

first anniversary of his first elected term of office. He will always have my support and best wishes.

SALUTE TO A FRIEND—JOHN K. MEAGHER

HON. SHERWOOD L. BOEHLERT

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 1997

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to extend my congratulations to my great friend, John K. Meagher, who has recently been named the managing director of the newly established Tax & Trade Group at Cassidy and Associates.

John has had a distinguished career which began when he and I served side-by-side on the staff of our own Congressman, former Rep. Alexander Pirnie of New York. We spent 5 years as colleagues and grew to be best friends. We have remained so to this day.

John was always interested in the law and has served with distinction as Republican counsel to the Ways and Means Committee, as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury under Secretaries Baker and Brady as a partner in the law firm of Le Boeuf, Lamb, Greene and Mac Rae.

He not only understands the law, he understands the Congress and the executive branch as well. He's been both places as a junior staffer and as a high official. He knows us and how we work.

As he and his colleagues in the Tax & Trade Group embark on their new and exciting venture, I wish my friend well.

IN HONOR OF CHARLES BENDHEIM

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 1997

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to note with great sorrow the passing of Charles Bendheim, philanthropist, Israeli patriot, husband, brother, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He passed away last Friday at his home in Jerusalem. He will be missed.

Mr. Bendheim was born in Brooklyn, NY, in 1917. During the Israeli War of Independence, he helped the Hagana obtain arms for the new country. He remained deeply involved with the new nation for the rest of his life.

Just before he died, Mr. Bendheim was cited as a Ne'eman Yerushalayim by the city of Jerusalem. This award, making him an "Honorary Fellow of the City of Jerusalem," has been bestowed on only 15 other people. At a special ceremony in the Jerusalem City Hall, Mayor Olmert declared: "For fifty years you have worked tirelessly for Jerusalem—for its hospitals, educational institutions and the economic development of the city." Indeed he did. And he was just as active here in the United States.

Mr. Bendheim served as a member of the board and the executive committee of Yeshiva University. He served as chairman of the board at Manhattan Day School. He was involved in many other charitable organizations in his 79 years—too many to list here.

Mr. Bendheim will be fondly remembered at the schools he helped, at the Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem whose new building he helped build as chairman of the board, and the other institutions that his philanthropy benefited. But the way Charles Bendheim will be remembered best is through the family he left behind. Besides his wife and sister, Mr. Bendheim leaves behind 7 children, 45 grandchildren, and 21 great-grandchildren.

By dedicating his life to serving his community, Charles Bendheim became a role model for generations here and in Israel. His children have followed in his footsteps, playing important roles in their communities. The Bendheim family continues to be involved in many schools, hospitals, religious institutions, and numerous other charitable organizations in the United States and Israel.

Mr. Speaker, the world is a little darker this week. The light that was Charles Bendheim has been dimmed. But through his work and family, he will live on forever. He will not be forgotten.

THE LOSS OF THE "FAMILY HOUR"

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 1997

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, where has the "family hour" gone? What happened to the wholesome series such as "The Cosby Show" and "Happy Days?" Vulgar language and sexual material have invaded the time slot between 8 and 9 pm in unprecedented volume, rendering the "family hour" nearly obsolete. A February 1997 study which analyzed television shows during a 4-week period found one-third of the programs to contain obscene language and another third to contain sexual references.

I am appalled by the subject material which has become acceptable during the "family hour." But even more than that, I am outraged that the networks have become so concerned with ratings that family values have gone by the wayside in favor of programs focusing on premarital sex, violence, and homosexuality. The fact is that the networks may be misguided thinking that this is what an American audience wants to watch. One of the highest rated shows, *Touched by an Angel*, focuses on heart-felt themes and teaching good values.

Mr. Speaker, more than 90 percent of Americans believe in God. But when was the last time we saw a television character go to a priest or a rabbi to seek counsel in making one of life's difficult decisions? I can't say that I've ever seen this on prime-time television.

We are inundated by sex and violence on television. I don't feel comfortable sitting down to watch television with my grandchildren anymore. Even with the new television ratings system, programs rated G and PG contain sex and obscenities unsuitable for our children and grandchildren.

The family hour picture is bleaker than ever before. The ratings system is poorly applied and the networks appear to have little desire to clean up their act. The anything goes mentality has come to replace one in which core family values are of central importance. I urge the networks to reevaluate their priorities. A

return to the family hour might be just the ticket to both higher ratings and more well-grounded American values.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HIGHWAY RESTORATION ACT

HON. RAY LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 16, 1997

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I along with Congressman LIPINSKI and ten other colleagues are introducing the Highway Restoration Act. This bill will address the tremendous need that has arisen for the maintenance and restoration of our Interstate Highway System.

The National Highway System is second to none in its ability to provide an efficient and safe network of roads, highways, and bridges linking the country together. Its existence has been crucial to our national defense and to interstate commerce. The System that we know today was largely the result of President Eisenhower's leadership and foresight, and just last year, we celebrated its 40th anniversary.

Unfortunately, many pieces of this 42,000-mile system are getting old and in need of repair. Current Federal programs for interstate maintenance and restoration do not adequately address the growing costs and needs associated with our aging highways. That is why I have introduced the Highway Restoration Act of 1997. This bill calls for funding the Discretionary Interstate Resurfacing, Restoration, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Program [I-4R] at \$800 million per year. The I-4R Program is the Federal discretionary program responsible for helping States maintain our highways, and it is separate from the Interstate Maintenance Program [IM] which distributes funds to the States based on a formula.

An adequately funded I-4R Program is necessary to ensure the longevity of our Interstate Highway System, because it allows factors, other than lane miles and vehicle miles traveled, to be taken into account when funds are distributed. Such factors for which the I-4R Program is able to account, include: The need to complete a project in a short period of time in order to reduce or minimize traffic disruptions; a particularly costly section of highway; traffic congestion caused by repair work; and delays in construction. The I-4R Program gives States the flexibility they need to effectively manage the repairs and preservation of our highways. Thus, sufficient funding for this program is crucial if we are to prolong the lifespan of our Interstate System, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me as a cosponsor of this important piece of legislation.

HONORING THE QUENTIS B. GARTH FOUNDATION, INC.

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 16, 1997

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Quentis B. Garth Foundation, Inc., which has served youths in the Chicagoland

community for the past 2 years. This foundation has worked hard to see that the dream of a college education is not out of the grasp of any deserving young student.

From its inception in May 1995, the foundation has granted annual scholarships to academically gifted and underprivileged students pursuing a college education. This year the foundation's \$15,000 scholarship award will be granted to 5 academically gifted students in Chicago-area high schools, and another \$75,500 will be distributed among 15 1995-96 scholarship awardees, currently pursuing studies at some of the most prestigious universities in the Nation.

These awards have been a blessing to many students and their families, but the benefits of this scholarship program reach far beyond the individual student's home. The surrounding community and our Nation at large will benefit from the quality education and training that these students receive.

It brings me great pleasure to honor the Quentis B. Garth Foundation today. I am certain that their good work will continue to enrich all of our students and our lives for many years to come.

U.S. ASSISTANCE IN SUPPORT OF ECONOMIC REFORM IN ARMENIA

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 16, 1997

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I have exchanged correspondence over the past 2 years with the executive branch on the question of how our assistance programs help to promote the United States objective of economic reform in Armenia. In recent months, I have exchanged correspondence with the Agency for International Development [AID], pertaining to its plan to provide a \$30 million grant to Armenia during fiscal year 1997 to purchase natural gas. It is my firm belief that U.S. assistance to each of the New Independent States should, whenever possible, be conditioned on the achievement of specific reform objectives.

The text of a March 7, 1997 letter from AID, my reply of March 19, and AID's reply of April 16 follow:

U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT,
Washington, DC, March 7, 1997.

Hon. LEE HAMILTON,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN HAMILTON: As a follow-up to staff discussions on January 3, 1997, with Mr. Kupchan on the FY 1997 Armenia natural gas program, I am writing to confirm that our provision of natural gas commodity assistance to Armenia is contingent upon significant energy sector reforms.

Ambassador Tomsen has recently communicated to the Prime Minister and Minister of Energy that the provision of FY 1997 natural gas would require: (1) evidence of progress in implementing conditions contained in last year's agreement, e.g., creation of an independent energy regulatory authority; and (2) commitment to new conditions that deepen and broaden the movement to restructure and privatize the energy sector. Furthermore, we are coordinating this position closely with the World Bank as well as introducing elements that go beyond the World Bank's conditions.

If you should require more detailed information, my staff are available to discuss our position and progress in obtaining energy reforms.

Sincerely,

THOMAS A. DINE.

COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 19, 1997.

Hon. THOMAS DINE,
Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Europe and the NIS, USAID, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. DINE: Thank you for your letter of March 7 regarding the Armenia natural gas program and the reforms upon which this agreement would be contingent.

I support your decision not to release the \$30 million until: (1) the government of Armenia provides evidence of implementing conditions contained in last year's agreement, and (2) Armenia commits to new conditions which go beyond the World Bank's conditions.

However, I would appreciate receiving more detailed information on both issues before I could support providing another round of funding for fuel. First, what progress has Armenia made, in AID's view, on complying with last years' agreements? According to a letter of April 3, 1996 from Assistant Secretary Barbara Larkin to me, the US was to seek Armenian agreement to increase tariffs in the private sector, pursue energy sector reform in parliament, and reform the gas sector. Your letter of March 7, 1997 mentions creation of an independent energy regulatory authority as a US goal. Where are we on these issues?

Second, if this year's \$30 million award goes forward, what specific conditionality *over and above* that already in World Bank agreements, will US assistance be contingent upon? What steps will you insist that Armenia take to deepen and broaden the movement to restructure and privatize the energy sector?

I look forward to working with you on this issue and other matters pertaining to NIS assistance.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

LEE H. HAMILTON,
Ranking Democratic Member.

U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT,
Washington, DC, April 16, 1997.

Hon. LEE H. HAMILTON,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN HAMILTON: We appreciate your continuing interest in the Armenia energy program and wish to reconfirm that our provision of natural gas commodity assistance to Armenia is contingent upon significant energy sector reforms.

As requested in your letter of March 19, 1997, to Assistant Administrator Tom Dine, I would like to highlight some of the significant progress Armenia is making in achieving energy sector reforms. Tariffs have been raised and are on a path to economic cost recovery, a goal that may be reached in early 1998. The Armenian Government recently completed its first round of privatization in the power sector, focused on small hydro-power plants. Although the Energy Law has not yet passed, the Law was submitted to Parliament March 31 and should be acted upon shortly. Meanwhile, the Government of Armenia has just issued a presidential decree acceptable to both the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank establishing an independent energy regulatory body. The new regulatory body will play a critical, catalytic role in

further movement toward a financially-viable, market-oriented utility system. According to USAID energy advisors who have worldwide experience, both the decree and the Energy Law are superior to those enacted in other NIS and Eastern European countries.

We have established new covenants in connection with the provision of natural gas in 1997 that go beyond the conditions set by the World Bank. These conditions relate to:

Full implementation of the aforementioned regulatory body;

Establishment of a financial settlement process and procedures for improving cash flow in the power sector;

Consolidation of power distribution companies to a reasonable number;

The formation of power sector joint stock companies with corporate charters;

Development of an action plan for further privatization;

Promotion of a Petroleum Law to encourage foreign investment; and

Implementation of a least-cost power investment plan to provide replacement power for the Armenia Nuclear Power Plant.

We have discussed these covenants with the Government of Armenia and expect them to agree to these covenants in the very near future.

The 1996 delivery of gas to Armenia amounted to \$15 million, which purchased 201 million cubic meters or about 33 percent of Armenia's total annual gas use. Due to changes in international gas prices, this year's \$30 million should purchase about 290 million cubic meters, which could represent from 25 to 50 percent of Armenia's 1997 gas imports, depending on future industrial demand, next winter's severity, and alternate energy supplies.

If you should require more information, please let us know.

Sincerely,

ROBERT K. BOYER,
*Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator,
Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs.*

TRIBUTE TO DAVID HARRIS

HON. VIC FAZIO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 16, 1997

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor David Harris of Dixon, CA. David Harris has served as the city manager for the city of Dixon for 19 years, from June, 1978, to July, 1997.

During David Harris' career as city manager to the city of Dixon, he placed the city of Dixon on the map. Dixon grew from a population of 6,031 in 1978 to a population of 13,078 in 1997. Furthermore, the city's area increased from 3.2 square miles in 1978 to 6.5 square miles in 1997.

He served under Mayors Maureen Southwell, Marime Burton-Halloran, Joe Anderson, Richard Brians, and Don Erickson.

David Harris oversaw the planning and development of Dixon City Hall in 1981, the Senior Multi-Use Center in 1987, the Council Chambers in 1988, the Dixon Police Station in 1991, and the Dixon Fire Station in 1997.

In addition, he is credited with creating the city of Dixon's logo, overseeing the planning and development of Northwest Park, and all the major renovations of Hall Park. Under David Harris' leadership, the first traffic signal was installed at the corner of North Adams