

hometown of Flint, Michigan. On May 21, 1998, Mrs. Shari Lambert will be the guest of honor as family and friends gather to celebrate her retirement after 25 years of dedicated public service.

Shari Lambert has never once hesitated to reach out and help someone in need. Since 1974, she has worked for the Michigan Employment Security Commission, now known as the Michigan Unemployment Agency. Most recently, Shari worked as Manager for the Agency's Flint branch.

For 25 years, Shari has worked with thousands of individuals, ensuring that each one was set on the road toward prosperous and gainful employment. Her dedication to being an active public servant set a positive tone in each branch of the Michigan Employment Security Commission, as well as its successor, the Michigan Unemployment Agency. She has served as a role model for efficiency, compassion, and fairness. Many Michigan residents owe their ability to provide for themselves and others to Shari's influence.

In addition to her work with the Unemployment Agency, Shari serves as a member of several Workforce Development Boards, such as the Career Alliance Board, Greater Pontiac Area Consortium Board, and Macomb/St. Clair Board. She can also be found working with groups within Macomb County such as Growth Alliance, the Private Industry Council, the School to Work/Tech Prep Board, the Human Services Coordination Body, the Macomb County Economic Club, and the Central Macomb Chamber of Commerce. She has also been a member of the Flint Chamber of Commerce, and is a past president of the Michigan chapter of the International Association of Personnel in Employment Security.

Mr. Speaker, many people, not only in the city of Flint, have been granted a new lease on life because of the dedication of Shari Lambert. As it is our duty to preserve and protect the quality and dignity of life for our constituents, let us remember that our task is made easier by people like Shari. I ask my colleagues in the 106th Congress to join me in acknowledging the accomplishments of Shari Lambert. We owe her a debt of gratitude.

A TRIBUTE TO REVITALIZATION OF THE SOUTHERN AREA OF THE SLOPE (ROSAS) ON THE OCCASION OF ITS COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS BANQUET

HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite my colleagues to pay tribute to Revitalization of the Southern Area of the Slope (ROSAS) on the occasion of its Community Service Awards Banquet.

The members of ROSAS have long been known for their commitment to community service and to enhancing the quality of life for all New York City residents.

This banquet is not only a festive happening, it is a chance for all of us to celebrate and pay tribute to a group of individuals who have dedicated their lives to helping others. This year's honorees truly represent the best of what our community has to offer.

Simon Brooking is the President of the 6th Avenue & 15th Street Community Garden and

a former ROSAS board member. He is a staunch advocate for community green spaces, composting and ROSAS' anti graffiti campaign. His painting company, The Flying Scotsman, helped art teacher Alison Conte and local children create a mural on 14th Street and 5th Avenue in Brooklyn. Simon and his wife Sheila have built a partnership with the Sierra Club to promote organic waste composting. Perhaps the Garden's greatest gift is providing area children with the opportunity to express themselves through their gardening and artistic talents. The Children's Creative Workshop, now entering its fourth year, is one such program that is available to Park Slope's children.

Carolyn Greer has spent the last four and a half years with New York State Senator Marty Markowitz and has lived up to the Senator's mandate that his staff be responsive to the needs of his constituents. As the Senator's Director of Community Programming, she handled complaints, responded to issues and identified and addressed community needs. Carolyn Greer is a founding member of South Brooklyn Hockey, which has ice and roller teams, and serves on the board of the Russian American Kids Circus. She is the author of the PS 321 Newsletter and is the founder of the PS 321 Holiday Helper Project, an annual drive for new clothes that are donated anonymously to several hundred needy public school children.

As ROSAS' Co-President in 1993 and 1994, Roger C. Melzer documented the extensive damage being done to Prospect Park by unrestricted barbecuing, organized community meetings to discuss the problem and worked to have regulations and enforcement imposed. He remains a strong advocate for more enforcement, better maintenance and more capital funding to preserve the natural aspects of Prospect Park. As a twenty-year resident of Park Slope, Roger has been a regular participant at Community Boards 6 and 7 meetings where his focus has been to ensure that city agencies provide service to residents in Park Slope and Windsor Terrace and to facilitate new initiatives as a means of resolving neighborhood problems.

All of today's honorees have long been known as innovators and beacons of good will to all those with whom they come in contact. Through their dedicated efforts, they have each helped to improve my constituents' quality of life. In recognition of their many accomplishments on behalf of my constituents, I offer my congratulations on their being honored by ROSAS.

INTRODUCTION OF MEDICARE MODERNIZATION #4 MEDICARE PERMANENT COMPETITIVE BIDDING AUTHORITY

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself and Representative McDERMOTT, I am pleased today to introduce the fourth bill in my Medicare modernization package: permanent competitive bidding authority. As with the other bills in this series, competitive bidding will save money for Medicare, while also improving the quality of health services provided to

Medicare beneficiaries. These modernizations are a template for meaningful Medicare reform that allows us to avoid radical, untried theories that could endanger the program's future.

The promise of managed care is coordinated, comprehensive, cost-effective health services. Medicare+Choice plans are not currently living up to this promise. For some time now, Medicare has over-paid Medicare+Choice plans. Current overpayments are estimated to cost Medicare and taxpayers \$2 to \$3 billion per year. This is because Medicare+Choice has attracted only the healthiest beneficiaries—people who would have cost next to nothing had they stayed in the traditional fee-for-service plan—leaving a much sicker population in the traditional program.

In addition, managed care plans are disenrolling beneficiaries who need expensive services, such as heart surgery, and then re-enrolling the beneficiary after the fee-for-service plan has paid the bill. The OIG estimates that in 1991 through 1996, Medicare spent \$224 million for inpatient services furnished to beneficiaries within three months of their disenrollment. Had these beneficiaries not disenrolled, Medicare could have spent only \$20 million in capitation payments. That's \$204 million in savings Medicare could have realized. "Cherry picking" such as this has forced fee-for-service costs to rise.

Because Medicare+Choice payments are tied to fee-for-service cost, rather than the actual cost of providing care to beneficiaries enrolled in managed care, Medicare continues to over-pay health plans. De-linking Medicare+Choice payments from the fee-for-service program will enable Medicare to pay a more realistic price for managed care services. Fostering greater competition through competitive bidding will help to achieve this goal.

Competitive bidding would take place in both the managed care and fee-for-service Medicare programs. Under this bill, the Secretary of DHHS would have the explicit authority to select items, services, and geographic areas to be included in a bidding or negotiation process based on the availability of providers and the potential to achieve savings. To protect quality, the bill would require that providers meet specified quality standards in order to participate in the bidding process.

Competitive bidding is almost universal throughout the private sector and in many other areas of government contracting. However, HCFA is still forced to go through tortured demonstration processes to "test" this basic tool of capitalism.

At this moment, HCFA is trying to get three competitive bidding demonstration projects off the ground: two Medicare+Choice demonstrations, one in Phoenix and one in Saint Louis; and one fee-for-service demonstration for durable medical equipment (DME). Unfortunately, the industry is blocking HCFA's attempt because they know that competitive bidding will force them to charge a more realistic price. This is not about cutting services to beneficiaries or lowering quality standards. It's about helping the taxpayer so that society has the money to improve Medicare for everyone while extending the life of the program. Competitive bidding can work. It has worked in the public and private sectors for centuries. We should make it work for Medicare too.

As we search for ways to secure and improve Medicare, it is appropriate to consider increasing the efficiency of the program through competition. Introducing competition into the managed care equation will achieve greater efficiencies, higher quality, and cost savings, and will enable Medicare managed care to live up to its promise.

Following is a portion of an interview from the May/June 1999 issue of Health Affairs by Princeton professor Uwe Reinhardt with HHS Secretary Donna Shalala which describes how different it has been to make progress on this simple, basic, free enterprise approach to health care:

THE CONTROVERSY OVER COMPETITIVE
BIDDING

Reinhardt: In my time, Medicare has been a pioneer in innovating with the DRG (diagnosis-related group)—based hospital payment system, which has been copied worldwide, and the Medicare physician fee schedule, which has been copied by private American payers. If we are ever going to really test managed competition by having health plans compete fairly for enrollees, only HCFA (the Health Care Financing Administration) can actually show the way, because the private sector has not yet done it so far. Do you share that view?

Shalala: I share that view, but the political system has to buy into it. For instance, we've announced a competitive-bidding demonstration in which we have some consensus among the experts as to where we ought to go and how to organize our experiment with managed competition. Phoenix and Kansas City are our two sites.

Reinhardt: HCFA has attempted such demonstrations in Baltimore and Denver but was forced to abandon both efforts by private interests that were opposed to them.

Shalala: Yes, in Denver we had bipartisan support to try it. But when we got specific and picked the places, we immediately had political opposition. However, Congress directed us (in the Balanced Budget Act [BBA] of 1997) to try again. We set up an advisory panel on which all of the political interests were represented. And now we're proceeding again.

Reinhardt: I suppose that we should never expect the managed care industry to voluntarily acquiesce to a competitive-bidding process because people instinctively don't like to compete. They prefer administered prices because such prices can be manipulated politically. Who is it, in general, that opposes competitive bidding?

Shalala: One source of opposition is the managed care industry. The companies in that industry believe that such a process will undermine their profits. So the private sector—the famed competitive marketplace—doesn't want competition. They keep saying things like, "Health care is different; we can't predict our costs." We have to have a system that is more nimble, more flexible. Managed care plans would not oppose a competitive-bidding process if they could modify the package of benefits. But if HCFA locks them into a benefits package, they want to be able to negotiate the price, rather than making competitive bids.

INDIAN INTELLIGENCE INTERRO-
GATES REPORTER AFTER VISIT
TO AMERICA

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, India has once again shown true nature of its democracy by grilling a reporter who visited the United States. Journalist Sukhbir Singh Osan has exposed the corruption and the atrocities of the Indian government in newspapers and through his website, Burning Punjab. He visited the United States, Canada, and Great Britain to cover the Sikh 300th anniversary marches and speak on human rights. He met with my colleague from Indiana, Mr. Burton, and with a minister in the Canadian government. Their pictures appear on his website.

Mr. Osan returned to his home in Chandigarh before Indian intelligence officers showed up at his house to interrogate him for 45 minutes, claiming they were acting on instructions from the central government in New Delhi. This is not the first time the Indian government has gone after Mr. Osan. He has received anonymous threats and has been denied a law degree that he worked hard to earn because he had written news stories that the Indian government didn't like.

Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, brought this to my attention. I understand that Dr. Aulakh has notified the Committee to Protect Journalists in New York of Mr. Osan's mistreatment.

What happened to Mr. Osan is not just an isolated incident. Other reporters have been threatened for reporting stories critical of the Indian government. Clearly, there is no press freedom in India despite its loud and frequent boasts that it is "the world's largest democracy."

Does a democratic country harass reporters for covering stories that the government doesn't like? Would a democratic country incite 17 freedom movements within its borders? India is a democracy only for the Brahmin ruling class. It is also anti-American, working with such models of democracy as China, Libya, and Cuba to undermine U.S. foreign policy. It approached China and Russia trying to build a triangular "security alliance" against America.

We should treat India as we do other violators of religious freedom. That will help to end the kind of abuse that Mr. Osan and his fellow Sikhs suffer and bring real freedom to all the nations and peoples living within India's Borders.

I am placing the Burning Punjab story on Mr. Osan's harassment into the RECORD for the information of my colleagues.

INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES GRILL SUKHBIR SINGH
OSAN

Chandigarh.—True to their anti-Sikh stance, the Indian Intelligence Agencies have again started harassment of innocents. Punjab based journalist, Sukhbir Singh Osan, who recently visited United States, Canada and United Kingdom for the purpose of participating in a human right convention to read a paper on the subject "Recent attacks on Christian community in India" and covering the 300 year celebrations of the Khalsa community was grilled by the intelligence sleuths for more than forty-five minutes at his residence on May 11. When Mr.

Osan asked the DSP [Intelligence Bureau] as to why he was questioning him about his visits abroad, the said DSP replied, "Delhi wants to know all about it." When again asked whether there were any written instructions, he replied that "we have specific instructions from Delhi". However, nothing in writing was given to Mr. Osan.

A TRIBUTE TO LACKLAND ELE-
MENTARY SCHOOL; RECIPIENT
OF THE UNITED STATES DE-
PARTMENT OF EDUCATION BLUE
RIBBON SCHOOL AWARD

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my sincerest congratulations to Lackland Elementary School in San Antonio, TX, upon the notification of their receipt of the Blue Ribbon School Award.

Schools are awarded the Blue Ribbon School Award based on their performance in regards to several criteria, including: student focus and support; active teaching and learning; school organization and culture; challenging standards and curriculum; professional community; leadership and educational vitality; school, family, and community partnerships; and indicators of success.

Lackland Elementary joins three other schools in San Antonio and forty other Texas schools, all of which excelled in these areas and were rewarded with the Blue Ribbon School Award from the United States Department of Education.

To receive consideration for this prestigious award, schools must be recommended for national recognition by their individual state department of education or sponsoring agency. Nominations are then evaluated by a National Review Panel including the Department of Education, the Department of Defense, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Council for American Private Education and a select group of educators from around the country. The Secretary of Education then makes a final determination based on the recommendations of this panel.

In receiving this special recognition, I believe that Lackland Elementary School will inspire others to provide the level of quality education that this Blue Ribbon School Award merits. I am proud to represent a district and hail from a state that has clearly placed an emphasis on the education of our children.

TRIBUTE TO COLLIS P. CHANDLER

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Collis P. Chandler, Jr., a friend of mine and a true friend of the petroleum industry, who passed away May 5, 1999, at the age of 72.

Mr. Chandler was a man of good character who loved life, his family and the industry upon which he had such a great impact. In a