

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 19, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1654) to authorize appropriations for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for fiscal years 2000, 2001, and 2002, and for other purposes:

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Chairman, today the House of Representatives considers an important bill to improve and strengthen U.S. leadership in space exploration. This bill, the "National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act" includes approval of funds for U.S. participation in the International Space Station, funds for aerospace and earth science research and funds for space science programs. These are all important programs and worthy goals. However, I rise to speak in support of an important technology for our future efforts to explore space: funding for research and develop into TransHab technology.

TransHab uses inflatable structure technology to package a much larger living and working volume in the equivalent Shuttle cargo size. In theory, the TransHab concept has more volume and radiation shielding when compared with the current Habitation module. TransHab could also serve as a technology demonstration for the human exploration of Mars. The NASA reauthorization bill currently prohibits NASA from making additional expenditures on any inflatable structure intended to replace current models on the International Space Station. However, the bill does leave the possibility for research and development of crew-related inflatable structures in FY01 and FY02.

I understand the financial concerns the Committee on Science has expressed regarding funding TransHab technology for the International Space Station. Ideally, I would like to see TransHab technology funded now for the station, but I agree that in a time when Congress is struggling to keep the federal budget balanced, all federal programs should receive scrutiny and careful consideration. However, I think that it is very important that the Committee continue to keep the door open on TransHab funding in the future. Those familiar with TransHab technology believe that this technology validates potential technology for future solar system exploration. TransHab technology could possibly mean a manned-exploration of Mars which could result in a wealth of scientific information previously unavailable.

I believe that scientific research is vital to the current and future prosperity of our nation. I think we owe it to ourselves, to our nation, and especially to our children to keep the dream of manned space exploration alive. TransHab technology is an investment in our future. To permanently close the door on such research and development jeopardizes this nation's preeminence in science and technology.

In my home state of Delaware, we are fortunate to have ILC Dover, a leader in the aerospace industry and a company that has prov-

en themselves a model for providing aerospace technology in accordance with NASA's new focus: "better, faster, cheaper." ILC Dover has been providing innovative and cost-effective technology since 1947. ILC Dover has helped to provide the technology that put a man on the moon and Pathfinder on Mars, and ILC Dover will continue to help provide technology that will help future space missions in exploring our world.

I am very proud of the research and development conducted by ILC Dover, and I am proud of the contributions ILC Dover has made to the U.S. Space Program. There is a strong commercial interest from committed, innovative companies in the aerospace industry such as ILC Dover in helping to develop TransHab technology. I am encouraged that the Committee has left the door open for TransHab research in development in FY01 and FY02, and I look forward to any future Congressional hearings on the issue.

LEGISLATION TO HONOR FORMER CONGRESSMAN KIKA DE LA GARZA

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to designate the U.S. border station located in Pharr, Texas, as the "Kika de la Garza United States Border Station." The bill is identical to legislation I introduced in the last Congress. That bill was approved unanimously by the House. Unfortunately, no action was taken on the legislation by the other body. I am proud to reintroduce this bill honoring a great legislator, former Congressman Kika de la Garza.

Kika de la Garza was born in Mercedes, Texas on September 22, 1927. He earned his law degree from St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas in 1952. He served in the Navy from 1945 to 1946, and in the Army from 1950 to 1952. He served in the Texas House of Representatives from 1953 to 1965.

In 1964 he was elected to Congress, where he was sent back to Congress by the people of the 15th Congressional District of Texas for 16 terms. In 1981 Kika became the chairman of the House Agriculture Committee. During his 14-year tenure as chairman, Kika compiled an impressive record of achievement and dedicated service to America's farming community.

Most notably, Kika went out of his way to foster a climate of cooperation, inclusiveness and bi-partisanship on the committee. Under his able leadership, the Agriculture Committee was able to form a consensus on a number of important and intricate agricultural issues.

In the 103rd Congress Kika played a lead role in the enactment of legislation revamping and streamlining the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Kika de la Garza guided through legislation that made many needed and important changes, without eviscerating those USDA programs that were effective and needed to help America's farmers and protect the public.

The bill, now law, made remarkable changes at USDA. Because of Chairman de la Garza's leadership and sage counsel, the bill represented the right way to "reinvent" government.

Throughout his 32-year career in Congress Kika never lost sight of the folks back home. He fought tirelessly for his constituents. He also proved to be an able and effective advocate for American farmers. In no small measure because of his leadership, American agriculture remains the envy of the world.

The former chairman is also an amateur linguist and a gourmet cook. On many occasions he conversed with foreign dignitaries in their native tongue. On a personal level, Kika is my good friend, and I am so proud to sponsor this legislation.

I urge all my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation.

HONORING NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL 122 FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute a group of remarkable students and educators. While we see many unfortunate examples of failing schools, it is refreshing to share good news about a public school that is succeeding. New York State public schools test all sixth-grade students for reading ability. Among all the schools in the State of New York, the sixth graders at P.S. 122 finished first in this reading test. Moreover, every sixth-grade student at P.S. 122 ranked at the highest level in reading.

P.S. 122's outstanding accomplishment on this test is considered a citywide triumph because the students overcame competition from more affluent suburban schools. The school attributes this success to its emphasis on exposing children to art, music and theater.

With a diverse student body, P.S. 122 is accomplishing an early goal of public education—preparing immigrants and their children with the necessary tools to build a new life in America. At P.S. 122, Hispanic students comprise almost a third of the student body with Asians making up additional 20%, and African Americans 10%. This School also serves numerous children from Italian, Greek, Indian, Native American, and other backgrounds. Forty percent of the students who succeeded so well in this standardized test began school with "limited proficiency in English." Approximately 65% of the student at P.S. 122 meet the criterion for free school lunches.

The educators at P.S. 122 are to be strongly commended for their success. I particularly want to recognize the principle of P.S. 122, Mary Kojes, whose leadership helped inspire the best from the students who took the test. This spirit no doubt inspired, and continues to inspire, her students to strive for excellence. Mary Kojes and the extraordinary teachers of P.S. 122 have provided that New York City School students can reach the highest levels of achievement when they are properly prepared. The Students of P.S. 122 have also benefited from the support of the School District 30 Superintendent, Dr. Angelo Gimondo and his staff.

The real heroes of this story are the students of P.S. 122. This success demonstrates that hard work has clear and definite rewards. I ask my colleagues to join me in commending all those associated with P.S. 122.

MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED
ACCESS TO CARE ACT

HON. DONNA MC CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I along with 38 of my colleagues on the Congressional Black Caucus introduced H.R. 1860, the Medically Underserved Access to Care Act which seeks to address the needs of minorities in the managed care system. As a physician, I have seen the problems that minorities—both patients and healthcare providers—can face within the managed care system. This bill seeks to ameliorate some of these difficulties by proposing some concrete solutions to overcome these problems.

A key provision of H.R. 1860 would require managed care organizations to contract with providers in medically underserved communities who are ethnically representative of the population of those communities. This will help to ensure that these providers have the cultural sensitivity needed to interact with their patients in an understanding manner that will directly cater to their specific medical needs and concerns as minorities.

To make this lofty goal a reality, H.R. 1860 establishes a program of outreach grants to underserved communities that will help patients locate culturally sensitive providers within their managed care plan. The bill also creates a similar outreach grant program for doctors that will be operated through a national private non-profit organization in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human Services. The specific goal of this program will be to assist minority physicians and other health care providers to convert their practices and internal administrative procedures to best access the managed care system for both private insurance plans and Medicaid insurance plans.

Ultimately, this bill seeks to redress the many grievances that minority physicians and patients have expressed regarding the managed care system. Addressing the problems that minorities face within the managed care system will take us one step closer to realizing the goal of Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to ensure that all Americans have access to quality care delivered in an appropriate manner.

I want to express my thanks to the National Medical Association and its President, Dr. Gary Denis, for their invaluable help in developing the language of this bill and assisting in getting it ready for introduction. I also want to thank my colleagues on the CBC for their support in joining me as cosponsors of this important bill.

H.R. 1858, THE CONSUMER AND INVESTOR ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT OF 1999

HON. TOM BLILEY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, we hear the phrase quite often that "we live in the Information Age." This is true because of advances in

technology in recent years. Digital technology—and more specifically, the Internet—has brought a world of libraries and magazines and newspapers and on-line stock trading to consumers' living rooms.

And while technology played a critical role in paving the way for the Information Age, it's clear that access to the information itself is just as important. Consumers use the Internet to price shop, to compare mortgage rates, to buy stocks, and for a variety of other commercial activities. The underlying ingredient to all of these activities is information. Without it, electronic commerce would still be a twinkle in Bill Gates' eye.

It is therefore critical that Congress take great care when it enacts laws that relate to consumers' access to information. Along with my colleagues on the Committee on Commerce, Messrs. Dingell, Tauzin, Markey, Oxley, and Towns, I am introducing legislation that ensures that consumers and investors will continue to have full access to information when they surf the Web.

H.R. 1858, the Consumer and Investor Access to Information Act of 1999, provides new protection to publishers of electronic databases, while ensuring that public access to information will not be limited by publishers' asserting a proprietary right over facts and information, which historically have been part of the public domain. The bill's anti-theft protections will also protect institutions like the stock exchanges from hackers and pirates seeking to undermine the integrity of the data they disseminate to the public.

Mr. Speaker, we live in the Information Age. We must keep information—like stock quotes—readily available to consumers on the information superhighway. Millions of Americans depend on information they obtain over the Internet to help them make important investment decisions. This bill will ensure that consumers and investors continue to have access to this information.

Mr. Speaker, Americans should not have to pay tolls for public information obtained on the information superhighway. Facts and information should remain toll-free on the information superhighway. Facts and information like stock quotes have been, and under H.R. 1858, will continue to remain readily available to the public.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to my statement, I am submitting for the RECORD a background piece on, as well as a section-by-section analysis of, H.R. 1858. I urge my colleagues to join me, along with the rest of the bipartisan leadership of the Committee on Commerce, in supporting this legislation.

H.R. 1858, THE CONSUMER AND INVESTOR
ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT OF 1999
THE IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION TO
ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

Economists have long recognized that one of the great obstacles to the efficient operation of markets is imperfect information. A consumer might pay too much for an item because he or she was unaware of the lower price being charged for the item at another store, and the transaction cost of visiting all the stores to determine which charged the least exceeded the savings of buying at the least expensive store. This problem has become more significant as markets have become more complex. The need for information on which to base economic decisions is greater now than ever before.

One of the great virtues of electronic commerce is that it has the potential to provide

its participants with much more information at much lower cost than is available in more traditional forms of commerce. This additional information will allow for the much more efficient operation of markets for capital, labor, and goods. If a small businessman is seeking a loan, the Internet will allow him to learn the terms offered by banks all over the country. If a computer programmer is looking for a job, the Internet will allow him to learn about opportunities in distant cities. And if a homeowner needs to buy a new refrigerator, the Internet will provide him with the prices in stores throughout the region. This information will obviously benefit both the purchaser and the seller of goods and services. We have seen some of these benefits in the last five years, and they will only accelerate in the years to come.

One of the most explosive areas of growth that consumers have benefitted from through the Internet is in the area of securities investing. According to a recent study, the number of households with people trading on the Internet has nearly tripled, to 6.3 million in the last 16 months. And the same study reported that 20 million households use the Internet for investment news, quotes and ideas. This access to information about the stock market has empowered investors and given them greater control over their finances. Studies have reported that investors feel increasingly secure about their investment decisions as they use the Internet to monitor their portfolios, follow news about their holdings and obtain other information about their investments.

Indeed, the Internet will make it so much easier for people to access information that they will be confronted with a new problem—too much information. Accordingly, people will need tools for locating and organizing the information into useful forms. Otherwise, the information will be overwhelming. Such tools already exist in the form of databases, search engines, and webcrawlers, and these tools are becoming more sophisticated to keep up the information that is flooding the Internet.

The basic information policy of this country—a policy that has existed since the writing of the Constitution—has served many communities, including the Internet and electronic commerce, extremely well. Our long-standing policy says that facts cannot be "owned." Instead, they are in the public domain. Accordingly, a database publisher can visit the site of every bank in a state, extract data concerning each bank's loan programs, and construct a larger database with loan information for all the banks. Another database publisher can then extract some of that information, and combine it with other information—for example, loan programs from out-of-state banks, or customer service ratings of the banks)—to create a new, more useful database which promotes commerce.

This information policy facilitates electronic commerce at an even more fundamental level. The culture of science involves combining new data with existing databases to create more powerful research tools. Allowing scientists to reuse facts, rather than requiring them to "reinvent the wheel," ensures that research moves forward. Research and development is the foundation of all commercial activity.

THE NEED FOR LIMITED LEGISLATION

Although the existing information policy generally functions well in the context of the Internet and electronic commerce, there is one potential problem. Digital technology, which makes the Internet and electronic commerce possible, also increases the likelihood of unfair competition in the database