

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SUPPORT THE HOPE FOR CHILDREN ACT

HON. TOM BLILEY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 1999

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, recently I received a letter from one of my constituents, Mr. Scott Thompson of Richmond, Virginia. Mr. Thompson and his wife are in the process of adopting a child and I was struck by what he was willing to go through to give a child a loving home.

Mr. Thompson writes:

To give some background, my wife and I have been going through the adoption process for about two years. During that time we have pursued many different paths and options, all unsuccessful, so far. As it stands now we are about six months from getting our child, hopefully. We have invested to date, roughly \$6,000. We will surely invest another \$10,000 before it is all over . . . It is, however, very sad that two people who wish to provide a loving and stable home to a child must endure . . . outrageous costs as well. In our case we will have to obtain a second mortgage on our home and us all of our savings to make this a reality. These payments will make it more difficult for us to give all that we want to our child. Passage of this bill will cost the Federal Government so little in the grant scheme of things. It will, however, provide much needed help to the searching families and the waiting children.

Mr. Speaker, as Mr. Thompson's letter indicates, the cost of adopting a child continues to go up. Many parents who want to give a child a loving home cannot because of the huge expense of doing so. Adopting a child can cost a family thousands of dollars; more than most families can handle. Today, I reintroduce the Hope for Children Act to help ease the financial burden on those who want to give a child a loving home.

The Hope for Children Act would increase the adopting tax credit for each adoption to \$10,000 and make the process more affordable for middle-class families. Present law only provides a \$5,000 tax credit per adoption and a \$6,000 tax credit for the adoption of special needs children. The current tax credit is far below the actual cost of adopting a child. Furthermore, the Hope for Children Act would index the credit for inflation and increase the earnings limit, expanding eligibility for the tax credit. The Hope for Children Act would also make the adoption tax credit permanent law, repealing the sunset, and exempt the beneficiaries of the credit from the Alternative Minimum Tax. This will ensure that parents receive the full benefit of this credit.

Mr. Speaker, my wife and I are adoptive parents. The Hope for Children Act will allow more families and children to experience the happiness my family has enjoyed. Most important, more children will have someone to call 'Mom and Dad' if the Hope for Children Act becomes law. With the average adoption costing between \$8,000–\$25,000, we need to do

more to promote adoption. The Hope for Children Act will make it possible for more children without homes to join loving families. The Hope for Children Act can make dreams come true for many people.

Today, thousands of children are without permanent families—it is time we all work together to fix this problem. We owe it to those children to put aside political differences and pass pro-adoption legislation this year.

IN HONOR OF THE NATIONAL APPRECIATION DAY FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the National Appreciation Day For Catholic Schools. As a former Catholic school student, I know first hand the value of a Catholic education. Catholic schools teach students discipline, pride, and respect for learning.

I especially wish to recognize the delegation of students, teachers, and parents that make the National Appreciation Day For Catholic Schools a special day, they also know the value of Catholic schools. Their commitment to ensuring an exceptional Catholic education and maintaining quality Catholic schools means that Catholic students in the future will continue to benefit from outstanding educational opportunities.

I would also like to recognize the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) for their efforts to promote educational and catechetical goals. By sponsoring events like the Seton Awards, which recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions to Catholic education, the NCEA works diligently to insure better education across America.

Providing excellent educational opportunities for all children is one of the most important goals in our society. I am encouraged by the involvement of the students, teachers, and parents who are observing the National Appreciation Day For Catholic Schools.

SOCIAL SECURITY EARNINGS LIMIT ELIMINATION ACT

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 1999

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce H.R. 519, the Social Security Earnings Limit Elimination Act of 1999. I invite my colleagues to join me in supporting this worthwhile piece of legislation.

The objective of this bill, H.R. 519, is simple and straightforward: It would fully remove in the future the limitations on the amount of out-

side income which working seniors who are receiving Social Security may earn while receiving benefits.

For too many years, those senior citizens, aged 65 to 69, who chose to continue to work have had their Social Security benefits deducted dollar for dollar once their earnings went over \$12,500 annually.

The 104th Congress made a much-needed change, raising the outside earnings limit to \$30,000 by the year 2002.

I believe that while this is a good step forward, more needs to be done on this issue. The earnings limit only serves to discourage many seniors from working and diminishes their potential impact on society. It is a condescending regulation that conveys the message that seniors have nothing to contribute and discourages them from serving in the work force.

I was pleased to hear the President, in his State of the Union Address, calling for the elimination of the earnings limit.

Accordingly, I invite my colleagues to join in supporting this timely and important legislation.

IN MEMORY OF JUDGE JOSEPH EDWARD STEVENS, JR.

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 1999

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I inform the House of the death of Judge Joseph Edward Stevens of Kansas City, MO. Judge Stevens was an honorable adversary in the courtroom, an outstanding jurist, and a warm and thoughtful friend.

Judge Stevens was born in Kansas City, attended Southwest High School, Yale University and Michigan Law School. He served as a Lieutenant in the Navy from 1952–1955. Before entering the Navy, he was a research assistant to Charles Whitaker. He was an attorney with Lombardi, McLean, Slagle and Bernard and then with Lathrop, Koontz, Righter, Blackwell, Gordon and Parker from 1956–1981. He was appointed by President Reagan in 1981 to the United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri and served actively until his death, presiding over some of the highest-profile cases in recent Kansas City history.

Judge Stevens taught at the Law Schools of the University of Missouri at Columbia and University of Missouri at Kansas City. He served from 1974 to 1982 as a member of the Board of Governors of the Missouri Bar and was president of the Missouri Bar from 1980 to 1981. He was appointed by President Clinton and confirmed by the Senate on April 6, 1995 as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation, serving as president from 1997 to the present. He was a former member of the House of Delegates of the American Bar Association and of the Advisory Board of the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA).

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Judge Stevens was awarded the Lon O. Hocker Memorial Trial Lawyer in 1962, and the Spurgeon Smithson Award in 1987 by the Missouri Bar Association. He was also awarded the President's Award in 1995 by the Missouri Bar President, the Charles E. Whitaker Award in 1996 by the Lawyers Association of Kansas City, and the William F. Yates Distinguished Service Medallion in 1998 by William Jewell College.

Judge Stevens was active in the community. He was on the Board of Trustees and sang in the choir at the Central United Methodist Church. He was a member of the Man-of-the-Month Fraternity from 1996 until the present, and of the Missouri Academy of Squires. He was a former member of the Board of Directors and later the Board of Governors of Truman Medical Center, 1981 to 1998, and a former trustee of the Bartsow School. He was on the Board of Directors for the University Club from 1994 until 1997, and was also a member of the Carriage Club, Beta Theta Pi Fraternity, Epsilon Lambda Chapter. He was President of the Vanguard Club in 1993 and the Mercury Club in 1995.

Judge Joseph Edward Stevens will be missed by everyone who had the privilege to know him. I know the Members of the House will join me in extending heartfelt condolences to his family: his wife, Norma; his two daughters, Jennifer and Rebecca, and his sister and brother.

LEGISLATION TO AUDIT MILITARY PURCHASES TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH THE BUY AMERICAN ACT

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 1999

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, today I introducing legislation to direct the Inspector General of the Department of Defense to conduct an audit of fiscal year 1998 procurements of military clothing by four installations of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps (a total of 16 installations). The installations should be in the United States or U.S. possessions and territories.

The objective of the audit is to determine whether contracting officers complied with the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 10a) and the Berry Amendment (10 U.S.C. 2241 note) when they procured military clothing and related items. The audit should be completed by September 30, 2000 and the results submitted to Congress.

I introduce this legislation in response to the findings of an IG audit conducted last year pursuant to an amendment I had included in the fiscal year 1998 defense authorization bill, Public Law 105-85, directing the Pentagon's IG to audit the procurement of military clothing and related items.

I was deeply troubled by the findings of the audit (Report No. 99-023). The audit found, among other things, that "151 of 256 contracts (59 percent) did not include the appropriate clause to implement the Buy American Act or the Berry Amendment. The noncompliance

with the Buy American Act and the Berry Amendment resulted in 43 potential violations of the Antideficiency Act."

The audit only covered 12 military organizations. The likelihood is very high that there had been widespread violations of the Buy American Act throughout the military. The audit noted that procurement officials within the Department of Defense have agreed to issue policy guidance to contracting officers emphasizing the importance of complying with the Buy American Act. However, I am concerned that there will continue to be widespread violations of the Buy American Act unless the Congress exercises continued vigilance in this area.

That is why I am introducing this legislation. My bill will ensure the IG conducts a follow-up audit to determine whether or not the Pentagon has effectively addressed the widespread Buy American Act violations revealed in the original audit. I hope all Members will support this important bill.

HONORING WEST UNIVERSITY PLACE, TEXAS

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 1999

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate West University Place, Texas, on the occasion of its 75th anniversary, which they will celebrate with a series of events throughout 1999. The first event will be the reopening this Saturday, February 6, 1999, of the newly refurbished City Hall, which was built back in 1955.

West University Place was originally developed by former Tennessee Governor Ben Hooper, who wanted to build a community of country homes outside Houston out of an old Spanish land grant that had been surveyed by A.C. Reynolds. In 1912, Governor Hooper bought 750 acres of land that became the city of West University Place because of its proximity to Rice University.

West University Place, known affectionately as "West U," had humble origins. By early 1923, only about 40 families lived in West University Place, an area remembered as a low-lying, poorly drained swamp, that flooded whenever it rained heavily. West University Place incorporated to help its residents accomplish together what they could not do alone. That is, residents needed to build the necessary infrastructure to protect themselves and their property from heavy rain and flooding—streets, drainage systems and water sewers—and provide for schools, police, and fire protection.

In the first step toward incorporation, community leaders filed a plat of their proposed city in October 1923. There were 29 signatories, all of whom had lived in West U for at least six months. The petition to incorporate was filed with Harris County Commissioners Court on December 1, 1923, and signed by County Judge Chester H. Bryan. The Judge ordered an election for incorporation on December 18, 1923. The election drew a total of 30 people, all of whom voted to incorporate.

The incorporation papers were signed on January 2, 1924.

In the years since, West U has grown into a thriving community that, together with Houston and the rest of Harris County, is one of the nation's great metropolitan areas. Today, over 13,000 residents live in West U. The City has progressed toward its present position as one of the area's most desirable neighborhoods. Civic-minded citizens and small-town governments, combined with a proximity to major business, educational, cultural, and scientific centers have enriched life for all living in the Houston metropolitan area.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate West University Place and all of its citizens as they celebrate their 75 anniversary. I wish them continued success as they build on the strong sense of community they have established in West University Place, Texas.

IN MEMORY OF C. SAM THEODUS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 3, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of C. Sam Theodus. Sam was a great national labor leader and a great friend to many, particularly in the Greater Cleveland area; I am proud to count myself as having been Sam's friend.

C. Sam Theodus was a key leader in the Teamsters. He was President of Local 407 from 1982 to 1987, and again from 1990-1995. Mr. Theodus was a member of Local 407 for 46 years. He was a man of the people, never placing himself above those he represented. He was dedicated to the advancement of ordinary working men and women, and he dedicated his life to improving the lot of others. This was his life's mission. In addition, Sam was a compassionate leader and loyal colleague.

For anyone who knew Sam, knew that he stood on principle, and was willing to stand up for those beliefs. He fought to introduce rank-and-file elections for national Teamster offices, an idea that was considered impossible at one time. Now, of course, it is the national policy. He also challenged the traditional practice of appointing local leaders; Sam worked to allow all members to determine the leaders. That was the essence of his legacy, fighting for the democratic principles of improving the representation of his fellow Teamsters.

I will always be proud of knowing and working with Sam Theodus. He was always in the trenches with the members, fighting every battle side-by-side with everyone else. Perhaps it was something he learned while serving his country in Korea. Sam's respect and confidence in the rank-and-file was recognized in 1991 when the Teamsters instituted their first rank-and-file election. He was the top vote getter for the position of vice-president in that election. Clearly the national Teamsters recognized what Local 407 had long known—that Sam Theodus was an incredible, compassionate, and dignified leader.

I will miss Sam. To his wife Lillian, and his loving family, I extend my heartfelt sympathies.

God Bless Sam Theodus.