

there are no easy answers. We simply don't have instructive, persuasive evidence either way.

Many experts believe, however, if the slightest possibility exists that dioxin residues in tampons could harm women, the dioxin should simply be eliminated. I also believe we should err on the side of protecting women's health. Tampon manufacturers are not required to disclose ingredients to consumers, although many have taken the positive step of voluntarily disclosing this information. Unfortunately, women are still being forced to take the word of the industry-sponsored research that these products are completely safe.

I should also note that this is not the first time a Member of Congress has expressed concern about this issue. In 1992, the late Representative Ted Weiss of New York brought the issue up in a subcommittee hearing of the Committee on Government Operations. He did this after his staff had uncovered internal FDA documents which suggested the agency had not adequately investigated the danger of dioxin in tampons.

My bill, The Tampon Safety & Research Act (H.R. 890), would direct the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to conduct research to determine the extent to which the presence of dioxin, synthetic fibers, and other additives in tampons and related menstruation products pose any health risks to women. An NIH study would provide American women with independent research, so they will not have to rely solely on research funded by tampon manufacturers.

The second bill I have introduced, The Robin Danielson Act, calls for a program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to track instances of Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS). This bill is named in memory of Robin Danielson, a 44 year-old mother of two who last year of TSS. This bill addresses the many potentially harmful additives in tampons, including chlorine compounds, absorbency enhancers, and synthetic fibers, as well as deodorants and fragrances. Most people are surprised to learn these additives are commonly found in these products.

Toxic Shock Syndrome is a rare bacterial illness which caused over 50 deaths between 1979 and 1980, when the link between tampons and TSS was first established. According to a 1994 study, of the Toxic Shock cases occurring in menstruating women, up to 99% were using tampons. Obviously Toxic Shock Syndrome is still a women's health concern, and its link to tampons has become more clear. We do not know enough about the potential risks associated with such additives. Independent research has already shown synthetic fiber additives in tampons amplify toxins, which are associated with Toxic Shock Syndrome.

Reporting of TSS to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is currently optional and uneven. No one knows the actual number of TSS occurrences or deaths. Because doctors do not report all cases of TSS and because local health departments are swamped with other higher-ranking concerns, Toxic Shock is greatly under-reported. My bill establishes a CDC program to implement mandatory collection of Toxic Shock Syndrome data.

I want to share an excerpt from a letter written to me by a TSS survivor addressing the importance of The Robin Danielson Act and TSS research: "I think women are mis-

informed about the dangers and risks that go with using tampons. I know that I remember hearing about it years ago but had always thought that tampons now were very safe to use. Apparently this is not true and many women today are dying from this disease and it goes unreported.

Women, like Robin Danielson, are still dying from this terrible disease. It is imperative that we are able to accurately inform women of the risk of Toxic Shock associated with tampon use, and that women are well aware of that risk. We know there is a dangerous link between tampon use and TSS. What we don't know is how prevalent the disease is among tampon users. The only means to determine the current risk of Toxic Shock and to raise awareness of the disease is to require systematic reporting through the CDC.

Currently, the CDC believes that women are at increased risk for developing Toxic Shock due to a false sense of security, believing that there is no longer a risk for developing the disease. To make matters worse, the diagnosis of Toxic Shock is difficult because the symptoms are flu-like and can be easily misdiagnosed or ignored. Knowing the continued risk for contracting Toxic Shock is the only way to raise awareness among women and their physicians. More knowledgeable women and physicians will recognize TSS symptoms earlier, diagnose Toxic Shock more readily, and prevent needless deaths.

The fact is, women do not have the information they need to make sound decisions about their health. For the sake of women's well-being, we need accurate, independent information. American women have a right to know about any potential hazards associated with tampons and other related products. It is only when women fully understand the consequences that they can make truly informed decisions about their reproductive health.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in this fight to get accurate health information to the women of America. Their future fertility, and perhaps their lives, may depend on it.

HONORING COLORADO BOYS
STATE TRACK 2A CHAMPIONS—
HOLYOKE

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my heartiest congratulations to the Holyoke boys track team on their impressive State 2A Championship. These young men displayed an impressive combination of talent, determination, and teamwork to earn a share of the 2A State Championship.

The State 2A Championship is the highest achievement in high school track. The champions receive a coveted trophy which symbolizes more than just the team and its coach, Mr. Vann Manly. It also represents the staunch support of the runners' families, fellow students, school personnel and the community. From now on, these people can point to the 1999 boys track team with pride, and know they were part of a remarkable athletic endeavor. Indeed, visitors to Holyoke and the school will see a sign proclaiming the boys 2A

State Championship, and know something special had taken place there.

The Holyoke track team is a testament to the old adage that the team wins games, not individuals. Each team member should be proud of his own role. These individuals are the kind of people who lead by example and serve as role-models. With the increasing popularity of sports among young people, local athletes are heroes to the youth in their home towns. I admire the discipline and dedication these high schoolers have shown in successfully pursuing their dream.

The memories of this storied year will last a lifetime. I encourage all involved, but especially the Holyoke runners, to build on this experience by dreaming bigger dreams and achieving greater successes. I offer my best wishes to the team as they move forward from their State 2A Championship to future endeavors.

IN MEMORY OF DONALD L.
ALFIERO

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great sorrow on the passing of Donald L. Alfiero of Norwich, Connecticut. Don was a friend to me and thousands in Norwich, a dedicated husband and a tireless public servant.

Don Alfiero worked hard day-in and day-out on behalf of everyone in Norwich. He served on several boards and commissions and was a senior member of the City Council. He recognized the importance of education and fought to ensure that the students in his community had the very best. Don Alfiero was more than a remarkable public servant, he was a great person. He was gregarious and outspoken, but compassionate above all else. I have attached an editorial from the Norwich Bulletin that describes Don well which I request be included following my statement.

Mr. Speaker, Don Alfiero's memory will live on and endure in Norwich. He will always be a model for those of us in public service.

[Editorial from the Norwich Bulletin]

LOSS OF DON ALFIERO STUNS AND DIMINISHES
NORWICH AND COUNCIL

Donald L. Alfiero died suddenly yesterday morning and his loss has stunned and saddened this city.

As husband, neighbor, alderman, volunteer—and simply a good guy—Don Alfiero touched a lot of people hereabouts and always for the better.

Don was 62, retired from Electric Boat, and the senior member of the Norwich City Council. A Democrat, Don represented Precinct 9. But you didn't have to be a Democrat or live in his precinct to call Don Alfiero a friend.

If ever there were anyone of whom it could be said led by example, Don Alfiero was that man. He was involved, he listened and—regardless of what others thought—Don always spoke his mind and did what he thought best. That didn't always win him great popularity; but for Don being popular was secondary to being right.

His service to the city was extensive. Don was vice chairman, then chairman of the Democratic Town Committee, and remained

active with it after that. He was a member of the Mohegan Park Advisory Committee, the Public Parking Commission, City Hall Renovations Committee and the Public Works and Capital Improvements Committee.

Don's and his wife Anna's commitment to education is well known. Anna is chairwoman of the Norwich Board of Education.

Lines on a resume do not adequately describe Don Alfiero. Though they had no children, Don was a grandfatherly kind of guy who loved his city and the people who live here.

It's appropriate to recall that shortly before he died, Don was on the radio with Johnny London, cheerleading for his city and summer festivals at Howard T. Brown Park.

Don Alfiero was a nice man, but more importantly he was a good man. His presence in this city will be missed.

Anna has our sympathy. Don has our prayers. The Norwich City Council has big shoes to fill.

TRIBUTE TO MEL TAKAKI

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize one of Colorado's outstanding individuals, Mel Takaki. In doing so, I would like to pay tribute to an individual who, time and again, has exemplified the notion of public service and civic duty.

A resident of Pueblo, Colorado, Mel Takaki has taken an active role to better his community. Recently, Mr. Takaki, a Pueblo civic leader, was recognized with a "Distinguished Service Award" from the University of Colorado for his work in medicine and community service.

A graduate of the Northwestern Dental School, Mel Takaki has previously been honored by the University of Colorado as an honorary alumnus. He was nominated for the "Distinguished Service Award" by Dr. Robert Schrier, chairman of the CU Health Services Center in Denver, Colorado.

Mr. Takaki has worked to better the community of Pueblo in various capacities. He has cared for the citizens of Pueblo through his work as a dentist, and he has provided leadership as an economic-development leader and former City Council president. He is an outstanding citizen and great contributor, and for this I would like to express my gratitude and pay tribute to him for his extraordinary efforts.

TRIBUTE TO GERALDINE "GERRY" SCHNEIDER

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to congratulate Geraldine "Gerry" Schneider on completing her general educational development certificate at Lewis and Clark Community College on June 10, 1999, at age 58. Ms. Schneider was born with cerebral palsy.

Despite this disability, Ms. Schneider diligently worked to learn the three R's. Her work at Lewis and Clark Community College that

began in 1994, has allowed her to become actively engaged in issues on disabilities as a resident of Godfrey, Illinois. She was appointed to the Illinois Planning Council on Development by former Governor Jim Edgar, and has moved out of nursing and group homes to live with a companion Raymond Boyle since her educational progress.

Her success can also be attributed to Support Systems Services; a nonprofit organization that provided the funds allowing Gerry to pay for her classes. I believe this is an excellent example of local service organizations caring about people, and helping dreams become realities. I commend both Geraldine Schneider and Support Systems Inc. for their efforts.

I want to congratulate Gerry, in particular, for receiving her hard-earned and much deserved GED. Her personal efforts to persevere and overcome adversity are an inspiration to us all.

HONORING THE OUTSTANDING GRADUATES OF THE EL PUENTE ACADEMY

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating special graduates of the 12th Congressional District of New York. I am certain that this day marks the culmination of much effort and hard work which has lead and will lead them to continued success. In these times of uncertainty, limited resources, and random violence in our communities and schools, it is encouraging to know that they have overcome these obstacles and succeeded.

These students have learned that education is priceless. They understand that education is the tool to new opportunities and greater endeavors. Their success is not only a tribute to their strength but also to the support they have received from their parents and loved ones.

In closing, I encourage all my colleagues to support the education of the youth of America. With a solid education, today's youth will be tomorrow's leaders. And as we approach the new millennium, it is our responsibility to pave the road for this great Nation's future. Members of the U.S. House of Representatives I ask you to join me in congratulating the following outstanding students from the El Puente Academy: Lily Andugar, Indra Camo, Isable Espinal, Ana Hernandez, Evelyn Hernandez, Mia Hilton, Luis Johnson, Miriam Nunez, Maria Perez, Marvin Rodriguez, Luis Ramos, Gerson Santillana, Rodolfo Solis, Omar Torres, Jennifer Valentin, Octovio Vargas, Taiesah Vasquez, and Essany Velazquez.

INTRODUCTION OF ZERO CAPITAL GAINS PROPOSAL

HON. JENNIFER DUNN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, Mr. MATSUI and I are introducing a bold proposal to zero out capital gains taxes for those who invest in our burgeoning high tech industry. We are joined by our colleagues on both sides of the aisle who are leaders in the effort to foster a healthy economic climate in which our nation's high tech companies can continue to thrive.

The American economy is moving quickly from one dominated by large corporations to one whose growth is fueled by emerging entrepreneurial high-growth companies. Entrepreneurial companies are today's leaders in job creation, technological innovation, and international competitiveness. America's future economic well-being lies in the hands of today's emerging companies and the central organizing principle for our nation's economic policy should be entrepreneurship.

Over the course of many years, a complex fabric of public policies have created the environment in which entrepreneurial firms compete. Due to the fact that the public policy needs of this community have not been articulated in a united fashion or widely understood by policy makers, however, the basic "building blocks" used to enhance economic growth have not been properly constructed. I rise today to begin to lay the foundation for this policy and ensure that the engine that drives this economy has access to the fuel it needs to thrive: capital.

Entrepreneurs are synonymous with jobs. In the last three years there has been over a million new jobs created in the high tech sector alone. More importantly, the average wage of a high tech job is \$53,000 per year, 77 percent higher than the private sector as a whole. By creating an environment for entrepreneurship to thrive, we also ensure that "spin off" companies develop to foster even greater job creation and technological development. Nowhere is this more clearly demonstrated than in the biotechnology and computer industries that have grown up in my home state of Washington.

The bill I am introducing today will ensure that these new capital-intensive small businesses will have the money they need to create innovative technologies and create jobs. By raising the Section 1202 definition of small business from \$50 million to \$300 million and raising the capital gains exclusion from 50% to 100% for both individuals and corporations, we can create a climate in which individual investors are rewarded for their risky investment and entrepreneurs have the tools they need to succeed.

Capital gains taxes are one of this nation's primary obstacles to job creation and technological innovation. Anything to reduce the effective or actual rate on capital gains taxes will help put more money in the hands of our nation's most enterprising citizens and lift the standard of living for everyone.

In addition to the capital gains provisions in the bill, I am also proposing to eliminate Incentive Stock Options from the calculation of