

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE GLAUCOMA DETECTION ACT OF 1999

HON. MARK FOLEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 1999

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Medicare Glaucoma Detection Act of 1999 today. Although it is not a disease that is always at the forefront of our attention, glaucoma is a significant cause of legal blindness in this country. An estimated 80,000 Americans are blind because of this disease. Alarming, at least two million individuals have glaucoma and estimates show that at least half of them are not aware of it.

Medical science has shown that glaucoma can be prevented or delayed through early diagnosis and treatment. Preliminary data indicates that early detection in many cases can lead to treatment through pharmaceutical intervention rather than through surgery. I see no reason that America's seniors should risk losing their sight, and consequently their independence, from glaucoma if we can effectively identify and treat this disease early. Unfortunately, current Medicare coverage of glaucoma testing is inadequate. Current coverage is only available for those who show clearly identifiable symptoms of the disease. However, for many people, this could be too late.

The Medicare Glaucoma Detection Act will expand coverage of glaucoma testing to include all Medicare patients 65 and older, Medicare-eligible individuals aged 60 to 64 who have a family history of glaucoma and other high risk populations identified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Covered services will include a series of tests which must be performed in combination by an ophthalmologist in order to successfully detect the disease.

Preventive care, like early disease testing, has proven to be highly effective in reducing the seriousness of many diseases and in improving the recovery time and quality of life for those who suffer from them. It only makes sense that coverage of glaucoma testing should be expanded in light of the known value of preventive care. Therefore, I would encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

RECOGNITION OF S. 76, THE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS BILL AS INTRODUCED BY STATE SENATOR FRANK W. BALANCE, JR., RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 1999

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, as a strong proponent of equal enforcement and protec-

tions under the law, I rise today to call the attention of the Congress to North Carolina Senate Bill (SB) 76, "Traffic Enforcement Statistics" legislation introduced by North Carolina State Senator and Deputy President Pro Tempore Frank W. Balance, Jr. Governor James B. Hunt of North Carolina signed SB 76 into law on April 22, 1999.

SB 76 will greatly assist in determining whether minorities are treated fairly by highway patrols along North Carolina roads and highways by requiring troopers to record the race, age and sex of every driver stopped as well as to cite the reason for particular stops. The collected data will be presented by the Attorney General's Office in a biennial report to the General Assembly. As the chief sponsor of the bill, Senator Balance argued that "there should not be a crime called 'driving while black.'"

Mr. Speaker, SB 76 can serve as a viable model for other states experiencing similar concerns about equal enforcement of traffic laws as well as for our nation. To provide you with more detailed information regarding this important legislation, I am submitting the text of SB 76 along with an article from the Raleigh News & Observer. I encourage my colleagues to read this article and consider SB 76's applicability for your states and on the federal level.

ELECTRONIC DISCLOSURES DELIVERY ACT OF 1999

HON. RICK LAZIO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 1999

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, Today, I join Congresswoman ROUKEMA and Congressman INSLEE in introducing, The Electronic Disclosures Delivery Act of 1999. The legislation addresses the rapidly increasing role of computers and telecommunications technology in the delivery of financial products and services of all kinds. Providing financial services such as mortgages, insurance and securities over the Internet is redefining the banking and investment industries and promises to be an area of explosive growth over the next five years.

The legislation only addresses electronic delivery of information to and from consumers and financial services providers. It does not affect the rights and responsibilities of any party or the content of any disclosure, including both the timing and format of disclosures and the information to be provided. The bill makes it possible for these disclosures to be given to the consumer efficiently and in a more user friendly format than is currently the practice. Over the Internet, consumers will be able to conduct transactions virtually anywhere and at any time, 7-days-a-week, 24-hours-a-day. Internet commerce will increase consumer convenience, through reduced costs and more "one-stop shopping."

Many of the federal laws that regulate mortgage transactions, including the Real Estate

Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA), mandate the delivery of disclosures to consumers. However, in most cases, these laws were adopted to apply to face-to-face or paper transactions, and do not easily accommodate on-line transactions. RESPA is a statute that has not been free from controversy—many would argue that substantive provisions of that law are in need of clarification. However, the legislation that we are introducing today focuses only on the electronic delivery of disclosures. I believe that the on-line delivery of disclosures deserves review apart from the overall RESPA reform.

Let me give you a sense of the impact of the Internet on the financial services industry:

International Data Corporation forecasts that total worldwide commerce on the Internet will grow from an estimated \$32.4 billion in 1997 to an estimated \$425.7 billion in 2002.

According to Jupiter Communications, the number of on-line banking households in the United States is projected to grow from an estimated 4.5 million in 1997 to an estimated 17.1 million in 2002. Jupiter Communications further indicates that the percentage of these on-line banking households utilizing Internet banking is projected to rise from an estimated 8 percent in 1996 to an estimated 80 percent in 2000.

A recent Forrester Research, Inc. report indicates that by the year 2003, nearly \$100 billion or 10 percent of the mortgage market will be generated online, while other reports project the market share for Internet originations to be as high as 30 percent by the year 2005.

The Forrester study also indicated that in the view of the financial services industry one of the principal impediments to progress in the offering of mortgages over the Internet is outdated laws and regulations.

The Congress and the regulators must play a leadership role in updating many of the consumer protection laws to reflect new technologies and establish a coherent legislative framework to deliver financial services and products through electronic commerce. As chairman of the Housing Subcommittee I look forward to working with Congresswoman ROUKEMA and Congressman INSLEE to promote these legislative changes that will enhance consumer access to financial products while maintaining appropriate consumer protections.

THE NAVY AND VIEQUES

HON. TONY P. HALL

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 1999

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, in April, U.S. F-18 fighter jets accidentally dropped two 500-pound bombs on an observation post nearly a mile from their target on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, killing a civilian and wounding four others. Although Vieques has housed a naval live-fire training facility for over 50 years, there are 9,300 civilians who live on the island.

• 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.

The following research memorandum was authored by Rebecca Brezenoff, a Research Fellow with the Washington-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA). This timely and pertinent article investigates the issues and delves into the history of naval operations on the island of Vieques:

Washington now finds itself embroiled in a sticky problem on the little-known Puerto Rican Island of Vieques, the site of one of its more perplexing public relations nightmares. Recent tragic events resulting from the military's continuing use of most of the heavily inhabited but relatively small island as a live-weapons storage and training facility present the Clinton Administration with a growing need to reevaluate its policies there. The increasingly militant demonstrations now being staged in Puerto Rico against the Vieques facility and the unity of the Puerto Rican population on the issue suggest that the problem will not go away, but requires some hard decisions now.

The island-municipality, located just off Puerto Rico's southeastern coast, once again emerged into the national news following its latest fatal accident in April, when two Marine fighter jets on a night training run over Vieques missed their mark by a mile and dropped bombs near an observation post, killing a civilian security guard and injuring four other people. Certainly not the first serious incident to have afflicted the training facility, it is one that is likely to remain in the headlines as it prompts heated debate among citizen groups and government leaders, both here and in Puerto Rico. For decades, civilians on the island have suffered the effects of friendly fire. This time, a propitious moment may be at hand for the Pentagon to review its options and have the wisdom to dismantle the base.

The Navy's primary argument in favor of Vieques' continued use has been the unparalleled importance of the live-ammunition training grounds for military readiness. The facility has been used by U.S. military personnel since 1941, when the Navy expropriated more than two-thirds of the 51-square-mile island for weapons storage and for ordnance training, involving bombings, shellings, and mock invasions.

Vieques' usefulness is indisputable. But the Navy is not the island's only tenant; a permanent community of 9,300 inhabitants occupies one-third of it. It would be disingenuous to argue that the naval presence is not detrimental to the lives and livelihoods of the local population. Far from it. This week, the Navy admitted, after years of denials, to dropping 24 napalm bombs on Vieques in 1993. In February of this year, depleted uranium (believed to be linked to Gulf War Syndrome) was illegally discharged by Marine jets during a training exercise. On an island plagued by a cancer rate significantly higher than that of Puerto Rico, the firing of radioactive shells—only a fifth of which were actually recovered during "cleanup"—has not inspired confidence in the Navy's pledge of enhanced attention to safety. Nor is the local populace reassured by current plans to install a powerful anti-drug trafficking radar system, whose electromagnetic waves would be capable of reaching the mainland of South America.

Faced with encroaching environmental damage, stunted economic development due to declines in the fishing and tourism industries, crushing unemployment, the constant pounding of heavy artillery and the drone of low-flying aircraft, damage to building caused by vibrations from war games, and the ongoing danger of bombing accidents from ships and planes, Viequesians have been both figuratively and literally raked by all

branches of the military. And not just the U.S. military. The participation of foreign armed forces as well as commercial entities has been solicited—even via advertisements on the Navy's website—for a price. The fees collected in 1998 alone amounted to \$80 million, but the increased bombing volume further strained the island's economy and worsened living conditions.

For all the Navy's purported efforts to be a good neighbor to the Viequesians, it words and deeds are today viewed with mistrust. Assurances that the accidentally discharged depleted uranium and the electromagnetic frequencies of the powerful anti-drug trafficking radar pose no threat to human health are dismissed as inaccurate, if not deliberately misleading. Shortly after the mid-May announcement that the Navy would be returning a portion of its land on Vieques to civilian jurisdiction, a fisherman found a 12-foot torpedo near the island's main town. Even the U.S. panel recently established to conduct a thorough study of the Navy's presence on Vieques is seen by skeptics as weighted toward the armed forces—only one of its four members comes from a civilian background. The unfortunate combination of military mistakes and miscalculations, together with questionable judgments and belated admissions, has created for the U.S. authorities a situation as ominous as the unexploded bombs and missiles that often appear on the beaches of Vieques. With the integrity of the inquiry already called into question, Washington will face the difficult task of defending any decision that falls short of completely phasing out the facility.

Short of the forced relocation of over 9,000 people, no modification to the current program can adequately safeguard the residents of Vieques, whereas locating a viable substitute—an unoccupied island—and installing a new training facility, while difficult and costly, remains feasible. The Pentagon has had to reject plans for bases in other locations for such reasons as proximity to population centers and the periodic presence of federally protected migratory birds. Regardless of the recommendations due in August from the commission examine future military use of the island, the White House cannot allow itself to give any less consideration to Vieques' population. Continued live-ordnance target practice on a heavily inhabited island is indefensible, and it is time for the 60-year practice to end.

HAPPY RETIREMENT TO PATRICK KEOHANE

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 1999

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to note the passing of an era in the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Mr. Patrick Keohane will retire August 31 as warden of the Federal Medical Center in Springfield, Missouri. That will mark the end of a period of over 30 years in which Warden Keohane or one of his two brothers has been a warden somewhere at a federal prison in the United States. It is reportedly the longest period of similar service of any family in federal prison history.

The Keohane family association with the federal prison system goes back even further to Patrick's father Tom who retired as a senior lieutenant after 31 years of service with the Bureau of Prisons. Tom and his wife Nora raised ten children—six boys and four girls—

in Springfield, Missouri. Pat and four of his five brothers served in the military.

It is only fitting that Pat is retiring while warden of the Federal Medical Center in Springfield, because it was in Springfield that he began his civilian career in criminal justice as a member of the Springfield Police Department in 1964. It was only 2 years after beginning work for the Federal Prison System in 1967 as a correctional officer that he was transferred to the Springfield facility in 1969. While there, he completed his degree in law enforcement and corrections in 1974 at Drury College.

Pat Keohane has served with distinction in federal prison facilities in Indiana, Wisconsin, Florida, Pennsylvania, New York, Kansas, and Illinois. He was promoted to warden in 1985 and since then has led facilities in Pennsylvania, Indiana, and California, returning to Springfield, Missouri in 1996.

As I mentioned earlier, service for the Keohanes in the Federal Prison System is a family thing. Two of his older brothers each retired with 27 years of service. In fact, they are the only family in the Nation in which three brothers served as wardens in the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and the only one where two brothers, both served as wardens of the same Federal institution at different times—and they accomplished that on two separate occasions.

Besides his family distinctions, Pat Keohane, has received numerous honors and recognitions, including the 1994 Warden of the Year award from the North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents and the U.S. Attorney General's Award for Distinguished Service from Attorney General Janet Reno.

He is being honored later this week at dinner in his hometown in the Seventh District of Missouri. I know that my colleagues in the House join with me in expressing their appreciation for a lifetime of outstanding service to the citizens of these great United States and best wishes for a very happy future to Warden Patrick W. Keohane of Springfield, Missouri.

NATO'S OBLIGATION TO THE SERBS

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 1999

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, in the Boston Globe for today, Tuesday, July 27, there is an excellent editorial occasioned by the terrible murder of 14 Serb farmers in Kosovo. As the editorial notes, NATO—with the United States as a lead member—has an absolute obligation to do everything humanly possible to apprehend the murderers of these men, and of course an even greater obligation to do everything humanly possible to prevent any recurrence of this sort of outrage.

I believe that the military action in which America took the lead against Serbia was morally justified by the need to prevent the continued systematic oppression of the Albania population of Kosovo. But exactly the same moral considerations demand that we do a better job than we have of protecting the Serbian people left in Kosovo.

The Boston Globe editorial is a forceful, lucid and morally compelling statement and I ask that it be printed here.