

My legislation requires states to conform their EBT standards to a national, uniform operating system that the states themselves choose. The clear choice, the Quest operating system, has already been adopted by 33 states.

Pilot studies have been conducted to determine cost and other efficiencies that might be realized by EBT interoperability. The pilot program determined my bill would only cost the Food Stamp Program \$500,000. That's not a lot of money for an \$18 billion program. Also, the State of Missouri found around \$32 million in abuse of the program that they never would have found if their EBT system couldn't talk with neighboring state systems.

Mr. Speaker, the bill I introduce today is simple. It returns the national redemption convenience to the beneficiaries of the program, gives the states the guidance they are looking for, and provides another tool in the fight against fraud, waste and abuse in the Food Stamp Program. Thank you for this time and I urge support from the membership for the Electronic Benefit Transfer Interoperability and Portability Act of 1999.

AMERICAN INVENTORS PROTECTION ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 3, 1999

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to a bill that jeopardizes America's future prosperity by endangering the protection of our nation's independent inventors. HR 2654 seeks to extensively reform the patent process, which should only occur after deliberative discussion and with the opportunity for amendment. This bill will pass this body without even the courtesy of open debate. Such an important matter demands a thorough dialogue.

Small inventors, like the industrious citizens of Eastern Long Island, provided sparks of inspiration that helped build this nation. The Constitution ensures that inventors have the exclusive right to the product of their efforts. The bill upon which HR 2654 is based would severely erode that protection. Without considered debate and extensive review of HR 2654, we have no idea whether it would be similarly harmful.

Technology has driven America's latest economic boom. It is the foundation of the new economy as we move into the 21st Century. Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, and Raymond Damadian, the inventor of the MRI, were once independent inventors whose ideas have changed the face of society and how we view ourselves. Their creations were protected and have contributed to the prosperity America now enjoys. Tomorrow's inventors deserve the same treatment.

Mr. Damadian, a valued constituent of mine, has written extensively on the issue of patent reform given his unique position as an independent inventor who has seen the impact of his ideas on the lives of his fellow citizens. In correspondence with our colleague, Representative Manzullo, he strenuously objected to passing this bill that could cost independent inventors a right protected by the U.S. Con-

stitution. I would like to place that letter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD at this point.

In more depth, he explored the problems with HR 2654's companion bill, S. 507, in a highly erudite letter to the Senate Majority Leader, TRENT LOTT. In that correspondence, he highlights the U.S. patent as "one of America's great blessings" and clearly outlines the serious problems with that bill from removing the U.S. Patent Office from the purview of Congressional oversight to eroding cherished Constitutional guarantees.

Mr. Speaker, as Mr. Damadian has written, Congress should not hastily pass laws that could have far-reaching impacts without and discussion. It is clear that we do not know what the effects of HR 2654 will be. We owe it to our independent inventors, and to our future, to be sure.

FONAR CORPORATION,
Melville, NY, August 3, 1999.

Hon. DONALD MANZULLO,
House of Representatives,
Cannon HOB, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN MANZULLO: It has come to my attention that an effort is under foot to steal the U.S. Patent System in what I consider an outrageous usurpation of power. The House of Representatives intends to pass a bill, H.R. 2654, that will void the constitutionally granted patent rights of independent inventors everywhere.

Remarkably it is doing so without even a written bill informing the affected parties or even their Representatives what the bill contains. Even more remarkably it is doing it under a suspension of the rules, whose predicate is that there is no opposition to the bill, when independent inventors everywhere are BOILING over the prospect of losing their constitutionally granted rights to a patent.

Please be advised that Roberts Rines speaks only for himself and not for the rest of us great masses of independent inventors, whose rights are being taken away without a hearing, without a vote, without a single sentence of the bill to view and in the darkness of the night, a villainy that will live in infamy!

Sincerely yours,

RAYMOND DAMADIAN,
President and Chairman; Inductee, National
Inventors Hall of Fame.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE B-2 BOMBER

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 4, 1999

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this means to recognize the tenth anniversary of the first flight of the B-2 bomber. The anniversary was recently celebrated at a ceremony at Air Force Plant 42 in Palmdale, CA, on July 17, 1999.

The first public display of the B-2 was in late 1988, at Air Force Plant 42 in Palmdale, CA. This was followed by the first flight of the B-2 on July 17, 1989, at Edwards Air Force Base, CA. Northrop Grumman's Military Aircraft Systems Division unveiled its brand new product—a low-observability, Multi-role bomber that can fly 6,000 nautical miles (9,600 kilometers) without refueling. The plane's revolutionary design, while instantly recognizable to the human eye, makes it all but invisible to radar.

The B-2 is an engineering marvel. The plane's low-observability characteristic derives from a combination of reduced infrared acoustic, electromagnetic, visual, and radar signatures. These facts make it difficult for even the most sophisticated defensive systems to detect and engage the B-2. While most of the technical aspects of the plane remain classified, the B-2 owes some of its stealth capabilities to special coatings, the flying wing design, and the composite materials of which it is made. These innovations are complemented by the highest-precision bombing technology in existence. The B-2 is now outfitted with the Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) guidance kit. This system combines the Global Positioning System and Inertial Navigation System for incredibly accurate bombing.

The B-2 is based at Whiteman Air Force Base, near Knof Noster, MO. The first B-2, the Spirit of Missouri, was delivered to Whiteman on December 17, 1993. During the recent air war, B-2 made 30-hour round-trip missions from this base to Kosovo, where they dropped eleven percent of the precision ordnance while flying less than one percent of the sorties. As General Leroy Barnidge said at the tenth anniversary ceremony, "The airplane exceeded everybody's expectations. It's got a war-fighting capability that is second to none."

Mr. Speaker, I know that all of our colleagues in the House will join me in celebrating the tenth anniversary of the most revolutionary design in bombing aircraft since World War II.

IT'S TIME TO CONSIDER A PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 5, 1999

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, the people of Kansas' Third District sent me to Washington, D.C., to represent their concerns and do all I can to address major, pending federal issues. For this reason, I was very disappointed when it became apparent in the last few days that the House would not be considering proposals to enact a Patients' Bill of Rights.

One of my first actions as a freshman Member of Congress was to join as an original cosponsor of H.R. 358, the Patients' Bill of Rights. This important legislation will ensure basic rights for patients and give them the protections they deserve. While the majority was unable to reach the consensus necessary within their caucus to bring a proposal in this area before the House for consideration this week, I am pleased that Commerce Committee Ranking Democrat JOHN DINGELL has continued active discussions with three members of the majority who are physicians—Doctors GANSKE, COBURN and NORWOOD—in an attempt to reach a bipartisan consensus on a proposal to provide meaningful protections for managed care patients and physicians.

I also want to bring to the attention of my colleagues a recent newspaper column by Steve Rose, the chairman of Sun Publications, which publishes the Johnson County Sun and several other newspapers that serve my congressional district. I commend to everyone Mr. Rose's commentary regarding the real-world problems that indicate a need for enactment this year of a Patients' Bill of Rights.

DARLA WANTS HER RIGHTS

My good friend Darla is all for the Patients' Bill of Rights. She's had it up to here and won't take it anymore.

Just last week, Darla called her doctor to ask if he thought it might be a good idea for her to try a new medication on the market called Celebrex, for her arthritis. Darla also has a stomach disorder, ulcerative colitis, so she has to be careful of side effects.

Her doctor thought Celebrex was a good medication to try, at first in a small dose. So, he called the pharmacy in Overland Park and ordered a 30-day supply. When Darla arrived at the counter, however, she met tricked-down red tape, straight from the insurance company.

The pharmacist explained that the health insurance provider had denied the prescription until Darla tried a generic brand first.

"What's the difference between the generic drug and Celebrex?" asked Darla. The pharmacist replied, "They're about the same, except the generic drug can be a little harder on your stomach."

"That won't do," replied Darla, "I have ulcerative colitis, and I can't stand any medications that irritate the stomach."

The pharmacist was sympathetic, but there was nothing to be done. Darla was advised to consult her doctor, who could contact the insurance company.

That's exactly what Darla did. She called her doctor and explained what had happened.

Said the doctor, "I'll contact the insurance company, and get this resolved."

A day later, Darla got a call from her doctor.

"I just spent an hour-and-a-half on the phone with the insurance company," said the doctor. "I could not speak with anyone with any medical background. After being put on hold three times, and being switched from one person to another, all I got was a clerk who wouldn't budge. I lost."

Darla is still fuming.

There are millions of Darlas out there. And when the President calls for a Patients' Bill of Rights, he has a lot of folks clapping.

Ironically, the President's proposal would do nothing for Darla. It only addresses mandatory emergency room care, an appeals process when insurance companies deny critical procedures, and the right of patients to sue insurance companies.

Nonetheless, Darla figures, probably correctly, that if this first Bill of Rights can be passed, it undoubtedly will be amended later to deal with some of her issues.

Insurance companies will scream that governments' intervention will only drive up health care costs. And they're probably right.

But if you asked Darla, she would be glad to pay a little more to let the insurance companies know they cannot just roll over her, or her doctor.

The Bill of Rights cure might be worse than the insurance disease, but Darla is so frustrated, she says she's willing to take that risk.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that 6.4 percent of the population, or 17.3 million Americans, report having asthma. This represents a dramatic 75 percent increase in self-reported cases from 1980 to 1994.

Asthma is disproportionately hurting children. Today, it is the most common childhood chronic disease. Five million American children have asthma. And as Surgeon General David Satcher recently concluded, the United States is "moving in the wrong direction, especially among minority children in the urban communities." The most devastating indicator of our Nation's lack of progress is the news that, from 1980 to 1993, the mortality rate for children and teens with asthma rose a staggering 78 percent.

Just a few days ago, Dr. Philip Landrigan reported in the *Journal of Asthma* that higher asthma hospitalization rates are associated with children, communities of color and the poor. The potential causes for the disproportionate impact of asthma are wide ranging, from the lack of preventive care, poor housing conditions and increased exposure to indoor allergens, to sedentary lifestyles and the siting of polluting commercial facilities.

Our country can and must do more to prevent and treat asthma. I am pleased to introduce the Children's Asthma Relief Act of 1999, which was originally introduced by DICK DURBIN and MIKE DEWINE in the Senate. This legislation provides \$50 million for pediatric asthma prevention and treatment programs, allowing states and local communities to target and improve the health of low-income children suffering from asthma. The Act would also increase the enrollment of these children into Medicaid and state Children's Health Insurance Programs (CHIP), such as California's Healthy Families.

I am also pleased that the Act includes mobile "breathmobiles" among the community-based programs eligible for funding. These school-based mobile clinics were developed by the Southern California chapter of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, in conjunction with Los Angeles County, Los Angeles Unified School District and the University of Southern California.

This legislation has the support of leading child health and asthma organizations, including the American Lung Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs, the National Association of Children's Hospitals, the American Academy of Chest Physicians and the Children's Health Fund.

As an honorary co-chair of Asthma Awareness Day, I urge my colleagues to join us in cosponsoring the Children's Asthma Relief Act of 1999.

CHILDREN'S ASTHMA RELIEF ACT
OF 1999

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 5, 1999

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleague, FRED UPTON, in introducing the Children's Asthma Relief Act of 1999.

Asthma is one of the most significant and prevalent chronic diseases in America. The

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO EXPAND
ALASKA NATIVE CONTRACTING OF FEDERAL LAND
MANAGEMENT

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 5, 1999

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce a bill to expand Alaska Native contracting of Federal land manage-

ment functions and activities and, promote hiring of Alaska Natives by the federal government within the State of Alaska.

This bill was developed in response to my request to the Alaska Federal of Natives at their retreat in August of 1998. Pursuant to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, tribes are authorized to enter into contracts with the Department of the Interior to directly administer programs previously administered by that agency. Congress strongly advocated this change to allow tribes to provide direct and improved services to their members.

The bill entitled "Alaska Federal Lands Management Demonstration Project" would direct the Secretary of the Interior to enter into a demonstration project in fiscal years 2000 and 2001 with no less than six eligible Alaska Native tribes or tribal organizations to manage a conservation unit or other public land unit within the closest proximity of that tribal organization.

The bill further directs the Secretary to fully fund these demonstration projects in the same manner he would have funded the programs if they were still being managed by the Department of the Interior.

It has always been my strong belief that Alaska Natives can manage conservation units or national park systems units as well or even better than the federal government. Alaska Natives have demonstrated their reliance of the land, the conservation of its bounty and great respect for the cautious management of its resources to preserve for future generations. I believe that Alaska Natives should be given the opportunity to manage federal conservation units that are in close proximity to their own lands.

The Alaska regional non-profits worked long and hard to carefully draft a bill which would have the support of the Alaska Federation of Natives and all of the Alaska regional non-profits. I believe it is time that we authorize Alaska Native entities to manage federal conservation units in the manner consistent with lands that they have carefully preserved and utilized for thousands of years. This bill does exactly that.

BROOKFIELD ZOO'S SALT CREEK
WILDERNESS EXHIBIT

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 5, 1999

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that on August 14th Brookfield Zoo will celebrate the grand opening of its newest attraction, the Salt Creek Wilderness exhibit.

Representing a northeastern Illinois wetland, Salt Creek Wilderness includes the existing Indian Lake, the Ellen Thorne Smith nature trail, and a new demonstration wetland exhibit called Dragonfly Marsh. Guests will be able to hike along a wood-chipped trail that circles the 4-acre lake to see trumpeter swans and several other waterfowl species. At the north end of the lake, the trail is paved and leads onto a wheelchair-accessible boardwalk that overlooks Dragonfly Marsh.

Support for the Salt Creek Wilderness project comes from the Chicago Zoological Society, Forest Preserve District of Cook