

and Rick Smith and their seven grandchildren, Lloyd IV and Ryan Bentsen; Skyler, Kendall and Kate Bentsen; and Lori and Richard Smith.

Mr. Speaker, Lloyd Bentsen is a committed public servant with a remarkable record of achievement as Treasury Secretary, Senator, Representative, businessman and decorated veteran. He is also a devoted husband and a caring father, grandfather, and uncle. He has dedicated his life to public service and his family. He is an example and an inspiration to Texans and Americans, of all that is good in public service. He is truly deserving of the Medal of Freedom, which is awarded by the President and recognizes individuals who have made significant meritorious contributions to the security or national interests of the United States; world peace; cultural or other significant public or private endeavors. Without doubt, Lloyd Bentsen meets this criteria and I salute him for his achievements and receipt of this award.

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
PEPSI SOUTHERN 500

HON. JOHN M. SPRATT, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 5, 1999

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, on September 5th of this year, the Darlington Raceway will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Southern 500 stock car race, now known as the Pepsi Southern 500.

The Darlington Raceway, I'm proud to say, is located in my district. It was built in 1949, and unlike most stock car tracks of its day, it was paved with asphalt, giving the track its name, "The Lady in Black."

Harold Brasington, a native of Darlington, attended the Indianapolis 500 in 1933, and brought home with him a dream, a vision of some day having a race track in his home town, Darlington, South Carolina. Harold Brasington's dream had to wait out the Depression and World War II, but he nurtured it and in 1949 he made it come true.

The first Southern 500 was held on September 1, 1950, and sanctioned by "Big Bill" France and NASCAR, the National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing. STROM THURMOND was the Governor of South Carolina at the time, and he and his lovely wife, Jean, cut the ribbon and christened the race the "Southern 500," to the delight of 25,000 fans, an unexpected overflow crowd.

The Southern 500 was an instant success. It soon grew into the largest sporting event in South Carolina. This Labor Day Weekend, over 100,000 people are expected for the 50th anniversary. Millions more will enjoy the race by television or radio.

The great success of the Darlington Raceway started with the vision and skills of two great entrepreneurs, Harold Brasington and "Big Bill" France, both now gone. But their leadership has been carried forward by Jim Hunter, who has made Darlington Raceway bigger and better than ever, and who has won recognition as South Carolina's "Economic Ambassador." Because of his skills as a manager and sports promoter, the Pepsi Southern 500 and the TranSouth 400 now generate over \$50 million, making the Darlington Race-

way a top source of tourism income for South Carolina.

Other race tracks have been built since 1949, some larger, some more glamorous than Darlington. But the Darlington Raceway remains world famous, and an attraction fans everywhere, because it remains the genuine article.

The Darlington Raceway has never forgotten its roots and the people who helped make it what it is. Every year, the Darlington Raceway makes a substantial contribution to Darlington's schools. It recognizes a Darlington County Teacher of the Year, and awards a scholarship to a Darlington County high school senior; and every year, it cosponsors a gala honoring 1500 county educators.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent the Darlington Raceway. As we approach the 50th Anniversary of the Southern 500, I think commendations are in order for Jim Hunter, President of the Darlington Raceway; for Bill France, Jr., CEO of International Speedway Corporation and President of NASCAR; and for everyone involved in bringing us 50 years of the finest, most exciting stock car racing in the world.

SILK ROAD STRATEGY ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, August 2, 1999

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1152, the Silk Road Strategy Act. I commend my colleague, Mr. BEREUTER, for championing this important legislation that will greatly benefit countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

The Silk Road Strategy Act is a proactive policy of engagement, which authorizes U.S. assistance to support the economic and political independence of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, after decades of Communist rule, these countries have faced a tough road toward economic development and prosperity, and the cultivation of a democratic society.

With this in mind, the U.S. must actively engage this region to ensure a peaceful post-Soviet era, and to protect our national security. Since being elected to Congress in 1996, I have worked hard to build bridges between the U.S. and Central Asia and the Caucasus. Through regular meetings with Ambassadors from this region and travel to Central Asia, I am keenly aware of the necessity of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, the Great Silk Road, which in ancient times joined the East with the West, by means of trade, cultural-humanitarian, political and economic ties, has a history stretching back several thousand years. The Great Silk Road played the role of a connecting bridge between countries and civilizations. It served as a channel for trade, which became the catalyst for the development of crafts and the active exchange of philosophies and cultures. The spirit of the Great Silk Road is what this bill before us today is about—a new Silk Road—connecting Central Asia and the Caucasus with the United States, in an effort to encourage economic, cultural, and political exchange between our countries.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of this bill and look forward to continuing working with Central Asia and Caucasus states to build prosperous market-oriented economies in the former Soviet Union. Again, I thank my colleague, Mr. BEREUTER, for sponsoring this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support the Silk Road Strategy Act.

HOMES OVER TAX CUTS

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 5, 1999

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I am protesting this rule because it's the first step in ripping off the roof over people's heads.

That's what we are doing when we cut the HUD budget. Some people will argue that cutting the budget is good government. They will argue that we are reducing wasteful government spending. But this isn't just some government program. It's a roof over people's heads. When we cut this program, we are taking away some senior's rent money. We are throwing families out of their homes. We are denying people on fixed and low incomes the safety and security of an affordable home.

One of those government programs is the Section 8 program. HUD has contracted with private landlords to provide affordable apartments to people on fixed and low incomes. Over 500,000 of those apartments will come up for renewal in the next five years. If we don't renew those contracts, landlords will leave the program, raise their rents and evict hundreds of thousands of people on fixed and low incomes.

This is a terrible thing and we know it. Last March, we cut \$350 million from the Section 8 program to pay for non-emergency spending in Kosovo. But both the Chairman of the Appropriations Committee and the Chairman of the VA-HUD Appropriations subcommittee promised to put it back if they could because they know that it is money well spent. If we have the money, we ought to use it to give people a safe home so they can go to work and their children can go to school and they all can be productive citizens.

Well, we can put the \$350 million back if we don't give \$800 billion to wealthy special interest in the form of an irresponsible tax cut. And we should put in an extra \$1 billion that the President has requested because 500,000 households are depending on us.

This money is well spent. It's money for local governments to attract jobs. It's money for services for seniors and persons with disabilities so that they can live their lives with some comfort. It's money for secure families. People deserve this from us and we ought to give it to them. Oppose this rule, because it's the first step in ripping off the roof over people's heads.

FULLY FUND HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

NATIONAL LOW INCOME

HOUSING COALITION,

Washington, DC, August 3, 1999.

Hon. JANICE SCHAKOWSKY,
House of Representatives,

Cannon Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SCHAKOWSKY: This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Housing Act of 1949, in which Congress declared

the national goal of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family. We believe, as do most Americans, that this nation is capable of achieving this worthy goal.

However, we have a long way to go. Even while most Americans are thriving in our remarkably healthy economy, many families still struggle with excessive housing costs and insufficient income to meet basic needs. Over 9,000,000 very low income households pay more than half of their income for housing. The 1999 report by the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard, *The State of the Nation's Housing*, clearly documents the paradox of record accomplishments in housing production and home ownership while rents are increasing faster than wages. Nowhere in the country can a household with one full time minimum wage earner afford basic housing costs. Families who apply for housing assistance wait longer than they ever have before, and in many communities, waiting lists are closed indefinitely.

We believe that a time when we are celebrating bountiful budget surpluses is also the time to address our severe national shortage of affordable housing. This can best be done by strengthening the proven federal housing and community development programs that lift up low-income Americans. There is ample evidence that housing assistance helps low income families gain the housing stability that is necessary for family members to succeed at work and in school.

Unfortunately, the action of the House Appropriations Committee last week weakens our housing and community development programs. Rather than building on the success of our economy by extending its rewards to more and more people, the Committee moved us backwards by failing to fully fund the President's FY2000 HUD budget request. The bill cuts CDBG, HOME, HOPWA, Public Housing Operating Fund, and Homeless Assistance, among others, and does not fund a single new housing voucher.

We find it inconceivable that in this period of extraordinary economic prosperity that Congress continues to purport that we are unable to fund modest expansions of programs that improve the housing and economic opportunities of low wage earners and people on fixed incomes. The substantial tax cuts that are under consideration in the House will not improve the housing circumstances of low income people, but more housing assistance will.

We urge you to vote against the HUD-VA-IA Appropriations bill when it comes to the full House. We are capable of doing much better.

Sincerely,

ACORN, AFSCME, AIDS Policy Center for Children, Youth and Families, Alliance for Children and Families, Campaign for America's Future, Center for Community Change, Child Welfare League of America, Children's Defense Fund, Children's Foundation, Coalition on Human Needs, Development Training Institute, Employment Support Center, Feminist Majority, Friends Committee on National Legislation (Quaker), International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Jesuit Conference, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, Lutheran Services in America, McAuley Institute, Mennonite Central Committee U.S., Washington Office, NAACP, National Alliance to End Homelessness.

National Association of Child Advocates, National Association of Housing Cooperatives, National Association of School Psychologists, National Center on Poverty Law Inc., National Coalit-

tion for the Homeless, National Council of Churches, National Council of Jewish Women, National Council of Senior Citizens, National Housing Law Project, National Housing Trust, National League of Cities, National Low Income Housing Coalition, National Ministries, American Baptist Churches, USA, National Neighborhood Coalition, National Network for Youth, National Puerto Rican Coalition, National Rural Housing Coalition, National Urban League, Neighbor to Neighbor, Network, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, Preamble Center, Public Housing Authorities Directors Association, Surface Transportation Policy Project, Unitarian Universalist Affordable Housing Corporation, United Church of Christ, Office of Church in Society, U.S. Conference of Mayors, Volunteers of America.

GAMBLING ATM, AND CREDIT/DEBIT CARD REFORM ACT

HON. JOHN J. LAFALCE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 5, 1999

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I am today introducing legislation to implement one of the more important recommendations of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission to help lessen the potential financial losses of compulsive gambling for individuals and families. My legislation, the "Gambling ATM and Credit/Debit Card Reform Act", amends federal law to reduce the ready availability of cash and credit for gambling by removing automated transfer machines (ATMs), credit card terminals, debit card point-of-sale machines and other electronic cash dispensing devices from the immediate area of gambling activities.

The National Gambling Impact Study Commission recently completed the nation's first comprehensive analysis of legalized gambling in more than twenty years. The Commission took on one of the most difficult and divisive issues in America today and produced an extremely thoughtful report with more than 70 recommendations for changes in gambling policy. The thoroughness of the Commission's effort, despite significant divisions and difficulties, is commendable and clearly justifies the efforts of those of us who sponsored legislation to create the Commission three years ago.

A major finding of the Commission is that America has been transformed during the past 20 years from a nation in which legalized gambling was localized and limited to one in which it is almost omnipresent and a major economic and entertainment activity. Some form of legalized gambling is now permitted in 47 states and the District of Columbia. Thirty-seven states officially sponsor gambling through state lotteries. Americans now spend an estimated \$650 billion a year on legalized gambling—more than they spend on movies, records, theme parks, professional sports and all other forms of entertainment combined.

The Commission also found that while legalized gambling can produce positive economic benefits for the communities in which it is introduced, it also produces significant negative consequences for millions of individuals and

families—consequences such as bankruptcy, crime, divorce, abuse and even suicide. A specific concern of the Commission has been the dramatic increase in problem and pathological gambling. Studies suggest that more than 5 million Americans are pathological or problem gamblers, and that another 15 million have been identified as "at-risk" or compulsive gamblers. Growth in problem and compulsive gambling has been particularly noticeable among women and includes growing numbers of teenagers.

The Commission identified the ready availability of cash and credit in and around gambling establishments as a major factor contributing to irresponsible gambling and to problem and pathological gambling behavior. Between forty and sixty percent of all money wagered by individuals in casinos, for example, is not physically brought onto the premises but is obtained by gamblers after their arrival. Much of this money derives from credit markers extended by casinos, but a growing portion involves cash derived from ATMs and debit cards and cash advances on credit cards.

Credit cards, debit cards and ATMs have long been used within gambling resort hotels and near other gambling facilities. But their availability and use on gambling floors for purposes of making bets or purchasing playing chips was generally prohibited. This changed in 1996 when the New Jersey Casino Control Commission approved the use of credit card point-of-sale machines at gambling tables for direct purchases of playing chips and slot tokens. The action was immediately recognized by gambling experts as one of the "most potentially dramatic changes" in gambling in decades that would result in more impulse gambling by consumers and higher revenues for casinos. Since then, ATM machines have been moved from outside casinos and other gambling establishments to locations near gambling floors and debit card machines have also been installed directly at gaming tables.

Allowing gamblers to use ATMs, credit and debit cards directly for gambling removes one of the last remaining checks on compulsive or problem gambling—the need to walk away to find more cash to gamble. This separation helps break the excitement of the moment and permits many gamblers to walk away. Providing electronic transfers of additional cash not only feeds compulsive behavior, but makes it easier for problem gamblers to bet all their available cash, draw down their bank accounts, and then tap into the available credit lines of their credit cards as well. Financial institutions become unwitting accomplices in encouraging gamblers to bet more money than they intended and more than most can afford.

My legislation addresses this problem in a number of ways. First, it amends the Truth in Lending Act (TILA) to prohibit gambling establishments from placing credit card terminals, or accepting credit cards for payment or cash advances, in the immediate area where any form of gambling is conducted. It also amends the Electronic Funds Transfer Act (EFTA) to impose a similar prohibition on the placing of any automated teller machine, point-of-sale terminal or other electronic cash dispensing device in the immediate area where gambling occurs. The bill directs the Federal Reserve Board to publish and enforcement rules for assuring that all electronic transfers of cash and credit are physically segregated to the extent possible from all gambling areas. And it provides for comparable civil liability as provided