

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### INTRODUCING THE MEDICARE VISION REHABILITATION COVERAGE ACT OF 1999

**HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 17, 1999*

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, September 15, 1999, I filed the Medicare Vision Rehabilitation Coverage Act of 1999 which would reimburse, under Medicare Part B, vision rehabilitation professionals for services provided. September 15 is also National Vision Rehabilitation Day, established to raise awareness of the services available to those suffering from visual impairment. Currently 6.6 million Americans over the age of 65 report some level of vision impairment.

My own mother, who suffers from vision impairment, benefited tremendously from the rehabilitation services provided by the Greater Boston Aid to the Blind. The training and therapy she received helped her to avoid the injuries and loss of independence that often accompany vision impairment. Unfortunately, Medicare does not currently cover programs like this and not all seniors can afford the services on their own. This legislation is designed to ensure that this situation is not repeated.

Statistics provided by the American Council of the Blind project that by 2005, 1 out of every 6 Massachusetts residents over the age of 60 will either suffer from blindness or from partial impairment. Vision rehabilitation services teach seniors who suffer from permanent vision impairment how to continue living independently with this loss. Examples of services covered include independent living skills and training in safe methods of travel.

Medicare beneficiaries who are blind or whose vision difficulties cannot be addressed by surgery, medication or corrective lenses could be eligible for services provided by certified vision rehabilitation professionals under the legislation.

According to the National Vision Rehabilitation Cooperative, age-related visual impairment is second only to arthritis/rheumatism as a cause of disability. However, due to a lack of awareness about the services available as well as a lack of funding, only 2% of the visually impaired have benefited from vision rehabilitation services.

Visual impairment is one of four major conditions contributing to a senior's loss of independence. The nonprofit Alliance for Aging Research has determined based on data from the Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey that a loss of independence by older adults costs the United States an additional \$26 billion a year.

The type of vision rehabilitation covered under this legislation could save the Medicare program millions of dollars in costs associated with injuries such as broken bones which are often caused by vision impairment. A person suffering from an injury such as a hip fracture

is eligible for reimbursable therapeutic services. Why shouldn't a person who suffers from irreversible vision loss be afforded the same type of therapeutic services under Medicare?

Loss of vision can be a devastating disability for seniors, who value independence foremost. Wonderful new therapies like vision rehabilitation not only save money, but more importantly give people back their quality of life.

### TRIBUTE TO HARVEY CURLEY

**HON. SANDER M. LEVIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 17, 1999*

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mayor Harvey Curley of the City of Eastpointe, Michigan, who will retire in November 1999 after a distinguished career serving his community over the last twenty-five years.

Beginning in 1975, Harvey Curley was elected to the East Detroit Board of Education, serving as its President from 1978–1983. He also served two years on the Zoning Board of Appeals and as Councilman from 1985 to 1987. He has stood at the helm of elected city government since 1987 when he began his three terms as Mayor.

During Harvey Curley's tenure as Mayor, he was responsible for the re-development of the southwest corner of Gratiot and Nine Mile, transforming that area into a thriving commercial strip. In addition, many Municipal Facility Construction Projects were developed under his leadership: the New Parks Garage at Public Works Complex, the New Municipal Court Building, and the New Community Center.

Harvey Curly approached his public service with pride in his community, devotion to its continued improvement, enthusiasm, patience and a tireless commitment to projects small or large. It was always a pleasure to work alongside him on issues important to Eastpointe and the State of Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Mayor Harvey Curley for all that he has done to make Eastpointe a better place to live and work, and to send him every good wish for good health and happiness in the future.

### MOUNT LEBANON BAPTIST CHURCH CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 17, 1999*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, in November 1899, The Reverend Theodore Williams, a recent graduate of the School of Theology at Howard University was inspired by God to establish a mission which was named High Street Baptist Church. The mission worshiped

in an old jail, a former detention center for runaway slaves, on High Street, now Wisconsin Avenue, NW, in Georgetown. Later, the church held worship services at the Seventh Street Baptist Church—which is now named Jerusalem.

Mr. Speaker, on July 22, 1901, a recognition council was called, and High Street Baptist, which now had thirty-four members, was recognized as a regular Baptist Church. The congregation continued to grow, and in November 1904 purchased and relocated to a new site at 814 25th Street, NW, and was renamed Mount Lebanon Baptist Church. An all-day service was held on Sunday, November 19, 1908, in thanksgiving for the completion of the work of renovating this property. Six years later (1914), the congregation demolished that building and constructed a new building, to the glory of God, on the same site. The mortgage for the new building was burned in 1919. In April 1923, after 24 years of inspired and zealous leadership and service as pastor, Reverend Williams was called to his reward. He was succeeded by the Reverend John Ford, who served as pastor from 1924 until 1932 when he left to accept a new charge.

In November 1932, the Reverend Edgar Newton was installed as pastor. His motto was "Follow me as I follow Christ." Much was accomplished during his leadership of almost thirty-nine years. New clubs (ministries) and a building fund were established, significant growth in membership was accomplished, two properties adjacent to the church were purchased, services to members and the community were expanded, and the site of the present church was purchased. In addition, three mortgages were burned—two at the 25th Street site and one at the present site, 1219 New Jersey Avenue, NW, to which the congregation relocated on January 27, 1963. Reverend Newton retired in June 1971; and on June 18, 1974, he was called from service to reward.

The Reverend Vernon C. Brown, a son of the church, succeeded Reverend Newton to the pastorate on November 12, 1972, and served faithfully until his retirement on December 31, 1991. Under his leadership, programs of services to members and the community were expanded, including services to senior citizens and a "feed the hungry" program providing balanced hot meals at least once per week. His motto was "The family that prays together stays together."

From the time of Reverend Brown's retirement until November 1992, pastoral duties were shared by three sons of the church, the Reverend Norman King, the Reverend Benjamin C. Sands, and the Reverend William O. Wilson.

In November 1992, the Reverend H. Lionel Edmonds became the fifth pastor of the church. Pursuant to his vision of "building the beloved community", great strides have been made including nearly quadrupling the membership and the establishment of new ministries to meet the spiritual, physical, and intellectual needs of members and the community.

• 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.

These include a Cedars Discipleship Institute (Christian education); Sons of Simeon (men's ministry); Daughters of Miriam dance classes; boys' basketball and football teams; classes to develop job skills in computers, lock smithing and electricity; health and beauty workshops; aerobics classes; and a soon-to-be-opened child development center. All services are open to the community as well as to members of the church.

Mount Lebanon's community service extends beyond its immediate environs. Through very active involvement in the Washington Interfaith Network (WIN), an interdenominational coalition of churches from all eight of the city's wards, it also participates in other city-wide programs to provide low-cost housing for families and after school care for children, reduce crime, provide education/job skills to citizens, and to assure a living wage for all persons employed in the city.

Mr. Speaker, through worship and community service, Mount Lebanon carries out its slogan, "We serve a great God; we are a great people; and we are about a great work."

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the members of this body join me in congratulating the Mount Lebanon Baptist Church, and celebrating the spiritual understanding that has guided their path for 100 years.

VERY REVEREND NAHAS HONORED

**HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 17, 1999*

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Very Reverend Herbert G. Nahas from Northeastern Pennsylvania. This month, Rev. Nahas will observe the 50th Anniversary of his ordination at a community-wide celebration on September 19. I am pleased to have been asked to participate in this tribute.

Born in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, Rev. Nahas is the son of Rev. George Nahas and Elizabeth Kassab. He graduated from Brown University. Before entering the priesthood, he served his country in Army Intelligence for five years. Because of his fluency in both French and Arabic, young Herbert Nahas accompanied General Martin G. Eddy, of the Ninth Infantry Division in the invasion of North Africa, and was later assigned to the staff of General Eisenhower in Algeria.

Rev. Nahas' interest in theology began at an early age as he served and studied the church under his father. He later studied with Father Wakeem Dalack of St. Nicholas Cathedral in Brooklyn.

Rev. Nahas came to our area in 1951, spending 47 of his 50 years as a priest at St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox Church in Wilkes-Barre. Celebrating its 95th anniversary this year, St. Mary's holds the distinction of being one of the oldest Antiochian Churches in the nation. In 1961, Bishop Anthony made Reverend Nahas an Archpriest with the title of "Exarch." Shortly thereafter, the Reverend began to raise funds for a new church and the new building was completed and dedicated by 1968.

In addition to serving his parishioners, Rev. Nahas has also served the Wyoming Valley community. He has served on numerous local boards, including those of the United Way and

American Heart Association. He organized "Father Nahas' Senior Citizens Organization." After Wilkes-Barre was inundated by tropical Storm Agnes in 1972, Rev. Nahas opened his parish hall for use as a shelter for displaced flood victims. He is a much sought-after speaker, frequently addressing the local Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions clubs.

Mr. Speaker, Rev. Herbert Nahas is an icon in Northeastern Pennsylvania. He and his wife, Alice, raised three children here and now enjoy five grandchildren. His commitment to his parish and the community is legendary. He is loved by all those who have been fortunate enough to have been touched by his spiritual guidance and kindness over the years. I am proud to join with the community in sending my very best wishes to the Very Reverend Herbert G. Nahas on this momentous occasion.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2490,  
TREASURY AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT,  
2000

SPEECH OF

**HON. WILLIAM M. THOMAS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 15, 1999*

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I want, first of all, to complement the distinguished gentleman from Arizona, the Chairman of the Treasury-Postal Appropriations Subcommittee, Mr. KOLBE, for his work on this legislation.

I want to particularly complement the Chairman for the inclusion in this bill of three key and much needed reforms of the Federal Election Commission. They are a requirement that campaign reports be filed electronically, a simplified administrative penalty process for campaign reporting violations, and a change in the campaign reporting period from a calendar year to an election cycle basis.

As Chairman of the Committee on House Administration, I want to say that we have worked closely with the Appropriations Committee on the development of these legislative items. I believe we have taken an important step towards improving our election process.

These reforms may not make headlines, but they are the most significant legislative changes in the operation of the FEC we have seen in 20 years. These reforms were originally recommended in the January 29, 1999 report of the Independent Audit of the FEC. That Audit was authorized by the Committee on Appropriations in consultation with the Committee on House Administration.

The adoption of these reforms has been recommended on a bipartisan basis by the Members of the FEC itself. They were all included in H.R. 2668, the Campaign Reform and Election Integrity Act of 1999, reported favorably to the House floor by the Committee on House Administration on August 2, 1999.

Virtually everyone agrees these reforms would be good for the House and good for the American public.

Electronic filing would substantially speed up the transmission of information from campaigns to the general public, and ensure that information filed with the FEC is legible and more easily subject to analysis once filed. A campaign could not hide or delay the disclo-

sure of its donors. Reports filed electronically with the FEC can be posted on the Internet almost instantly, eliminating processing time that can delay the release of information for short, but critical periods, especially as election day nears.

Allowing the FEC to impose administrative fines for reporting violations without the lengthy procedural steps required in a normal enforcement case will free critical FEC resources for more important disclosure and enforcement efforts. The rights of those under these regulations are protected by preserving the option of appeal to a U.S. District Court, for those who believe the FEC erred.

Saving taxpayer dollars, cutting costs for the regulated community, and ensuring speedier resolution of cases are all a net gain for the voter and our electoral system.

Finally, the seemingly minor, but highly significant change from a calendar year to an election cycle reporting period will make it easier for candidates to avoid inadvertent receipt of contributions in excess of allowable election cycle limits, and provide more information to the public about the level of fundraising and campaign spending at any given point in an election cycle. Reports will show how much money a candidate has raised and spent from the end of the last election to the present, rather than from the end of the last calendar year. This recommendation will save money in enforcement costs and provide more relevant information to the public.

These reforms are the kind of legislation we should see more of from the U.S. House of Representatives. Without impairing the right of free speech, without the expenditure of large amounts of taxpayer funds, we have improved the level of information, and the quality of enforcement in our political process.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK GARRISON

**HON. SANDER M. LEVIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 17, 1999*

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, September 21, 1999, a dinner will be held in honor of Frank Garrison, President of Michigan AFL-CIO.

The dinner will mark the more than four decades of Frank Garrison's public service. The chairs of the dinner will include two former Governors, William Milliken and James Blanchard. The sponsorship of two leaders from different political parties is a reflection of the broad nature of Frank Garrison's activities. During his service as the legislative director for the UAW in the 1970s and early 1980s, he was a key player in a wide variety of efforts, including the lobbyist disclosure law enacted in 1976, the Open Meetings Act, and the Essential Insurance Act and other insurance reforms that protected consumers' access to insurance at fair prices. He also fought for measures to bring health care to more of Michigan's citizens.

An equal, if not greater passion, was that of participation in the political process in general and the Democratic Party in particular. I first came to know Frank well when I was running for Governor in the 1970s. There were many a plant gate that we visited together, often in the dark wee hours of the early morning. We