

her long involvement with our educational system and was elected treasurer of the school's PTA. From 1970 to 1973 she served as Vice President, then President of the PTA at J.H.S. 149; from 1973 to 1979 she was an Educational Assistant at the Development Learning Program at P.S. 5; from 1979 to 1980 she was an Educational Assistant at the Development Learning Program at P.S. 156; from 1980 to 1981 she was an Educational Assistant in Early Childhood at P.S. 30; in 1982 she was an Educational Assistant at P.S. 124; and in 1983 she was named Assistant to the Director at the Milbrook Senior Citizen Center.

Mrs. Fleet has also been very involved with the community. From January 1970 until July 1999 when she retired, she served at Community Board #1 in several capacities: Chair of the Education Committee, Treasurer, Health Committee, and Chair of the Housing Committee. She also served in Upward Bound Program at Fordham University, as Assistant Treasurer of the Mott Haven Center Community Advisory Board, and on the Joint Advisory Board of Eastside Settlement House.

Mrs. Fleet was married to the famous jazz guitar player William A. Fleet, Sr., who passed away in April 1994. She has four children, William, Evelyn, James, and Francis, and four grandchildren, James, Jr., Jawann, Jayanna, and Michelle.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Eula D. Nelson Fleet for her achievements in education and her enduring commitment to the community, and in wishing her a happy retirement.

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO JAKE N. VAN METER, JR., FOR HIS HONORABLE SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 9, 1999

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise to pay special tribute to a true American patriot from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District, Jake H. Van Meter, Jr.

On October 7, 1967, Jake H. Van Meter, Jr. paid the ultimate sacrifice while protecting the values and ideals of democracy. On that fateful day, some thirty-two years ago, Sergeant Jake H. Van Meter, Jr. was serving as squad leader with Company C, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry. His Army unit was sent to the Con Thien area in the Republic of Vietnam to help relieve an outpost of United States Marines. During their mission, his unit came under heavy and intense enemy fire during an attack on the Marine outpost.

During the firefight, Sergeant Van Meter demonstrated extreme bravery as he exposed himself to fierce enemy fire to draw attention away from his troops and enable them to take cover. With several of his men lying wounded, Sergeant Van Meter left his position and began removing them from the field of fire. In his efforts to save the lives of his men, Sergeant Van Meter was wounded, but he continued until they were pulled to safety.

At approximately two o'clock in the afternoon, while laying down a heavy amount of covering fire in the midst of the firefight, Sergeant Jake H. Van Meter, Jr. was killed by

enemy gunfire. He was just twenty-four years old. For his gallantry in action and in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and the United States Army, Sergeant Jake H. Van Meter, Jr. was posthumously awarded the Silver Star on March 15, 1968.

Jake Van Meter was an ordinary young man from LaGrange, Ohio when he entered the United States Army. He lived on Factory Street and worked as a die cast operator for General Motors Corporation. However, when Jake was drafted, he accepted his responsibility, and began his duty in Vietnam on October 22, 1966. Unfortunately, his tour of duty was to have ended just 12 days after his death.

Mr. Speaker, the story of Jake H. Van Meter, Jr. should make our hearts swell with admiration and pride. He courageously placed his life on the line for his men and his country. He fought for America, for democracy, and for freedom, and paid the supreme price for the preservation of those principles.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Veterans Day, let us remember the men and women who have served in our armed forces. It is often said that America prospers due to the unselfish acts of her sons and daughters. Jake Van Meter's brave actions in Vietnam demonstrate that statement very clearly. I would urge my colleagues to stand and join me in paying special tribute to Jake H. Van Meter, Jr.—a faithful husband and father, a loving son, and a true American hero.

THE RETIREMENT OF PATRICIA LAGREGA AS TOWN CLERK OF COLCHESTER, CONNECTICUT

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 9, 1999

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Pat LaGrega for nearly thirty years of service to the community of Colchester, Connecticut. Pat is more than an extraordinary public servant, she is a humanitarian and a personal friend.

On November 15, 1999, Pat LaGrega will officially retire as Town Clerk of Colchester after more than twenty one years in the position. In small towns across America, Town Clerks maintain all of the records so vital to guaranteeing that our system functions efficiently and effectively. In many respects, the Town Clerk is the institutional memory of so many small communities across eastern Connecticut and the nation. Over more than two decades, Pat has worked tirelessly to ensure that the citizens, elected officials and business owners of Colchester receive the best possible service. She has supervised a modernization process which has computerized the Town Clerk's office to ensure that records will be accurate, safe and available to citizens and others in a timely fashion. Even before the widespread use of computers, Pat was well known for meticulous recordkeeping and attention to detail. Thanks to her efforts, the Town Clerk's office is prepared to meet the challenges of a growing community in the 21st Century. Pat's public career in Colchester began several years prior to being elected Town Clerk. She served as Director of Social Services and a Tax Collector. In fact, she served simulta-

neously as Tax Collector and Town Clerk for a short period.

Pat is so much more than the Town's record keeper. She is its "jack-of-all-trades!" She is the person people call when they have any question, any problem. She is the person they contact when they don't know where to turn. And each and every time over the past three decades, Pat has come through for those individuals and the Town as a whole. Whenever she learned about a problem, she took steps to address it. It never mattered how busy she was with her duties or personal life, she always made time to address the needs of every resident. In this respect, she is a model for all of us in public service. Mr. Speaker, Pat LaGrega is a public servant in the very best tradition of our country. She has worked tirelessly on behalf of the citizens of Colchester and provided the highest quality service. She has also brought a sense of compassion to her work. And, on a more personal level, she has been a friend, a mentor and a trusted advisor for more than twenty years.

I am proud to be able to join the residents of Colchester in thanking Pat for her service and commitment to the community. On November 15, she will retire from a public position—not from public service. I know she will continue to play an important role in Colchester in the years ahead.

CONGRATULATING BUSH BOAKE ALLEN INC.

HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 9, 1999

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Bush Boake Allen Inc. of Montvale, New Jersey, on receiving the Voluntary Protection Program Star Award from the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration for its Norwood flavors and fragrances facility. This prestigious award is presented for safety and health training, hazard prevention and control and related programs that help maintain a safe workplace. This award is evidence that BBA values its hard-working employees and goes to extra lengths to protect their health and safety on the job.

BBA is one of only 20 companies in New Jersey honored with the VPP Star Award and the only company in the flavors and fragrance industry to receive the award.

Businesses that receive the VPP Star Award have the best OSHA compliance records in the nation and often exceed OSHA standards. In addition to management agreeing to meet health and safety goals, workers participate and work with management to create a safe and healthy workplace. Admission to the VPP program requires an extensive review and inspection by OSHA to verify that the business meets OSHA standards.

The VPP Star Award is considered such a high standard of OSHA compliance that recipients receive a three-year exemption from routine OSHA inspections. VPP participants typically experience lower workers' compensation costs and 60–80 percent fewer workdays lost to workplace injuries than would expected at an average business location in the same industry.

At BBA, the company set a corporate goal in 1996 that all four of its U.S. facilities would

receive the VPP Star Award, and the Norwood facility is the first to achieve that goal. The company implemented a series of health and safety audits, meetings with both management and workers and training for all employees. Safety standards were set for every individual from the plant manager down to factory workers. Employee groups were formed to address specific health and safety issues, operating procedures were reviewed and protective safety equipment was added to equipment as needed.

As an example of a safety improvement, it was found that production and warehouse workers were suffering repeated injuries during manual handling of 55-pound containers used extensively throughout the building. BBA eliminated the large containers seven years ago and has not had a single material handling injury since.

The improvements have given the 35-employee plant a three-year average injury incidence rate of 1.7, compared with an industry average of 5.4, and seven years without a lost-time injury.

With 250 employees in New Jersey, BBA is a major employer and one of the leading fragrance/food companies in our state. BBA traces its origins to 1870 and three English makers of flavors and fragrances—W.J. Bush Ltd., A Boake Roberts Ltd., and Stafford Allen Ltd. The three companies were eventually combined as Bush Boake Allen by the Albright & Wilson division of Tenneco, and were then acquired by Union Camp Corp. in 1982. BBA operated as a division of Union Camp until it was taken public in 1994, with its own listings on the New York Stock Exchange.

Today, BBA is a major international flavor, fragrance and aroma chemical company as well as a producer of chemicals and chemical intermediaries for industrial and agricultural applications. Headquartered in Montvale, the company conducts business in 60 locations in 38 countries on six continents worldwide. Annual sales total approximately \$500 million.

Flavors produced by BBA are used in beverages, dairy products, baked goods, confectionery items and processed foods. Fragrance compounds are used in perfumes and colognes, soaps, detergents and cleansers, air fresheners, cosmetics and a variety of personal care products. The company's aroma chemicals are used as raw materials for a variety of compounded flavors and fragrances.

I would like to ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating BBA on this award and all that this commitment to health and safety it represents.

PATIENTS' FORMULARY RIGHTS ACT OF 1999

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 9, 1999

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that today I introduced the "Patients' Formulary Rights Act of 1999", legislation aimed at protecting the health of millions of Americans.

This bill, if enacted, would ensure that prescription medications are dispensed for one reason and one reason only: for the sake of maintaining a patient's health—not for the sake of adding to a company's profits.

"The Patients' Formulary Rights Act of 1999" would help ensure that people enrolled in a variety of health insurance plans have access not merely to the drugs that they need, but also to something just as valuable to them and to the medical professionals who serve them: *information*.

The field of medicine has changed dramatically in recent years, as managed care has become the dominant vehicle for the delivery of health care. While these changes have led to some positive developments, it also has led to many alarming problems.

In far too many cases, "managed" care has meant that it is the *information* available to millions of Americans, and to their doctors and pharmacists, that is being "managed."

The practice known as "drug switching" is a dangerous example of patients being kept in the dark about the choices being made by others that will determine their health.

Sadly, when a patient finally becomes aware that the drug originally prescribed by a physician has been changed, it is often only due to the unfortunate consequences stemming from that switch. In far too many cases, the fact that one drug has been replaced by another is only detected after such an incident of "therapeutic substitution" manifests itself in the form of a serious health problem: an unforeseen reaction, a debilitating side-effect or even a life-threatening complication.

In other cases, of course, a change in drugs will result in no change at all in a patient's condition. And that is just as unfortunate, as a patient may grow weaker and sicker after taking a drug that is of no help in combating the illness from which he or she suffers.

To add insult to injury is the fact that such changes are often the result of pressure applied by accountants and CEOs, which too often trump the prescriptions supplied by doctors and the protocols preferred by pharmacists.

I believe that my legislation offers a practical, yet substantive, solution to this growing problem.

My bill would require officials of health plans to take new, yet reasonable, steps if they insist on maintaining a list of formularies.

Most notably, a health plan will be required to notify all participants, beneficiaries, enrollees and health care professionals that such a formulary is used.

A complete list of all prescription drugs included in the formulary will be provided in full.

Such notifications will be required at the time of a patient's enrollment, and a full and accurate notification of any changes in the formulary will also be necessary. Such an alert will be issued at the time that any such changes occur, and will be repeated in an annual update to enrollees.

In addition, health plans will provide enrollees with a reasonable and understandable explanation of the practice known as "drug switching" or "therapeutic substitution."

As a member of Congress, I am accustomed to hearing Pentagon officials invoke the need for secrecy for the sake of protecting national security. From time to time, I can accept that. However, I cannot accept a similar argument from officials of the health care industry. To protect the health of their beneficiaries—that is, to protecting their security—such a veil of secrecy must be lifted.

Finally, my bill would also instruct current enrollees on steps they can take to ensure

that they will continue to have access to the drugs as prescribed by their doctor regardless of changes in their health plan's formulary policies or lists. This would establish the continuity of care and doctors, pharmacists and other health care professionals agree is so crucial to the well-being of their patients and customers.

I am very gratified that this bill has already received the support of Citizens for the Right to Know, one of the nation's largest non-profit organizations representing patients and health care providers and health care trade associations. Their endorsement of and advocacy for this legislation will, I am confident, encourage other members of the House to join in me in fighting for such changes. I greatly appreciate their work on this important issue.

TRIBUTE TO BETHLEHEM A.M.E.
ZION CHURCH

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 9, 1999

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate Bethlehem A.M.E. Zion Church in Gary, IN, as it celebrates its 84th anniversary as a parish. The church will begin its three spirit-filled days of celebration with a banquet on Friday, November 19, 1999, and culminating with a service at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 21, 1999. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Reverend O.C. Comer, minister, on this glorious occasion.

On November 19, Bethlehem A.M.E. Zion Church opens its 84th anniversary celebration with a dinner at 6 p.m. in the Banquet Hall of Unity A.M.E. Zion Church in Merrillville, Indiana. Dr. Sandra Gadson will be the guest speaker at this gala occasion. Dr. Gadson is the second vice president of Woman's Home and Overseas Missionary Society of the A.M.E. Zion Church. On November 20 the celebration continues with the church's second annual "Back to Church Parade." A motorcade will leave the church at 10 a.m. on a "ride to help bring people back to the church." The three-day celebration will conclude on November 21 with two special services of praise and worship. Reverend Comer will deliver the message at the 11 a.m. service followed by the 3:30 p.m. service with special guest and speaker, The Right Reverend Enoch B. Rochester, Presiding Bishop of the Midwest Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Zion Church.

A church of humble beginnings, Bethlehem African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church is the oldest A.M.E. Zion Church in the city of Gary. In November 1915, 15 people assembled in a storefront in the 1600 block of Washington Street in Gary, IN. The parishioners decided that Bethlehem A.M.E. Zion Church needed a permanent home, thus a frame building located on two lots at West 19th Avenue and Jackson Street were purchased. Later the frame structure was moved to the rear of the lots and used as a parsonage. A brick structure was eventually built on the lots at 560 West 19th Avenue, where the current church stands today. The congregation labored and toiled in the basement structure for over 40 years, but in 1962, under the direction of Reverend Arthur W. Murphy and the parishioners at Bethlehem A.M.E. Zion Church, the