

DISASTER MITIGATION AND COST REDUCTION ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 707) to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to authorize a program for predisaster mitigation, to streamline the administration of disaster relief, to control the Federal costs of disaster assistance, and for other purposes:

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Chairman, H.R. 707, "The Disaster Mitigation and Cost Reduction Act of 1999" is a good bill for three reasons. First, this legislation will provide funding to a newly created pre-disaster mitigation program, which is something that has been needed for quite sometime. Second, this legislation will increase the authorization for post-mitigation funding by 33 percent. Third, H.R. 707 places the needs of victims ahead of bureaucratic red tape.

When a disaster occurs, non-profit organizations should be given the ability to move as fast as possible to help restore vital services to those in need. These organizations, what are known as "lifeline facilities," provide critical services such as: communications power, drinking water, water treatment, and emergency medical care to communities in need. In the wake of a disaster, it is imperative that these facilities receive the aid necessary to recover without delay, so they can help others that might be suffering. It does not make sense to impose any additional paperwork burden on these organizations in the hours or days after a disaster has occurred.

I am pleased that the legislation includes an amendment I offered in Committee to allow these critical care facilities to be put back into service as soon as possible in order to prevent additional loss of life or property.

Mr. Chairman, I am a strong supporter of cutting unnecessary federal spending. However, if even one life may be threatened because of delay, it is not worth it.

I commend my colleague and Subcommittee Chairwoman TILLIE FOWLER for her efforts.

H.R. 707 is a good bill and one that I ask every member to support.

CONGRATULATING WTOP RADIO FOR THIRTY YEARS OF NEWS COVERAGE

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in order to recognize and celebrate a Washington establishment. Today marks the thirtieth anniversary of WTOP radio's commitment to an all-news format here in the nation's capital. Since 1969, WTOP has been Washington's only all-news radio station, and a primary source of information on major news events.

For thirty years, WTOP has been a leader in the reporting of international, national, and

local news. WTOP has consistently provided comprehensive, up-to-the-minute news coverage. The frequent weather and traffic reports have kept Washington informed and on time. In addition to reporting the news, I am proud that WTOP has shown a true community commitment. The station dependably reports and produces public service announcements and school closings. In addition, WTOP has consistently helped to raise funds with various charity organizations.

Several national broadcasting figures started their careers at WTOP, including Connie Chung, Warner Wolf, Roger Mudd, and Sam Donaldson. During my service in Congress, I have had the pleasure to work with another Washington institution, WTOP's long-term Capitol Hill Correspondent Dave McConnell.

WTOP continues to serve more than just Washington. I am pleased that WTOP has provided my district in Montgomery County, Maryland with around-the-clock news coverage for these thirty years. WTOP's current AM and FM broadcast signals reach listeners from Baltimore to Richmond, and from the Chesapeake Bay to the Shenandoah Valley.

I extend my warmest congratulations to WTOP radio on this special anniversary.

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD PATZ

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to pay tribute to an outstanding citizen of Indiana's First Congressional District, Mr. Edward Patz. On March 27, 1999, Mr. Patz, along with his friends and family, will celebrate his retirement from the Pipefitter's Local Union 597. This reception will take place at the Villa Cesare in Schererville on March 27, 1999.

Ed Patz has dedicated a substantial portion of his life to the betterment of union members and the community of Northwest Indiana, as well as the entire state.

Mr. Patz's distinguished career in the labor movement has made his community and nation a better place in which to work and live. For more than forty years, Mr. Patz has served as an important figure in Local #597. He has held several positions throughout his tenure, but none as important as Business Agent, a position from which he retired on January 1, 1999.

Mr. Patz began his involvement with Local Union 597 in 1956, through his Pipefitter Apprenticeship with the Robert Gordon Corporation. Ed Patz was the top apprentice in the state of Indiana and won the state apprenticeship contest on November 23, 1960. In the same year, Mr. Patz graduated from the apprenticeship program and attained the rank of a journeyman. In 1983, Mr. Patz was elected to the Pipefitter's Local Union 597 executive board, where he served a three-year term. Mr. Patz was elected to the position of Business Agent in June of 1986, where he remained until his retirement in January 1999. Ed Patz served three consecutive two-year terms as Secretary-Treasurer for the Northwest Indiana Building Trades Council, and was involved as a committee chairman and/or member of numerous committees associated with the Build-

ing Trades Council. Ed Patz has devoted his career toward the expansion of labor ideals and fair standards for all working people.

On this special day, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to Ed Patz. His large circle of family and friends can be proud of the contributions this prominent individual has made. His work in the labor movement provided union workers in Northwest Indiana opportunities they might not have otherwise had. Mr. Patz's leadership kept the region's labor force strong and helped keep America working. Those in the movement will surely miss Mr. Patz's dedication and sincerity. I sincerely wish Ed Patz a long, happy, and productive retirement.

TRIBUTE TO ELENA PEISER HANRAHAN

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Elena Peiser Hanrahan on the celebration on her 70th birthday on Saturday, March 13, 1999.

Elena is a woman of many accomplishments. She has been a leader in her Bayside community for many years and she has volunteered countless hours for many different causes.

Elena has served her parish of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament as President of the Rosary Society. She has also been an active member of the National Council of Catholic Women. She served as President of the Brooklyn Diocesan branch of the NCCW, and was appointed executive director of the Northeast region. She currently is the NCCW representative to the United Nations.

Elena was the Director of Volunteers at the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary for 12 years. While there, she expanded the network to include handicapped volunteers as well as senior citizens and teens.

Currently, Elena is the community relations director for her local chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons. She still maintains her busy schedule at her church where she helps to produce the monthly newsletter, organizes a pre-school group called "Mommy and Me," and lectures regularly at Mass.

Elena has accomplished all of this while devoting herself to her family of 8 children, 4 stepchildren, and 10 grandchildren. She is an energetic and motivated citizen who shows no sign of slowing down as she enters her eighth decade.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in extending my best wishes and congratulations to Elena Peiser Hanrahan on the occasion of her 70th birthday, and wishing her many more years of active service to her family and to her community.

IN SUPPORT OF H. CON. RES. 22

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I was very disturbed to read on the front page of The Washington Post on February 11, 1999 the headline

"Chinese Missiles Menace Taiwan." Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have fought hard to ensure the safety of Taiwan, and this report and others are evidence that Congress must be vigilant in reinforcing its commitment to this tiny island state.

According to a Pentagon report, Beijing now has 150–200 ballistic missiles aimed at Taiwan and has plans to increase that number to 650. It is clear that this threat is a challenge to Taiwan's increased democracy and independence—as evidenced most recently by its successful elections.

We all remember the last time this happened. In March, 1996, China reacted to Taiwan's imminent first democratic presidential elections by testing missiles in the waters just miles off the coast of Taiwan's largest harbor, Kaohsiung. The United States responded swiftly and effectively, by dispatching aircraft carriers to the Taiwan Straits to show the Chinese government our strong opposition to its actions.

Our response in 1996 was based on the provisions of the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, which stipulated that the United States consider "any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means . . . of grave concern to the United States." Our response now should be based on this same principle.

1999 marks the 20th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act—the cornerstone of U.S. commitment to Taiwan's safety and security. We must commemorate this anniversary by sending a clear message to Beijing that their acts of aggression and intimidation against Taiwan need to cease. Beijing must understand that, as we have in the past, we will come to the aid of Taiwan in case of a Chinese threat.

I am proud to be a co-sponsor of H. Con. Res. 22 which concludes that "the United States should help Taiwan defend itself in case of threats or a military attack by the People's Republic of China against Taiwan." This resolution repeats the provisions of one I introduced in 1997, which was passed by the House of Representatives later that year.

Mr. Speaker, let us pass H. Con. Res. 22 now, and let us send a strong message to Beijing that we will not stand idly by while our friends on Taiwan are bullied into submission by Chinese military might.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 931

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill important to all workers, H.R. 931.

We no longer live in an era of one-company careers. Workers today change jobs with frequency. Oftentimes, these job changes are because of the worker's own choosing, however, just as often, they are not. In this era of downsizing and mergers, no one is safe from unemployment. Fortunately, Congress established the unemployment compensation system to provide temporary financial relief to workers who have lost their jobs. And it is a good thing it did. Last year, unemployment compensation was estimated to have helped 8.6 million workers who lost their jobs.

H.R. 931 takes this important program and goes a step further to improve it. It allows individuals who left their jobs because of sexual harassment or the loss of child care to collect unemployment compensation.

Sexual harassment is a widespread phenomenon. 42% of women and 15% of men have encountered some sort of sexual harassment in occupational settings. Despite the pervasive nature of this problem, only 1%–7% of victims file formal complaints. Oftentimes, sexual harassment results in low productivity and absenteeism. Although some victims may escape the problem simply by leaving their jobs, this option is not available for everyone. Unless one has money saved or another job lined up, it is hard to give up a steady pay check.

My bill addresses this economic obstacle by giving victims of sexual harassment the option to leave their jobs and to collect unemployment compensation if they can show "facts sufficient to establish a prima facie case" that they were victimized by sexual harassment.

In addition, H.R. 931 helps workers who leave employment because of the loss of child care by allowing them to collect unemployment compensation.

The need for child care is a daily reality for millions of America's working families. As real wages have stagnated over the last decade, many families have adapted by having two wage earners per family. Also, over this same period, the number of children living in mother-only families has increased. As a result, more women with children are working. In 1997, 65% of women with children under the age of 6 were working compared to only 39% in 1975. Child care is critical for these millions of working families.

If a working parent loses this child care, he or she has little choice but to stop working until new child care can be found. H.R. 931 would help those parents by allowing them to collect unemployment compensation if they left their jobs because of the loss of adequate child care for a dependent child under the age of 12.

The loss of child care places a tremendous strain on working parents. Although H.R. 931 does not relieve the stress over this loss, it does ease the financial strain placed on parents in this situation.

I am proud to introduce H.R. 931 and I urge my fellow Members of Congress to join me in support of this bill. We must seize the opportunity to help workers trapped in these unfortunate situations.

HONORING THE LIFE OF HENRY A. GOMEZ

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues in Congress to join me in paying tribute to an outstanding individual and my high school football coach, Henry Gomez. Coach Gomez passed away on January 13th after leading a long and distinguished life of service to his community and commitment to the enrichment of young minds.

Henry Gomez devoted his professional and private life to serving his home state of Texas.

After graduating from Jeff Davis High School in Houston, he entered the Navy to bravely fight for his country during World War II, where he served in the Seabees as a special undersea diver in the Philippine Islands.

After the War, he returned to his hometown of Houston to continue his education at the University of Houston. Henry was an outstanding athlete on the first University of Houston football team. His love of the game was so great that, upon graduation in 1948, he began coaching the Aldine School District football team. His true enjoyment of working with young players and enthusiasm for football soon made him a respected figure at the school. After a 7-year tenure at Aldine, Henry moved to Jackson Jr. High and later to our alma mater, Jeff Davis High School.

It was during his 14-year career at Jeff Davis High School that I came to know Coach Gomez. While a young player on his teams, I learned the true importance of teamwork and cooperation that remains with me today. At Jeff Davis, his influence reached beyond the football field as he worked as counselor and ultimately Vice Principal of the school. He was a leader who drew much admiration from his students, players and colleagues.

Hoping to expand his involvement with the young people of his community, Mr. Gomez transferred to James Dady Middle School where he began another 14-year career as Assistant Principal. He was lovingly known during his tenure as the "Sheriff of Dady," whose firm yet kind demeanor and dedication to the enrichment of young minds drew respect and love from all who knew him.

Upon retirement from his long career in education, Henry Gomez maintained close ties with the Texas school system, where he was involved in both the Houston and Pasadena Area Retired Teacher's Association.

The death of Henry Gomez is a blow to all who loved and respected him. His years of working with students and his devotion to his community touched a countless number of lives, including my own. Those of us who were fortunate enough to have known him will never forget his kind spirit, his leadership in the community, and his dedication to coaching and teaching. He has left a legacy that will never be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in paying tribute to the life of Henry Gomez. Those of us fortunate enough to have known him are truly blessed.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING THE "MEDICAL INNOVATION TAX CREDIT"

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today, Congressman SANDER LEVIN and I have introduced legislation, H.R.—that will establish a new "Medical Innovation Tax Credit." Last year, we introduced similar legislation with strong, bipartisan support. This bill is designed to provide incentives for companies to utilize our Nation's medical schools and teaching hospitals to conduct important clinical testing research. These institutions have led the world on the development of medical advances, including cures for small pox, treatments for diabetes, cancer, and leukemia as well as the