

different rates simply because of the business form of their investment. For timber companies, the capital gain on these forest products can be enormous. In some regions, tree farmers must wait more than 50 years from the planting of a relatively worthless seedling to the harvest of a mature tree. No other industry faces the extreme risks from wind, fire, and disease in protecting their asset over such an expansive period of time so they can realize a profit.

In addition, the Reforestation Tax Act rewards those environmentally-conscious companies that choose to use their dollars for reforestation of their lands. By extending tax credits for all reforestation expenses, and shortening the amortization period for reforestation costs, Congress encourages and assists those companies that are making a conscious effort to operate in an ecologically-sound manner.

The Reforestation Tax Act represents the best of tax, global competitiveness, and environmental policy. I urge my colleagues to support this important initiative.

IN MEMORY OF JOSEPH PAUL DiMAGGIO

HON. KAREN McCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Ms. McCARTHY of Missouri. Ms. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of the greatest baseball player who ever lived. Joe DiMaggio was my hero and a hero to our Nation. I am saddened by his passing, and I extend my heartfelt sympathy to his friends and family. The Yankee Clipper personified dignity and greatness. He understood the importance of having both guts and grace, and he took his responsibility as a national figure seriously.

DiMaggio and dignity are synonyms. Mr. DiMaggio viewed his position as an example to the young people of America and was always careful about the impression he made. He never lost control in public and was always conscious of his reputation and responsibility. He played every game as if it were the last game of the World Series, so someone seeing him for the first time would not be disappointed.

The people of my district in Kansas City, MO, were fortunate enough to see Mr. DiMaggio play in an exhibition game against the Kansas City Blues. A Yankee teammate and Kansas City resident Hank Bauer said of DiMaggio, "He was the most outstanding center fielder I have seen." He taught America what it means to embrace excellence and strive for greatness without seeking acclaim. I and others of my generation are in public service today because of role models like Joe DiMaggio.

Joe DiMaggio served as an inspiration to my generation. Simon and Garfunkel memorialized his leadership in their song *Mrs. Robinson*. The lyrics, "Where have you gone Joe DiMaggio? Our Nation turns its lonely eyes to you," express dismay at the absence of heroes like the Yankee Clipper to lead our Nation to peace and prosperity.

The number five will always hold a special place in the hearts of Yankee fans everywhere. His record of safe hits in 56 consecu-

tive games might never be broken. His lifetime batting average of .325 and his 361 career home runs remain impressive numbers even when we have new heroes such as Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa. He led his Yankee to nine World Series titles and was the American League's Most Valuable Player three times. As our Nation turns its lonely eyes once more toward this hero, let us learn from his life and his example of heroism. In the words of the Negro League Legend Buck O'Neil, "I don't cry for Joe. I cry for the people who never got to see him play."

MILLS-PENINSULA HOSPITAL HONORED FOR OUTSTANDING CARE AND PERFORMANCE

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct privilege today to recognize the Mills-Peninsula Hospital, which is located in my congressional district. In an annual study, "100 Top Hospitals: Benchmarks for Success," Mills-Peninsula was named one of the top hospitals for 1998 in the United States. The study was conducted by HCIA, a health care information company based in Baltimore, and William M. Mercer, a New York-based human resources management consulting firm. Nine measures of clinical, operational, and financial performance were used in the study to determine accurately the best hospitals.

Mills-Peninsula is a not-for-profit health service organization, and it has managed to improve and maintain existing services, despite battling extreme difficulties associated with the costs of managed care. By combining the highest quality care with the most cost-efficient operation, Mills-Peninsula has increased the standard of medical care and quality of life in the Bay Area. We are truly honored to have such an outstanding hospital located in our area.

Managed health care has sought to improve cost reductions and to streamline operations. The standards of excellence in health care management are becoming ever higher. Mills-Peninsula has thrived in this challenging atmosphere and continued to deliver a high level of care, and at the same time shown an ability to respond to change.

Mr. Speaker, the recognition of Mills-Peninsula Hospital has only confirmed the high value which residents of my district already place on the hospital's services. I offer my deepest and warmest congratulations to those individuals that have contributed to the success of Mills-Peninsula Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the editorial praising Mills-Peninsula Hospital from The Independent be placed in the RECORD.

PENINSULA HOSPITAL AMONG TOP 100

Bravo to Peninsula Hospital for being named among the top 100 performing hospitals in the nation by the consulting firm of William M. Mercer Inc., of New York, NY, the honor is one that should reassure residents in the area that they have one of the top hospitals in the country taking care of their health needs.

The study, naming Peninsula Hospital, was published in the December issue of Modern Health care magazine. This assessment of

the nation's benchmark acute care hospitals is published annually by Mercer and HCIA Inc., a data processing company based in Baltimore.

The study considers three separate categories including financial management, operations and clinical practice. Each category is then broken down into smaller components and evaluated.

The elements considered under clinical practices include mortality rates of complications during treatment. The information is published to show legitimate health care data about patients and health care facilities to measure performance.

This is a study that is in its sixth year of identifying the top management teams and best run facilities in the country. The longer the publication studies industry trends, the more established and prestigious its list becomes. People throughout the country are concerned and interested in the performance of their community hospitals and this rating of hospital care.

In an interview with this newspaper, Mills-Peninsula CEO Robert Merwin explained the price pressures Peninsula is under, to maintain services at the hospital. Merwin explained that the business community, Medicare and the costs of managed care, put pressure on all hospitals throughout the country, so maintaining standards of excellence was a major challenge.

We are happy to see that Peninsula has met that challenge and among the thousands of hospitals throughout the nation, been rated one of the best. That makes us proud of Peninsula and of the management and staff at the hospital who have carried the ball of excellence in recent years while the health care industry has been in radical change.

We know what happens when change comes to an industry, when economic pressures for change bring so many disruptions to the way a hospital does business. We commend the folks at Peninsula for not letting these changes disrupt the quality of health care they provide to the community. This rating is welcome news, especially in light of the fact that a decision must be made soon to spend millions of dollars either retrofitting peninsula or rearing it down to build a new facility.

We don't know which decision the powers to be will make but we do know that Peninsula is a very special hospital facility that is valued by everyone in the community. The rating only bears out the fact that its management and staff have been outstanding in face of unbelievable stress in the industry. We congratulate the people, all of them, that made this rating possible and look forward to the continuation of an evaluation that places Peninsula among the top 100 hospitals in the nation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AND ESTUARY RESTORATION ACT

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Water Pollution Control and Estuary Restoration Act being re-introduced today by the gentlelady from New York, Mrs. LOWEY, and gentlelady from Connecticut, Ms. DELAURO. I compliment and applaud my colleagues for their untiring efforts on behalf of our Nation's valuable fresh and estuarine water bodies.

Mr. Speaker, the protection of America's lakes, rivers, streams, and near coastal waters should indeed be one of our top concerns as a Nation, and I am proud and honored to be an original cosponsor of this important piece of legislation. The DeLauro-Lowey bill is a reasonable, straightforward measure that seeks to build upon past successes under the Clean Water Act (CWA). This measure will continue and strengthen several progressive programs to protect and enhance water bodies throughout our country, and I urge my colleagues to support this common sense and cost effective means of cleaning-up and protecting our water resources.

The DeLauro-Lowey bill will ensure that the existing State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) program continues to be adequately funded to provide the financial wherewithal for States and municipalities to maintain and upgrade their wastewater treatment facilities to protect America's water bodies. This program has achieved tremendous success in the past and clearly deserves to be maintained and enhanced.

While fresh water is important for life itself, and clean lakes and rivers provide a multitude of recreational benefits to society, the vitality of our estuaries is also of great importance. Estuaries, near coastal waters, play a dual function of protecting coastal lands as well as serving as the all important nursery grounds for most marine species. Of course, these waters also provide many important recreational activities.

The Congresswomen's legislation will serve to strengthen the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's existing National Estuary Program (NEP) that is widely regarded as a model for watershed-based pollution control. In addition, the legislation will clarify EPA's responsibility to assist States in developing and implementing their estuary management plans.

Mr. Speaker, as the Representative of the 7th Congressional District of New York, which includes a substantial portion of the Long Island Sound coastline, and a Member of the House Committee on Resources, I can think of few efforts more important to our environment. I intend to work closely with Congresswoman LOWEY and Congresswoman DELAURU to ensure we enact this vital measure into law early on in the 106th Congress.

TRIBUTE TO QUENTIN AND ELLEN BURKE

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding service and dedication of two of my constituents, Quentin and Ellen Burke of Imperial County. It is my understanding that Mr. and Mrs. Burke will be retiring after working for 34 years with the American Field Service (AFS), the international student exchange program.

Mr. and Mrs. Burke, who were publishers of the Holtville Tribune for 25 years, began their dedicated service to AFS in 1964 when they interviewed a visiting student, Helen Keel, from Switzerland and became excited about the program. Soon thereafter, they began to regularly print articles and photographs in their

weekly newspaper regarding AFS activities and events. For 15 years, Ellen acted as liaison between the Imperial Valley chapter and AFS international.

During the past three decades, Quentin and Ellen Burke have served as hosts for foreign students, worked with local families to open their homes and encouraged American students to travel abroad for the opportunity and experience to learn about other lands and cultures. I firmly believe that through their efforts with AFS, Mr. and Mrs. Burke have made a contribution to promoting peace through the global exchange of ideas, the sharing of customs and the collaboration of knowledge. On March 21, friends and family will gather in El Centro to honor this generous and caring couple. I would like to join with these individuals in honoring Mr. and Mrs. Burke for all their remarkable achievements and wishing them great happiness and success in all their future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO BEN ALEXANDER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take this opportunity to recognize former state Senator Ben Alexander who, for the last four years, has provided strong leadership and a dynamic voice for Western Colorado in the Colorado General Assembly. In doing so, I would like to pay tribute to my friend for his distinguished service and wish him well in all of his future endeavors.

Following his election to the state Senate in 1994, Senator Alexander rose through the rank and file with unprecedented speed serving as Vice-chairman of the Senate Finance Committee in his first year in the legislature. In just his third year, Senator Alexander was named Chairman of the powerful Senate Education Committee where he would play a leading role in shaping Colorado's education policy for the next two years. In addition to his duties as chairman, Senator Alexander also provided powerful leadership on the Senate's Finance and Business Affairs and Labor committees.

In addition to his service in the Colorado legislature, Senator Alexander also served his country distinguishedly and with great valor as an F-111 pilot for the Air Force during the Vietnam War. Senator Alexander's remarkable bravery during his 69 air combat missions earned him the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters as well as the respect and gratitude of those familiar with his extraordinary sacrifices.

Senator Alexander's eagerness to serve the American people, both as a pilot and legislator, has won him the unwavering esteem and admiration of friends and colleagues alike. It is clear that Colorado is a better place because of his remarkable service.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I pay tribute to this true public servant and friend for his extraordinary efforts and wish him all the best in each of his future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE FULL ACCESS TO CANCER TREATMENT ACT

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Medicare Full Access to Cancer Treatment Act. This bill is critical to protect the Medicare beneficiary's access to the newest and best treatments for cancer.

The BBA of 1997 directed HCFA to implement a prospective payment system (PPS) for hospital outpatient services provided through the Medicare program. When Congress passed this requirement, we recognized that some services would be difficult or impossible to include in a PPS and therefore authorized HCFA to use its discretion to exclude certain services from the payment system. Unfortunately, under their proposed rule, HCFA would bundle the costs of all cancer drugs into a small number of Ambulatory Payment Categories (APCs) and pay hospitals only for the average cost of these services.

The main problem with this proposal is that it fails to recognize the complexities of cancer treatments and the wide range and individual needs of each patient with cancer. As a result, the new payment system could threaten the quality and availability of cancer treatment for Medicare beneficiaries. In fact, under HCFA's plan, the lowest reimbursement rate for some cancer treatments would be only \$52.70 (which is expected to include supportive care such as anti-nausea drugs)! Moreover, under the proposal, new drugs, which are defined as anything after 1996, would be reimbursed at this lowest rate. Such a policy would have a crippling effect on research and development for new drug therapies.

This policy will create an overall reduction in the quality of patient care since hospitals will be pressured to provide the least expensive, rather than the most effective treatment. Moreover, research and development for new drug therapies may be diminished or delayed, ultimately denying the patients of today and those of future generations access to more effective treatments.

To correct this problem, the Medicare Full Access to Cancer Treatment Act would carve-out cancer treatment from the outpatient PPS. This simple yet sensible action would fully protect Medicare beneficiaries' continued access to the best and most effective cancer care.

I am pleased to introduce this legislation with over twenty bipartisan original cosponsors as well as the support of several patient and provider organizations, including Center for Patient Advocacy, National Alliance of Breast Cancer Organizations, Cancer Care, Inc., Cancer Research Foundation of America, Oncology Nursing Society, Association of Community Cancer Centers, Lymphoma Research Foundation of America, Alliance for Lung Cancer Advocacy, Support and Education, Lupus Foundation of America, US-TOO International and the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation.