

It is time to change that.

My bill caps the tax-free earnings of those who make waiting on tables a career in high-end restaurants and resorts, at \$10,000. But for the 95 percent of those in the service sector who work for tips, it's time to change the tax law covering income from tips.

Under current law, service employees who typically earn tips are assumed to have made at least 8 percent of their gross sales in tips. This tax is applied regardless of the actual level of the tip. Further, if the service personnel earns more than 8 percent in tips they are expected to report them accordingly. The end result for these employees, many of whose base salaries do not exceed minimum wage, is that they may have to pay taxes on income they didn't receive.

In addition, accounting for tips and gross sales is a burden on every restaurant, bar or other small business whose employees are regularly tipped. They are constantly under threat of an audit, where the IRS will hold their business responsible if the agency determines tip skimming to have occurred.

By putting in place a reasonable annual cap and strictly defining a tip, this tax relief bill is clearly focused on low- to middle-income households. According to the industries involved, most of the employees that will be helped are either students or single mothers. In addition, most of the employees are at the beginning of their careers.

Those in the service sector who rely on tips for their income are a special breed of people. Those who work for tips see a direct relationship between effort and reward like few others. Night after night, day after day, weekend after weekend, the millions of bell hops, valet parking attendants, coat checkers, taxi drivers, hairdressers, bartenders, waiters and waitresses are on the job, working hard and providing vital services to people of every walk of life.

Let us give a break to those who labor so hard for their living. Let's show them, for a change, that the Federal Government is not so out of touch, and has some understanding of life for so many, especially during their younger years in entry level jobs. I hope other Members will join with me in this common sense proposal that will help millions of hard-working Americans.

COMMENDING CITIZENS FROM
CONNECTICUT FOR AIDING VIC-
TIMS OF HURRICANE MITCH

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 1999

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to call my colleagues' attention to the work of a number of people from Connecticut who are helping to make life easier for our neighbors in Central America.

Last October, Central America suffered the greatest natural disaster of this century when Hurricane Mitch roared through the region. In Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador, Hurricane Mitch caused more than 9,000 deaths, left millions homeless, and resulted in \$8.5 billion in damage to homes, hospitals, schools, roads, farms, and businesses. As these countries were consolidating the gains of democracy, this brutal natural disaster came along and wiped out years of progress.

I have attached an article that appeared this week in the *Hartford Courant* which illustrates that the people of Connecticut are going out of their way to alleviate suffering and restore a small ray of hope to the people of Honduras. The Honduras Relief Committee of Connecticut—led by Dario Euraque, Cynthia Hill and a number of other students at Trinity College—has raised \$30,000 for relief efforts and sent 50 tons of food, clothing and medical supplies to Honduras.

Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that Congress has failed to provide desperately needed assistance to the hurricane-ravaged nations of Central America. I commend the people of Connecticut are helping to fill this void by providing assistance directly to the people of Central America. This kind of assistance is vital to alleviate suffering. Moreover, it also deepens the bonds of friendship between the people of the U.S. and the people of Central America. This will pay dividends for years to come.

AMBASSADOR OUTLINES NEEDS OF HONDURAS

(By Cynde Rodriguez)

The Honduran ambassador to the United Nations asked for continued global and financial support Saturday as the country begins to rebuild after being devastated by Hurricane Mitch last fall.

The ambassador, Hugo Noe Pino, told a small crowd at Trinity College that, several months after the natural disaster, Honduras is looking for financial help to rebuild roads, bridges, homes and schools. While Honduras received millions of dollars in emergency food and supplies right after the hurricane, Pino said there is still a lot of work to be done.

Hurricane Mitch killed more than 9,000 people and caused about \$7 billion to \$10 billion in damage.

New maps of Honduras are now being drawn to reflect rivers that have taken new courses and villages that were forced to relocate.

Pino said there is a big concern that Honduras will be forgotten in the coming months, that developed countries in the position to help may turn their attention and dollars elsewhere.

"In the emergency part, one month after the hurricane, international help was very important and opportune to prevent hunger. The most important need now is to rebuild," Pino said. "After six months, people forget about what happened and there's a problem in another part of the world and the attention goes there."

In an effort to prevent that from happening, the Clinton administration recently asked Congress for an emergency package of \$956 million to rebuild Central America. The money would be in addition to the \$300 million already provided for immediate disaster relief.

Locally, the Honduras Relief Committee of Connecticut continues to raise money and supplies, said Dario Euraque, director of international studies at Trinity and the committee's treasurer. Since November, the committee has raised \$30,000 and has sent 50 tons of food, clothing and medical supplies to Honduras.

Trinity senior Cynthia Hill will be one of three students to go on a relief mission in June. Hill and the others will use a \$2,000 donation from Trinity to buy food and medical and housing supplies for Hondurans while they are there.

An anthropology major who graduates in June, Hill said she was compelled to help with the relief effort because "the devastation was so all-consuming."

"Every aspect of the country was hit," said Hill. "I see it as they have a right to be rebuilt. . . . It was a natural disaster. It just

happened to be Honduras, but it could've been any of us."

COMMENDING SIX AFRICAN AMER-
ICAN LEADERS FOR THEIR
VITAL ROLES

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 1999

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the efforts of six African American leaders in Denver who fulfill vital roles in their communities. It is to commend these outstanding citizens that I rise to honor Rev. Paul Martin, Gloria Holliday, Rev. James Peters, Jr., Menola Neal Upshaw, Rev. Jesse Langston Boyd, Jr., and Arie Parks Taylor.

Reverend Paul Martin is the Chair of the Denver Urban League and also Senior Pastor at Denver's Macedonia Baptist Church. In conjunction with his church, he has laid the groundwork for a senior citizen's manor and remains active in creating and finding more housing for seniors. He has not only protected the interests of the elderly, but in conjunction with the Urban League, he has ignited the dreams of youth as well. Another example of this commitment is his work to open the Redeemer Alternative School for pre-kindergarten through 8th grade age children in Los Angeles, CA.

Currently, Reverend Martin is on the frontlines of a movement to redevelop neglected Denver neighborhoods. Through his work with the Stapleton Development Corp., he has helped take strides in the redevelopment of the old Stapleton airport site in central Denver. The Reverend is also working conscientiously to revitalize Northeast Denver. It comes as no surprise to me or any other member of our community that Reverend Martin was recently presented with the Humanitarian Race Relations Award by the city and county of Denver.

Gloria Holliday has amassed a long history of hard work on behalf of the African American community. In the 1960's, she served as secretary to legendary civil rights activist, Medgar Evers. Working with Evers on voter registration and integration, she organized the first economic boycott of racist business merchants in Jackson, MS, and fought valiantly to desegregate hotels in Atlanta, GA. Her desegregation efforts continued in Denver when she confronted and helped integrate retailers like King Soopers, Safeway and Denver Dry Goods Co.

Gloria has been a long time Democratic Party activist. She now serves on the Board of the Regional Transportation District (RTD) where she has been instrumental in creating an ad wheel that won the highest American Public Transit Association award. She also won the Black Women for Political Action's Award for Politics based on her work for RTD and her own personal endeavors. Not surprisingly, Gloria is also known for her outstanding work with youth. For young and old, she is a pillar in the community.

Reverend James D. Peters, Jr. also has a long history of civic leadership. This commitment has earned him several notable honors,

including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Special Service Award and the Outstanding Service Award, presented to him by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Reverend Peters worked for Dr. King in Connecticut where he raised money for civil rights causes. These funds were used to organize bus trips from Connecticut to the South for demonstrations and for bailing protestors out of prison among other things.

In Denver, Reverend Peters helps to fulfill both the spiritual and humanitarian needs of Denverites through his work as Pastor of the New Hope Baptist Church and as a member of the Denver Housing Authority Board of Commissioners. As a member of that board, he assists 22,000 public housing residents in enhancing the living conditions of their homes. His devotion and service to the community have earned him several accolades. Since his arrival in Denver, the Anti-Defamation League recognized him with its Civil Rights Award and the Denver City Council cited him for his leadership in Denver.

Menola Neal Upshaw has devoted herself to the city of Denver as the President of the Denver branch of the NAACP and as a teacher and administrator. Mrs. Upshaw taught elementary school students in Oklahoma City, East St. Louis, Illinois and Denver. She served as a Denver Public Schools administrator for 26 years. The Denver Public Schools recognized her outstanding work as a teacher and administrator with a cherished award, the Teacher of the Year Award. Menola also won the NAACP Legend of the Year Award and Woman of the Year Award.

She has been a member of the NAACP since she was 9 years old and the president of the Denver branch since 1994. She has won additional awards for her parenting skills and work with her church. She won the Parent of the Year Award from Ottawa University and the Most Valiant Woman award given by the Zion Baptist Church, where she served as Sunday School Superintendent for 25 years.

Reverend Jesse Langston Boyd, Jr., enriches Denver working as the pastor of Shorter Community African Methodist Episcopal Church and also through his own community efforts. His contributions to his parishioners have included the rebuilding and relocation of his church, containing education facilities and a multi-family housing complex. He is a past president of the Denver Ministerial Alliance and Methodist Ministers Fellowship in Denver and has served as a member of the Executive Board of Denver's Council of Churches.

He has also held important secular positions. He is currently Chairman of the Board of Directors of Denver-Metro Push and is the organizer of PUSH-Los Angeles. In addition, former Governor Roy Romer appointed him the first African American on the State of Colorado Wildlife Commission and to the Colorado Commission for Prenatal Care.

I would also like to recognize Arie Parks Taylor who has devoted a lifetime to improving Denver. Arie Taylor is often compared to Bella Abzug, a former Congresswoman from New York, who is remembered for her custom of wearing hats and her advocacy for the disadvantaged. Arie wears hats as well, but it is her compassion for people that helped Colorado so much.

Arie served Colorado as a State Representative for District 7 for 12 years. While in office

she passed legislation amending fair housing and civil rights laws. She also sponsored legislation to help people with hemophilia and sickle cell anemia find care. She caught the eye of the Nation when she served three times as a delegate at the National Democratic Convention, where she protested the seating of all-white southern delegations. Not only did she work in these positions, but she retired in 1995 as Denver's first African American Clerk and Recorder.

Please join me in commending Rev. Paul Martin, Gloria Holliday, Rev. James Peters, Jr., Menola Neal Upshaw, Rev. Jesse Langston Boyd, Jr., and Arie Parks Taylor for their courage and fortitude. It is the strong leadership they present in their everyday lives that make them so beloved in our community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PATIENT
FREEDOM FROM RESTRAINT ACT
OF 1999

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with Rep. Degette and our colleagues in introducing the Patient Freedom from Restraint Act of 1999. According to recent estimates, between 50 and 150 people die each year in psychiatric hospitals and other residential treatment centers while restrained or in seclusion. This legislation would extend much needed and long over due protections for people who rely on others for their care and safety. Specifically, our legislation will protect individuals living in residential facilities for adults and children who are developmentally delayed or suffer from a mental health disability.

According to a 1996 GAO report on institutions for the mentally retarded, one of the most common problems of care was excessive or inappropriate use of restraints. Other reports indicate the deaths due to restraint result from inappropriate and reckless use of restraint techniques and neglect of the patient's well being. Even if there is no physical harm due to restraint, the violent act can have long-term implications for the patient's psychological health and recovery.

Restraint and seclusion have no medical or therapeutic function. In fact, these techniques may do more to harm the individual than help. The only time that such measures are warranted occur when the person's behavior creates an immediate threat to the health and safety of self and others.

Currently, there is no federal statute or uniform regulation that protects patients from the misuse of restraints and seclusion. Many years ago, the same problem existed in nursing homes. Patients were indiscriminately restrained and suffered terrible as a result. The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987 greatly changed how the nation's elderly are treated. In essence, we revised the Social Security Act to make clear that restraint and seclusion could be used only in extreme cases. The result of that legislation has been an incredible improvement in the treatment that seniors receive. The staff of nursing homes found that simple changes in the environment and procedures made restraints unnecessary.

Our legislation would not prohibit the use of restraint or seclusion, it merely identifies the conditions when they may be used. The more important aspect of the legislation is that it would protect the health and safety of the patient. Our legislation would require that treatment facilities document the use of restraint and seclusion in the patient's treatment or medical record. In addition, to reporting the incident, the staff of the facility must document treatment a treatment plan to reduce the future risk of episodes requiring restraint or seclusion.

The legislation would require that residential facilities train their staff in the appropriate use of restraint techniques and its alternatives. We believe that this is an essential feature of the bill. Many of the deaths and severe injuries that patients experience result from misuse of standard restraint procedures.

Finally, the legislation would require that cases of severe injury and death be reported to the State's Protection and Advocacy Board, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Documentation of these cases is an essential mechanism for protecting the rights and liberties of the patients.

MORE JOBS IN THE
TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 1999

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the Department of Justice and SBC Communications for reaching an agreement which resolves the Department's antitrust concerns about SBC's pending merger with Ameritech. This agreement brings consumers one step closer to more options, lower prices and more substantial jobs in the telecommunications industry. The intent of the 1996 Telecommunications Act was to bring more competition to the telecommunications industry and this merger would be a good step towards a more competitive marketplace.

I commend SBC and Ameritech for their commitment to American workers. This proposed merger has the support of the AFL-CIO, the Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. SBC and Ameritech have committed to these labor unions that this merger will increase, not decrease, the number of good jobs in the telecommunications industry. SBC has already proven itself. Despite some critics' concerns, since SBC merged with Pacific Telesis, residential and business prices for basic local service in California have remained stable. In the meantime, SBC has also introduced new products and services and has created more than 2000 new jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the FCC to move quickly in approving this merger and to enforce the Congressional intent of the 1996 Telecommunications Act to lower prices, provide more choices for consumers and create new jobs in the industry.