

caused over twice as many outbreaks as foods regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture."

The GAO estimates that some 9,100 deaths each year can be attributed to food poisoning. If nothing is done to improve the situation, things will only get worse. Indeed, the Department of Health and Human Services estimates that food-borne related deaths and illnesses will likely increase by 10 to 15% over the next decade.

The Consumer Food Safety Act will address this growing problem in a number of ways. Let me explain the bill's three main components.

NATIONAL FOOD SAFETY PROGRAM

First, the Consumer Food Safety Act establishes a National Food Safety Program to ensure the food industry has effective programs in place to assure the safety of food products in the United States. While this program will contain a number of provisions, I would like to draw your attention to two key aspects of this program, inspections and registrations.

The legislation requires quarterly inspections of food processing and importing facilities. It also requires food processors and importers to register with the Department of Health and Human Services, injecting needed accountability into the food safety system. The Secretary of HHS may suspend the registration if a facility fails to allow inspections or if a suspension is necessary to protect the public's health.

Those processors who have a good track record will receive a waiver from the quarterly inspection requirement, but those who do not pass the test will continue to be inspected for sanitary conditions and to determine if their food products are unsafe for human consumption. This should be the baseline for all foods. Frequent inspections are a key ingredient to any food safety package. A more rigorous inspection program is one of the principle pillars of our legislation.

I would just like to add that federal and state cooperation is crucial to implementing the National Food Safety Program our bill envisions. It is for this reason the bill includes a section specific to federal-state cooperation, directing the Secretary to work with the states to ensure state and federal programs function in a coordinated and cost effective manner.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

The second major component of the Consumer Food Safety Act will be increased research and education. With new food-borne illnesses cropping up, additional research and education is necessary to devise treatments and better inform the public of threats to its safety. The bill I am introducing includes provisions to conduct better food surveillance and tracking to assess the frequency and source of food-borne illnesses. In addition, research will be conducted to improve sanitation practices and food monitoring techniques. The legislation will also target research on developing rapid testing procedures and determining contamination sources. The goal is to stop food-borne illnesses before they have a chance to spread.

As a complement to the research program, the CFSA contains education initiatives to enhance public awareness and understanding. In many instances, the medical community is not familiar with food-borne illnesses. Consequently, physicians are unable to properly diagnose and treat the illness until after additional complications develop or until it is too

late. In addition, to educating physicians, however, we must ensure that every American becomes an active participant in the battle against food-borne illness. To that end, the bill targets education initiatives toward public health professionals.

ENHANCED ENFORCEMENT TOOLS

The third major component of the Consumer Food Safety Act will provide the FDA with the additional enforcement tools it needs to better protect the nation's food supply. The bill includes notification and recall provisions that empower the FDA to stop tainted foods from entering the market. It also includes whistleblower protections to prevent employees from losing their job after reporting unsafe practices by bad actor employees. After all, it is the worker in the processing facility who is in the trenches and is most able to provide information about unsanitary practices. In order to give the bill the teeth it needs to be enforced, it includes civil monetary penalties for failures to comply with its provisions.

Taken together, the increased inspections, additional research and education, and enhanced enforcement tools of the Consumer Food Safety Act will ensure a safer food supply from farm to table. It is a common-sense solution to a growing problem. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in the effort to pass this bill so that we can stop the type of tragedy that has affected Lynn Nowak and her daughter Julia from happening to others.

NATIONAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS' WEEK

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 1999

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, as we approach National Correctional Officers' Week, which begins May 3rd, I wanted to commend the officers who work in correctional facilities in my home state of Michigan. We owe a debt of gratitude to the men and women who patrol law enforcement's toughest beat and provide an invaluable service to our communities.

Correctional officers make the difference in ensuring that dangerous felons are kept securely behind bars. As we know from the correctional officers who have given their lives in the line of duty, it's a dangerous profession that works in the face of threat and deserves our respect and support.

We owe a special thanks to these officers who deal with some of the most hardened in our society and yet, deal with them professionally, firmly and fairly. We count on these brave men and women to remain forever alert and ensure the protection of our families.

Correctional officers are working in an increasingly stressful environment, as incarceration rates have risen and the inmate population has become more violent. By working together, we can address the unique and often dangerous challenges faced by correctional officers around the country. These officers deserve our commitment to improving working conditions, reducing the threat of assaults and ensuring that they receive wages equal to other law enforcement officers.

Too often, we fail to recognize the work of these men and women, but our communities are better, safer places to live and raise our

children because of their noble efforts. They deserve our admiration and our thanks.

HONORING THE BELLFLOWER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 1999

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, improving our nation's public schools is one of the top priorities of the 106th Congress. We all share the goal of better educational opportunities for our nation's children. The only question is how to achieve that goal. Already this year both houses of Congress set an excellent tone of bipartisanship by passing the Education Flexibility Partnership Act of 1999—a measure that will help bring much-needed relief to our schools and improving the academic achievement of our students. This bill, like others Congress will consider this year, recognizes that local control is best for our schools, rather than a "Washington knows best" policy. Local school districts across the nation are laboratories for reform—finding innovative ways to improve student achievement. I rise today to pay tribute to one such school district, the Bellflower Unified School District, which serves many students residing in California's 38th Congressional District.

The Bellflower Unified School District recently received a Citation in the 1999 Magna Awards for Outstanding Programs in Student Achievement, presented by The American School Board Journal and Sodexo Marriott School Services. The awards recognize local school boards for taking bold and innovative steps to improve their educational programs, and include \$500 in scholarship money. The Bellflower Unified School District received the award for its Intensive Learning Center in Lakewood, CA—an elementary school that serves as a research model to demonstrate what works best in elementary education. The Intensive Learning Center offers a rigorous course of study and a longer school day (8 hours) and school year (200 days). It features state-of-the-art technology, including a science laboratory that allows students to perform experiments usually available only to secondary school students. Its faculty includes five full-time specialists to provide enrichment in science, technology, reading, Spanish, and physical education.

Also key to the success of the Intensive Learning Center was the willingness of the Bellflower Board of Education to collaborate with teachers and unions. The board and the union negotiated time to allow grade-level teams of teachers to meet daily for an hour to plan instructional units. The teachers at the Intensive Learning Center deserve commendation for their hard work in making the Center a success.

The Bellflower Unified School District received another honor recently when Esther Lindstrom Elementary School in Lakewood was selected as a California Nominee in the National Blue Ribbon Schools 1998–99 Elementary Program. Esther Lindstrom Elementary is one of California's 49 Nominees in this competition. Nationally, 381 public schools were nominated. Esther Lindstrom is one of 224 public schools (39 in California) to be selected for a site visit in the competition. The

criteria on which the schools are judged include curriculum; teaching strategies; student achievement; student focus and support; school organization and culture; active teaching and learning; staff development; and school partnerships with families, businesses, and the larger community.

I congratulate Board of Education President Ruth Atherton, Vice President G. "Petie" Anderson, Clerk Rick Roysse, Board Member Harold Carman, Board Member Jerry Cleveland, and an outstanding Superintendent Dr. Rebecca Turrentine. They have made a real difference not only for the students of their School District, but also for children across the nation whose schools can learn from the innovations of the Intensive Learning Center and the successes of Esther Lindstrom Elementary School.

FREEDOM COMES AT A GREAT COST—"BLOOD AND SINS"

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 1999

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I offer the following column written by John Kass in the March 29, 1999 edition of the Chicago Tribune to be entered in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

FREEDOM COMES AT A GREAT COST—"BLOOD AND SINS"

If you were downtown Sunday, and if you passed near Halsted Street, you may have seen the Greek Independence Day parade.

The Near West Side is far from the Balkans and far from Kosovo, but they were on the minds of everybody there. Those present thought about the present and the past.

We Americans come from so many different places. And there are other national day celebrations for the peoples who became free by their own hand and settled here.

But my favorite and the only one that counts is July 4, for all of us. That's when we Americans celebrate our independence from Britain, the founding of our own empire, and the strength of the union that was broken and recovered at a cost.

On Halsted Street, you would have seen children dressed in old country costumes and men in what look to be white kilts. You might have joked about men in skirts, especially if you don't know what they did long ago.

My great grandfathers and my great-great grandfathers dressed like that, in 1821, in their rebellion against the occupying power, the Ottoman Empire.

They wanted their freedom after 400 years of occupation by the Turks. They were tired of having to bow and kiss the hand of their conquerors. So they came down from the mountains with their long knives and guns, looking for blood—and they found it.

The Turks had spent four centuries in that land, and they considered it their own, with their own villages and towns, living side by side with the Greeks, mostly in peace.

But the sultan didn't tolerate freedom. The captured Greek soldiers were impaled on long poles for slow public deaths. Churches were burned, the nuns and priests skinned alive, villages cleansed, leaving only the stones to cry.

Matching the pasha's barbarism with their own, the Greeks committed unspeakable atrocities too. The English romantics who had adopted the Hellenic cause, the dilettantes who talked about fair play, were terrified.

But war and rebellion isn't about fair play. Once it begins it is about survival by people who are prepared to do anything. To the horror of their Western European supporters, the Greeks were prepared to do anything.

They fought the sultan's armies, and they raided Turkish villages, desecrating mosques, killing every man, innocent women and children, the livestock, everything that moved.

When they found Turkish soldiers, they did what the Turkish soldiers did to them, until the Turks finally fled.

The sins of the Greeks and the Turks were enough to send generations to hell. But finally, 400 years of Ottoman rule ended and part of Greece was free.

What we forget when we celebrate these independence days is the blood and the sins.

Like I said earlier, my favorite is July 4, for all of us Americans.

In America, while we celebrate our ethnicity and diversity, we should never forget that we're Americans first, even if we're hyphenated. We're Americans because we believe in this country and its freedoms, which is why we came here.

The only group that didn't have a choice was black Americans. They were liberated from slavery in a bloody Civil War. Appeals to the better angels of our nature didn't free the slaves.

What freed the slaves were the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Americans. The union was preserved, in part because of the atrocities committed by Sherman's army as he marched through the South, burning everything in his way.

Today, we call those tactics terrorism and barbaric and genocidal, but that's what was done to preserve the union. And let's not forget the Indians.

In our hyphenated ethnic celebrations, and when we sing the unifying Star Spangled Banner on the 4th, we concentrate on the positive images.

The newspaper photo of the little boys, like my own sons, eating souvlaki and waving. Or the tape of the little boys, like my own sons, chewing on an ear of corn in July, waiting for the fireworks.

What's forgotten is how unions are preserved and how independence is won—with the massacres of innocents, with children burned in their homes, with women dragged on the ground by the hair and finally dumped into graves.

It's not a video game and it's not clean. Americans are now finally debating NATO's war against Yugoslavia. We're in it, but many of us don't understand how and why.

And we don't want to deal with how it will grow, if we do what must be done to stop further atrocities against the Kosovars now that we're there.

We must understand the unspeakable violence, but we can't let that determine our reasons or rush us. So we can't creep our way in, distracted, rudderless, parsing the sentences of our political leaders to guess at what they mean.

If we're going to fight, we must fight to win. We already fought to lose once, in Vietnam.

But to win there will be a cost. So we better be prepared to pay it. And we better understand it now.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD F. "REGIS" GROFF

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 1999

Ms. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Denver leader Richard F.

"Regis" Groff whose leadership in Denver and throughout the world has enhanced so many people's lives. Regis Groff has contributed, not only to Denver through his teaching and civic involvement, but also throughout the world by traveling and working with foreign countries on humanitarian issues.

His international efforts have led him to many countries including Nigeria, Germany, Jamaica, Israel, China and South Africa to work on a variety of important issues. In Israel he worked on improving the Black-Jewish dialogue. He traveled to South Africa on a fact finding mission and, visited China with a small group of fellow legislators as part of a good will tour.

Regis Groff, who is now the Executive Director of Metro Denver Black Church Initiative, first came to Denver to get his Masters from the University of Denver. He taught history classes in the Denver Public Schools (DPS) until 1977, when he began working as an Intergovernmental Relations Specialist for DPS. From there he became the Community Affairs Coordinator for (DPS). From 1974 to 1988 he served in the Colorado State Legislature. In 1993 he worked as Consultant to the Chancellor of the University of Colorado at Denver and in 1994 he became Director of the Youthful Offenders System, where he targeted youthful offenders of crimes involving deadly weapons. His program vigorously worked to break down gang affiliations and instill hope and dignity to youth.

This is not the only work Groff has done to better Denver communities, but he has so many accomplishments, it is hard to list them all. He was Vice President of the Denver Federation of Teachers, the Senate Minority Leader for the Colorado State Senate and Vice President of the National Democratic Leadership Caucus to highlight a few accomplishments in his vast resume of community involvement.

The work he has done on behalf of the community has not gone unnoticed. He has received many awards for his efforts such as, Legislator of the Year Award from the Associated Press, the Appreciation Award in recognition of his work for the youth of Denver and the Distinguished Service Citation award presented by the United Negro College Fund to name a few.

Regis Groff's important work and selfless acts over the past two decades is what has inspired me to recognize and applaud his efforts today.

NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE POSITION ON TOBACCO SETTLEMENT

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 1999

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, on March 22, 1999, the Nebraska Unicameral Legislature passed Legislative Resolution No. 22. The resolution petitions Congress and the executive branch to prohibit federal recoupment of state tobacco settlement recoveries.

I agree with the Legislature that the funds received under the tobacco settlement should remain with the states. Nebraska's portion of the settlement funds will be used for the preservation of the health of its citizens. I oppose