

This honor is fitting for a woman who has worked so hard and touched so many lives in so many ways. Her teaching and her leadership have been dynamic. She has sought to bring out the best in the students and the best in the community by ensuring that the educational experience at P.S. 123K has been complete, engaging and dynamic.

Using her experience as an accomplished drama and music instructor, she worked to develop special initiatives such as Glee and Dance Clubs which perform city-wide. Her program has developed outstanding performers who enrich the community while improving themselves.

She has created and implemented essay, art and storytelling competitions within the school that has helped students tap into and expand their creative powers. Because of her efforts, students are participating in state, city and district-wide writing and art contests. The program she created boasts the citywide winner of the 1992 Storytelling Contest and the first place statewide winner of the 1993 SABE Essay Contest.

Ms. Spatola challenges students' thinking by holding school-wide celebrations which honor the rich and varied cultures and traditions reflected in the community. The celebrations honor Puerto Rico Discovery Day, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and African-American History, Pan-American Day, as well as Asian, Italian, Jewish and Irish heritages. By exposing her students to these diverse traditions, she not only enhances their educational experience, but deepens the roots of the community and strengthens its fabric.

In addition to ensuring that students have the tools to succeed in the future, Ms. Spatola has worked to provide them with an inside view into the working world by creating a Career Conference Day. Through this initiative, students are able to meet with individuals from a variety of fields and a number of different occupations. This forum gives the students a chance to explore ideas and possibilities that exist for them, and find out the challenging and exciting futures that they can pursue.

All of these attributes make Ms. Spatola an important member of P.S. 123K and a valued member of our community. She stands out to all of us as a model for leadership and her contributions underscore the important role that educators play in the lives of our children and in the future of our communities. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ms. Spatola and wishing her well as she continues to touch the future.

HONORING SEVEN ACRES JEWISH SENIOR CARE SERVICES

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Seven Acres Jewish Senior Care Services, which will celebrate the Sara Feldt Memorial Annual Older American's Day in recognition of Older American's Month. Many of Seven Acres' residents volunteer in schools and philanthropic organizations.

Seven Acres began in 1943, when a small, determined group of men and women of the Jewish faith purchased a frame house on

Branard Street in Houston. Their vision was to create a warm, friendly Jewish environment for 14 elderly citizens. As the concept and the need grew, there were milestone expansions. In 1954, a new facility with broader capabilities was built on Chimney Rock Road, initially serving 31 and eventually accommodating 98 residents. During the 1970's, planning began for a new and ambitious facility. By 1977, the present Seven Acres campus was dedicated to the mission of "Honor[ing] thy Father and thy Mother."

In 1998, a major renovation created today's modern campus. Throughout its history, Seven Acres has promoted a sense of satisfaction with life so that the humanity, dignity, independence, and strengths of each resident are realized to the fullest.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when America is aging and our parents are growing older, it is imperative that facilities like Seven Acres exist to care for the elderly. Our elderly are a tremendous asset and a source of great talent and inspiration. I commend them for their good works and Seven Acres for its great contributions to the community.

VETERANS APPRECIATION MONTH

HON. GEORGE E. BROWN, JR.

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, the people of our Nation have great appreciation and admiration for the many men and women who have served this country in the armed forces to protect and preserve our freedom and safety and that of others across the globe. In addition to a debt of gratitude, our Nation has a long tradition of providing concrete assistance to veterans to readjust to civilian life, to find employment therein, and to buy a home. We owe even more to those veterans who became disabled as a result of their service to our Nation. That assistance we provide usually pays benefits back to our society manyfold as veterans utilize their hard-earned skills, discipline, and loyalty in civilian life and their communities.

To help promote the many valuable programs our Nation, States, localities, and the private sector have to assist veterans, many States, including my own State of California, have proclaimed "veterans appreciation months." May is Veterans Appreciation Month in California, so declared by Governor Gray Davis. I wish to draw the attention of the Congress to that declaration and to urge my colleagues and the Nation as a whole to do all that we can to assist our Nation's veterans, including utilizing the employment assistance programs operating by many States and in California by the Employment Development Department.

TAX FREEDOM DAY

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, today is Tax Freedom Day. This is the day when American

taxpayers have symbolically "paid off" their tax burden to the government and begin working for themselves.

The hard working men and women of this country are now working 131 days simply to pay their debt to the government. When Bill Clinton and AL GORE were first elected, Tax Freedom Day was April 30. Today, Tax Freedom day does not come until well into May. In fact, Americans are now working an additional eleven days before they can start bettering their own lives and the lives of their families.

To put it in basic terms, the average person who works an 8 hour day, actually works almost three hours just to pay their federal, state and local taxes! The simple fact is Americans pay more in taxes than food, clothing, shelter and transportation combined. It is time we put a stop to this and provide some much needed tax relief for American families. After all, a surplus is nothing more than an overpayment by taxpayers. We should give it back.

Mr. Speaker, we need to continue the fight for lower taxes. It is time to eliminate the estate tax, the marriage penalty tax, and provide a larger child tax credit and provide an across the board income tax cut. American families know best how to spend their money, not Washington bureaucrats.

TRIBUTE TO THREE "CALIFORNIA DISTINGUISHED SCHOOLS"

HON. STEVEN T. KUYKENDALL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize three special schools in my district: West High School (Torrance, CA), Richardson Middle School (Torrance, CA), and Palos Verdes Peninsula High School (Palos Verdes, CA). These schools are among the 158 within the State of California that have earned the prestigious title "California Distinguished Schools" by the state's Department of Education.

My three schools were awarded the designation for their outstanding examples of teaching and learning. They have also incorporated strong teamwork and professional development components within the respective curricula. "Through the efforts of skilled and committed personnel, we can work even more efficiently to improve the educational system for your children," said Superintendent Delaine Eastin when bestowing the award.

The California State Department of Education began the California Distinguished Schools Program in 1985 to honor elementary and secondary schools in alternate years. To be eligible for the distinguished School title, a school must demonstrate a commitment to improve the quality of its educational services and performances. In this manner, it is an effective way of encouraging reform and does so in a manner that encourages local participation by those who matter most: parents, teachers, administrators, students.

I am a firm believer that education is the key to improving the lives of our children who are the future of this country. I am encouraged by the State's creativity in developing the Distinguished School concept and commend these three exceptional schools in my district for making a positive difference in the lives of our children and community.

MANDATORY RETIREMENT FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing legislation today, H.R. 1748, which will raise the mandatory age for the retirement of law enforcement officers from 57 years of age to 60 years.

Under current law those who want to retire may do so at age 50 years.

My bill only affects the mandatory age of the law enforcement officers. I believe that it is too restrictive. Law enforcement officers should be allowed to stay in at least until age 60 years which is the mandatory age for air traffic controllers.

With the mandatory age of retirement for law enforcement at 57 years, in the next 5 years the Criminal Investigation Division of the U.S. Treasury alone will lose 1,350 special agents.

Allowing these senior agents to stay on, if they wish, another three years will be both cost effective as well as help to keep our best, most highly qualified workforce.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1748.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF MICHAEL A. SMITH ON HIS APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to a truly outstanding young man from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Recently, I had the opportunity to nominate Michael A. Smith for an appointment to attend the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

I am pleased to announce that Michael has been offered an appointment and will be attending West Point with the incoming cadet class of 2003. Attending one of our nation's military academies is one of the most rewarding and demanding time periods these young men and women will ever undertake. Our military academies turn these young adults into the finest officers of the world.

Mr. Speaker, without question, Michael Smith belongs with the incoming West Point class of 2003. During his time at Tiffin Calvert High School, in Tiffin, Ohio, Michael performed in excellent fashion. With his outstanding 3.95 grade point average, he is ranked second in his class. He is a member of the National Honor Society, and earned the National Machinery Citizenship Award as a freshman, sophomore, and junior.

Not only did Michael excel in the classroom, but he distinguished himself on the fields of athletic competition as well. Michael has been a member of the Tiffin Calvert High School Cross Country and Track Teams, earning varsity letters in both sports. Michael is also a member of the French Club and Students Against Drunk Driving.

Mr. Speaker, at this point, I would ask my colleagues to stand and join me in paying special tribute to Michael Smith. Our service academic offer the finest education and military training available anywhere in the world. I am sure that Michael will do very well at West Point, and I wish him much success on all his future endeavors.

SMART GROWTH IN MARYLAND

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Representatives BLUMENAUER and HOFFEL for their effort in organizing this special order on the Department of Transportation's "Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program"—an outgrowth of the Clinton Administration's "Livable Communities" and "Smart Growth" initiatives. Innovative land-use and conservation policies, known as "smart growth" strategies, are used by communities across the U.S. to preserve green space, ease traffic congestion, and monitor infrastructure development.

As stated by Maryland Governor Paris Glendening, "The goal of smart growth is not no growth or even slow growth . . . rather, the goal is sensible growth that balances our need for jobs and economic development with our desire to save our natural environment before it is forever lost."

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you these facts: in 1970, 12 billion vehicle miles were traveled each year in Maryland, by 1990 that number more than doubled to 28 billion vehicles; from 1970 to 1995 Maryland's population grew by 25% from 4 to 5 million—and is expected to top 6 million by 2020; during the same 25 years, the population in the major suburbs around Baltimore City skyrocketed by 67 percent. In the last four years alone, Baltimore City has lost more than 50,000 residents!

Facing these daunting statistics, the state of Maryland has been at the forefront of smart growth initiatives. Maryland passed the nation's first comprehensive "Smart Growth" Act in 1992, which sought to: concentrate development in suitable areas; protect sensitive and resource areas; direct growth in rural areas to existing population centers; promote stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay; practice conservation and reduce consumption of resources; and encourage economic growth and streamline regulatory mechanisms.

As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I am pleased that the Administration has maintained its commitment to strengthening the federal government's role as a partner with urban and rural communities. Through the Department of Transportation, the Administration has actively pursued objectives that not only make communities more economically attractive, but also improve quality of life.

Under the TCSP program funded by the Department of Transportation, the "Maryland Integrating Transportation and Smart Growth Program"—MINTS—has been awarded \$450,000 to demonstrate how smart growth can successfully be linked with innovative transportation policies.

The grant will be used to: maintain and enhance existing communities and contribute to

their quality of life and economic vitality; demonstrate how investments in transportation strategies can encourage well-planned growth where it is desired and discourage new development where it is inconsistent with smart growth objectives; and use sound growth management to facilitate community conservation, preservation of infrastructure capacity, and "smart" transportation strategies.

The MINTS program will be implemented in two distinct growth management settings:

First, an urban community where there are challenges to improve the efficiency of the existing transportation system, to conserve the community, and to prompt re-development; and

Second, where suburban sprawl threatens rural resource protection goals and generates highway and other infrastructure needs.

Mr. Speaker, As legislators, we MUST recognize that growth is inevitable and growth is necessary. However, my hope is that my colleagues will utilize smart growth initiatives outlined by the Clinton administration to protect the environment, while also supporting the growing transportation and infrastructure needs of their districts and states.

THE COPYRIGHT DAMAGES IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1999

HON. JAMES E. ROGAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Copyright Damages Improvement Act of 1999. This bill makes significant improvements to the Copyright Act by strengthening damages for copyright infringement. It is extremely important that the United States remain a leader in the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights, not only because of the value of the intellectual property created in the United States, but also to set an example for other countries to follow.

This bill will increase the range of statutory damages available for copyright infringement. Copyright owners may elect to receive actual or statutory damages for infringement of their registered works. Because of the difficulty in proving actual damages, many copyright owners choose statutory damages. The amount of statutory damages were last increased in 1988 when the United States acceded to the Berne Convention. The proposed amount of statutory damages are rounded from the rate of inflation since 1988. In this time of economic and technological growth, it is necessary to increase the level of damages if they are to be an effective deterrent to copyright infringement. Further, the increase in damages will assist the United States in its negotiations with other countries concerning protection of intellectual property.

This bill also adds a new tier of statutory damages. It targets "repeat" offenders or parties that have engaged in a "pattern or practice" of infringement. These are the worst of the worst offenders. These individuals, who continue to infringe a copyrighted work in spite of receiving notice from the copyright owner that the use is unauthorized, should be subject to stricter penalties. Currently, an infringer may be liable for up to \$100,000 per infringed work. An infringer who is distributing thousands of unauthorized copies of a popular