

sum of the parliamentarians' collective expertises and experiences is so much greater than the individual parts. Indeed, when brought together and shared in such a forum, there is an exchange of ideas that better enables us to understand the root of global concerns, and ultimately how the international community can best take action to remove these problems. In effect, we are able to combine the best ideas and developments of our various countries in order to work toward peace and cooperation throughout the world.

Such innovation and progress would simply not be possible if we acted as isolated agents, and I firmly believe that the effectiveness of the OSCE PA lies in its ability to draw on both our shared and unique experiences. The St. Petersburg Declaration reflects the value of this interrelationship, and I am grateful for the opportunity to both learn from and contribute toward it.

While I am certainly proud to be a member of a distinguished body like the OSCE PA, it gave me particular pleasure to attend the Assembly as part of the U.S. delegation. This group of seventeen members enjoyed many successes in St. Petersburg. The St. Petersburg Declaration contains several U.S. authored initiatives, including Representative Chris Smith's resolution on "The Trafficking of Women and Children," Senator George Voinovich's "Regional Infrastructure in South-Eastern Europe," section and Representative Louise Slaughter's section on "The Assassination of Galina Starovoitova." Moreover, I, along with several other members of the U.S. delegation, contributed significantly to the chapter on "Common Security and Democracy in the Twenty-First Century."

The accomplishments of the U.S. delegation were certainly appreciated by the entire Parliamentary Assembly, and we were each encouraged to share the principles and goals of the OSCE with our colleagues in Congress. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to also encourage other members of Congress to familiarize themselves with the OSCE, and ultimately to take steps to continue our participation with this organization.

We are faced with a time of significant regional conflict. Eastern Europe is still in the recovery process of Slobodan Milosevic's brutal ethnic cleansing of Kosovar Albanians, and it will take many months, if not years, before the hundreds of thousands of refugees are able to return to their homes and resume their familiar lifestyles. Indeed, it will take considerable time for all of the residents of this region to recover from the rampage and injustices that were committed in this area.

These conflicts may sometimes seem isolated and removed from our own challenges and goals as a nation, but we have, in fact, entered a time where our setbacks and successes should be shared. We have a responsibility to use our successes as a means of alleviating other countries' setbacks. As I have said, the OSCE presents us with a viable and effective forum to share our resources, and the United States needs to remain engaged and build upon its place within their collective dialogue, rapporteur missions, peacekeeping operations, and peaceful dispute resolutions.

Last month I introduced a bipartisan resolution expressing this sentiment. H. Con. Res. 161 extends the support of Congress to the OSCE and the goals of the St. Petersburg Declaration, as well as urges the United

States to continue its role with this important international organization. Please show your support of the OSCE by cosponsoring this resolution.

As key players in the international community, the United States has historically and continues to take an active part in international organizations and institutions, such as the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the OSCE. I am confident that our commitment to these institutions will remain strong. Ultimately, it is my hope and belief that together we can secure peace, democracy, and justice throughout the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SPRATT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IMPORTANT PROVISIONS FOR PATIENT PROTECTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, after careful thought and consideration, I rise this evening in support of patient protection. I do this for a very simple reason in the final analysis. I believe that doctors, not insurance companies or HMOs, must have the final say on patient care. That is why I have many strong concerns with the Senate bill and would oppose that legislation in its present form.

Here are the provisions I believe are important to Americans, including those in my district: Legislative protections against abuse should be extended to the more than 100 million not covered in the Senate bill. There must be independent external medical review. Patients need maximum flexibility to select doctors and should be able to see pediatricians and OB/GYNs without referrals from other doctors. ER visits should be governed by a prudent lay person standard. Doctors should define medical necessity. There must be meaningful economic sanctions against companies that refuse to provide care approved by the external review process.

I know the importance of controlling health care costs, but a business bottom line, Mr. Speaker, should never be allowed to take precedence over medical necessity. We can allow insurers to continue to control costs and provide necessary patient protections. Many States have done that, including my own, Louisiana, including our neighbor, Texas. We can do it as a Nation.

TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF OFFICIAL DESIGNATION OF GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN, AS COAST GUARD CITY, USA, AND CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF COAST GUARD TRADITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, this weekend marks a very special time in the history of one of the communities in the Second Congressional District of Michigan.

For the past 75 years, Grand Haven, Michigan has celebrated its relationship with the U.S. Coast Guard and the contributions of the Coast Guard to our country as a whole.

Since 1934, the city has hosted the Coast Guard Festival, which has included a major parade, displays of various Coast Guard vessels, and a variety of ceremonies that focus on the special relationship, the special partnership between the Coast Guard and the community of Grand Haven.

Since 1963, when then-U.S. Coast Guard Admiral Richard Schmidtman attended one of these celebrations to dedicate the city's famous Musical Fountain, Grand Haven has proudly displayed the unofficial title of "Coast Guard City, U.S.A.". This designation was taken directly from Admiral Schmidtman's remarks. Ever since, signs near the entrances of the city have informed visitors that they were entering Coast Guard City, U.S.A.

As I said, that designation has been unofficial. That is until this year. As part of the Coast Guard reauthorization act of 1999, this Congress made it possible for the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard to officially declare an American town as "Coast Guard City U.S.A.".

I am happy to report to this House that, on this coming Saturday, August 7, 1999, U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Admiral James Loy will be in Grand Haven to make it official. Grand Haven will be Coast Guard city U.S.A.

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He will do that this week at the 1999 Coast Guard festival.

I have worked with several Members of the House and the other body for several years to make this designation a reality. I would like to thank all the people who worked with me to get this legislation approved, including Senators ABRAHAM and LEVIN, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS), the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST), and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER), who were especially helpful.

I also want to thank the local officials in Michigan, especially Coast Guard festival executive director Jerry Smith. Also various people at the U.S. Coast Guard, including former Commandant Admiral Robert Kramek. And Members of my staff, especially Todd Sutton and Chris LaGrand. I would like to thank all of these people for their patience and for their hard work.

Most of all, I congratulate the people of Grand Haven and their dedication and respect for the men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard. For more than 75 years, this community on the shores of Lake Michigan at the mouth of the

Grand River has welcomed the Coast Guard personnel with open arms. They have celebrated their relationship with the Coast Guard since the first community Coast Guard picnic way back in 1924.

In 1943, the city's residents also shared the Coast Guard's pain. They shared the Coast Guard's pain with a memorial service honoring the crew and the crew members of the Coast Guard cutter Escanaba, which had been based in Grand Haven from 1932 to 1940. One hundred and one men were lost when the ship was sunk by a German U-boat in the North Atlantic during World War II on June 13, 1943.

The city shared its pain, but also its resources. The city showed its commitment to the U.S. Coast Guard by raising funds to build a replacement, which was named the Escanaba II. The mast of the original Escanaba was saved and erected as a monument to those fallen heroes in Grand Haven's Escanaba Park, where it still remains today.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate Grand Haven, which from Saturday and henceforth will be known officially as Coast Guard City USA.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SWEENEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. METCALF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. METCALF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SMITH of Washington addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A TRIBUTE TO MARY CRITCHLOW KASTEN, "GRANDMOTHER" OF THE MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri (Mrs. EMERSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my admiration and respect for one of the most caring and effective public servants I have ever had the privilege to know, Representative Mary Kasten is lovingly known as the "grandmother" of the Missouri House of Representatives, and she has served the folks of Cape Girardeau for the last 16 years. She has decided to step down from this calling in January 2001 after serving the "people's body" in Missouri for 18 years.

If Mary's only contribution to her fellow man was this representation, she would be deserving of this special tribute. However, Mary Kasten, the farm girl from Matthews and New Madrid

County, is and has been much more. In fact, Mary's service in the legislature is only a small snapshot of a life that is truly a panorama of helping others. As a mother to her children, Mark, Mike and Meg, a wife to Mel Kasten, her husband of 50 years, and a teacher reaching out to kids and parents alike, Mary always sought to help brighten the lives of others.

In every endeavor Mary honored her personal commitment to God, family, country and her fellow man. Miss Mary, as we know her, honored her Lord by serving as a Sunday school teacher and choir member in the St. Andrews Lutheran Church. As a mom, she was and is the best example I have known of a mom who cares. She volunteered at every level to help her children and be involved in their lives. Later, she served on the Cape Girardeau school board and held various offices for 20 years. She also continued her service to education by serving on the board of regents at Southeast Missouri State University her alma mater. As a wife, Mary and Mel have been inseparable, and except for her times in Jefferson City, Mary and Mel go everywhere together. Their marriage is an inspiration to all of us.

For almost everyone who knows Mary, the first thought that comes to mind is her selflessness and her sensitivity and caring for her fellow man. It is that caring that truly makes Mary worthy of tribute. She is indeed the human manifestation of the golden rule of doing unto others as you would have them do unto you.

But in Mary's case it is no quid pro quo but a genuine love of all humankind. I personally have seen this caring when Mary and Mel took care of mine and Bill's daughter Tori when Katharine was being born. Bill was on the campaign trail 3 or 4 hours from home and Mary and Mel became Tori's surrogate parents, and even put her to bed with them. At every turn, the Kastens have been a part of the Emerson family, from the birth of Katharine and even in Bill Emerson's death, Mary and Mel opened their home to our entire family and became the nurturing core for the grieving family and our friends.

In fact, it is probably this empathy with others that inspired Mary to her greatest public service, and that was the beginning of the Cape Girardeau Community Caring Council. Mary's brainchild of making programs really work for people began in southern Missouri and is now being replicated in the rest of the State and nationwide. In fact, Mary Kasten and caring are indeed words that are synonymous with me and the hundreds who have known and worked with Miss Mary.

It is indeed an honor to offer this tribute on the floor of the House of Representatives, because I can think of no one more deserving than Mary Kasten to be recognized in the people's House. If Bill Emerson were alive today, I know he would gladly give Mary this very same tribute to her

service to the people. The girl from New Madrid County who served and broke new ground in politics and public service deserves, in my opinion, the same tribute made to bill.

Mary Kasten is truly deserving of the favorite Teddy Roosevelt quote "In the Arena," and I quote:

It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again, because there is not effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

Mary Kasten, our world is a better place because you have served all of us in the arenas of our lives, and for that we truly thank you.

THE TAX BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of partisan talk about the tax bill, and I can understand it. A bill of \$800 billion, exploding to \$3 trillion in the second 10 years, does indeed put our economy at risk. A bill that says lock up the Social Security money for Social Security but then take every bit of the regular general surplus, or virtually all of it, and pay that out as tax cuts. Regardless of whether that surplus actually arises, pay it out, lock it into the law. That could be regarded as fiscally irresponsible by many of us on the Democratic side of the aisle.

□ 2320

And of course, there are many partisans who would recognize that if we do not use the opportunity to pay off the debt now while the baby-boomers are in their peak earning years, that when the baby-boomers retire, there will not be any capacity to use general fund revenues to help make Social Security last through its most challenging demographic era and that as a result we will hear the cries at the first economic hiccup for cuts in Social Security or increases to FICA taxes.

Yes, indeed, with all that fiscal irresponsibility and all that risk to the Social Security system, some Democrats decry the bill in the most partisan terms. But do my colleagues know, we should not just decry the bill. Because as a tax lawyer, I was just amazed by it as I read each provision.

How is it that they could write a tax bill giving 45 percent of the benefit to only one percent of the people in the country? We should not decry the bill.