

office, he served our community with distinction on various boards, commissions, and task forces locally as well as nationally. He served as Chairman of the Permanent Organization Committee of the National Baptist Convention of America, Inc.; past Chairman of the Board of Operation PUSH; former national board member of the NAACP; past President of the Baptist Ministers Union; past President of the General Baptist State Convention; board member of Freedom, Inc.; and Treasurer of the Sunshine District Association.

He was the Pastor of Zion Grove Baptist Church in Kansas City, Missouri from 1964 until his retirement in 1997. Upon retirement he continued to serve as Pastor Emeritus. He was a man of tremendous faith, vision, and character. Reverend Johnson's leadership in our community utilized his faith and vision to lift us all up. I ask the House to join me in expressing to his family our gratitude for sharing this great man with us, and to accept our condolence for their tremendous loss which we share. Mr. Speaker, please join me in expressing our heartfelt sympathy to his wife, Flossie, his five sons and five daughters, and his many relatives.

PUERTO RICO-UNITED STATES BILATERAL PACT OF NON-TERRITORIAL PERMANENT UNION AND GUARANTEED CITIZENSHIP ACT

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2000

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, I have long been concerned about threats to the American taxpayer and to our Constitution. Today I address an ongoing and significant threat to both. The issue involves the status of Puerto Rico.

For too long the American public has been misled about how Puerto Rico's commonwealth status affects them. Most Americans seem to tolerate Puerto Rico's present relationship with the United States because they do not realize the direct harm it causes, including to Puerto Rico itself.

Mr. Speaker, the truth is that Puerto Rico's commonwealth status is a drain on the American taxpayer. Its status is an affront to our constitutional system of government. And, though it is hard to imagine, the leading proposal to continue and to enhance the current commonwealth status is even more offensive.

First, the residents of Puerto Rico do not pay one dime in federal income taxes, yet collect roughly \$11 billion annually in federal subsidies including massive welfare payments. This fact alone should offend all taxpaying Americans. At a time when Americans are working longer and harder to provide for their families, it is outrageous that we are shipping \$11 billion of their hard-earned tax dollars to Puerto Rico and getting demands for more benefits in return.

Second, the subsidy to Puerto Rico is likely to remain as long as it retains its commonwealth status. Under commonwealth, Puerto Rico has become home to a poor population that is losing ground compared to the mainland. Indeed, half of the island's residents receive food stamps—a rate considerably higher than the poorest of our 50 states. Mr. Speak-

er, we passed welfare reform in 1996 because we said the poor and out-of-work in America needed some "tough love." This policy has proven successful; it is time to implement it in Puerto Rico.

Third, the residents of Puerto Rico, even though they are U.S. citizens and mostly educated in public schools that receive large federal education funding grants, do not have access to a public English language education. Instead of diversity and respect for local heritage along with our common heritage in the United States, under decades of profoundly misguided federal and local policy we are allowing the creation of a Quebec-like enclave of linguistic separatism in Puerto Rico.

According to the Census Bureau, only 25 percent of Puerto Rico's population is fluent in English and another 25 percent is only somewhat fluent. This percentage has not risen in years. English is the language of our nation and it is the language of global economic opportunity, which is why the wealthy in Puerto Rico send their kids to private schools that teach in English. As long as one dollar of federal funds is going to Puerto Rico we should require an end to the linguistic segregation of students in the public schools of Puerto Rico.

Other facts demonstrate the cultural divide under commonwealth. For example, four times as many residents of the island consider themselves "Puerto Ricans" as opposed to "Americans". Yet 95 percent vote to retain U.S. citizenship. We need to end this "have it both ways" relationship and be honest about Puerto Rico's status. In my congressional district alone, I know many individuals whose ancestors have come from Ireland, Germany, Mexico, and all over the globe, but I know they consider themselves to be Americans first.

Recent developments in Vieques cast further doubt on the wisdom of the current commonwealth with the United States. For the first time, American servicemen and women are being denied critical training exercises on U.S. soil. We all regret the recent accident that took the life of a civilian employee working for the Navy, but if we are truly serious about protecting lives, we will continue live-fire training there so that our American military personnel are fully prepared for battle. Instead, we are paying an inordinate amount of attention to an extreme overreaction to any U.S. military presence on the island by a population that relies on that military to keep them free.

These are the facts about Puerto Rico. They might not be politically correct, but they are the truth. I share them today, Mr. Speaker, because I believe it does the American people and the residents of Puerto Rico a great disservice to perpetuate the fiction that Puerto Rico's federally subsidized commonwealth status can continue indefinitely.

I have little doubt that, if fully armed with the facts, the American people would overwhelmingly oppose continued commonwealth status for Puerto Rico. But like a doctor who treats a bad reaction with a double dosage of the same bad medicine, the leaders of the procommonwealth party in Puerto Rico are now proposing an "enhanced" commonwealth status that gives Puerto Ricans more rights and even fewer responsibilities.

This enhanced commonwealth proposal, Mr. Speaker, is an outrage that should be swiftly and forcefully rejected by this Congress. This change would not only continue to take advan-

tage of American taxpayers, it would violate the United States Constitution. Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution states that, "Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States." Read in conjunction with the Supremacy Clause of Article VI, the Framers of our Constitution could not have been clearer as to the proper sovereign of U.S. territories. In short, it is the Congress that has sole authority under our Constitution to make all laws and regulations with regard to Puerto Rico. Any proposal that asserts or promises otherwise is irresponsible and plainly unconstitutional.

And, yet, the formula to enhance commonwealth being proposed plainly asserts that the Territorial Clause of the U.S. Constitution does not apply to Puerto Rico now or in the future. It does so without identifying the source of constitutional authority for Congress to abdicate its territorial powers through statute and to conduct a "bilateral" relationship with the "nation" of Puerto Rico. Mr. Speaker, this is not "union" at all under the Constitution. It represents a treaty-based form of free association, despite the fact that Congress already has determined that free association is terminable at will by either party, not permanent. Under such a formula, U.S. sovereignty, nationality, and citizenship would be terminated at once.

To continue or, worse yet, to somehow "enhance" this fraudulent relationship with Puerto Rico will only lead to increased resentment on both sides. Consider the anti-death penalty demonstrations taking place today on the island. The majority of Puerto Rico's residents not only disagree with mainland Americans' support for the death penalty, they even object to U.S. officials applying capital punishment for federal crimes committed within Puerto Rico. This is another example, Mr. Speaker, of the desire to have it both ways under commonwealth. Commonwealth proponents want binding permanent union, guaranteed U.S. citizenship, and an uninterrupted stream of federal assistance, but do not want to be bound by federal capital punishment for federal crimes. Enough is enough.

Mr. Speaker, I think the majority of the American people would agree with me and reject both the current and proposed commonwealth status for Puerto Rico. It is about time they were given the opportunity to do so. They should have the opportunity to make their voices heard through their elected representatives. This can only happen if we have a legislative vehicle upon which to begin this debate.

The legislation I am introducing today will provide that vehicle. It is the "United States–Puerto Rico Bilateral Pact of Permanent Union and Guaranteed Citizenship Act." This bill would implement under federal law the "Proposal for the Development of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico" as adopted by the Governing Board of the Popular Democrat Party of Puerto Rico. It would permit Puerto Ricans to continue to receive government handouts without having to pay income taxes. It allows for separate Puerto Rican and American cultures, including different languages. And it would grant to Puerto Rico the authority to negotiate international agreements.

I am introducing this bill today with the intention that it never becomes law. I do hope, however, that this bill will provoke an honest

discussion of Puerto Rico's future and the truth about its current status.

IN HONOR OF JAMES
MASTANDREA

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give honor to James Mastandrea, who has received the George B. Davis award for service to Cleveland State University. He has been a tireless supporter of this institution and has dedicated himself to its growth and advancement.

Mastandrea, a current resident of Cleveland, received his bachelor's degree from the College of Business Administration in 1970. Mr. Mastandrea is recognized for his long and distinguished career in real estate, including his management of several firms in Illinois and Ohio. He has been the top executive of Midwest Development Corporation, First Union Real Estate, Triam Corporation, and Continental Homes of Chicago, Inc. He was also the vice president of Continental Bank as well as financial analyst of Mellon Bank. Since 1998, he has been the chairman and chief executive officer of Eagle's Wings Aviation Corporation, a private investment group.

Mr. Mastandrea's continuous and generous support of Cleveland State University began during his undergraduate years at the University. It was during these first years at Cleveland State where he organized the Student Economics Club and served as its president. Currently, Mr. Mastandrea is a director on the Cleveland State University Foundation and the chairman of its Nominating Committee. In addition to these many contributions, he also chairs the College of Business Visiting Committee, has served on the search committee for a business dean, and devoted many hours to the College's strategic planning process.

Let us join Cleveland State University as they honor Mr. James Mastandrea for his many contributions to the University.

HONORING THE DALAI LAMA

HON. CHRISTOPHER COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2000

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, today I join the Taiwanese-American Community of Southern California in welcoming His Holiness the Dalai Lama. His Holiness' speech on "Love, Compassion and Universal Responsibility" is certain to motivate and inspire this historic gathering.

In 1991 Congress passed a resolution stating that Tibet is an occupied country whose true representatives are the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government-in-Exile.

Forced to flee brutal repression in his homeland, the Dalai Lama is now living in enforced exile. Although the Dalai Lama has repeatedly stated that he seeks only autonomy and not the independence that his people so rightly deserve, the Communist Chinese dictatorship refuses to negotiate. And yet the Dalai Lama

continues to exhort his followers to adhere to the Buddhist principle of nonviolence. His message of hope and freedom through non-violence is an inspiration to us all.

We must never forget the suffering that the people of Tibet have been forced to endure. The government of the People's Republic of China should be held accountable for the immense damage that has resulted from its invasion and occupation of Tibet. The almost complete destruction of Tibet's unique cultural treasures, the attempt to eradicate the Buddhist religion, and the intense repression has never been adequately redressed.

I know I speak for all the Members of this House who voted for freedom in Tibet when I say we welcome His Holiness and look forward to the day when Tibet is free and its people can express themselves without fear. We will look back on these meetings and know that the cause of freedom was advanced and that we did the right thing to stand by His Holiness the Dalai Lama's side.

CHURCH PLAN PARITY ACT

HON. SHERROD BROWN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2000

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, as you know, the Commerce Committee shares jurisdiction over this legislation to the extent it pertains to state regulation of the health insurance market.

Church plans provide health benefits for many clergy and laypeople across the country. They represent a wide range of denominations.

Current law has created some uncertainty regarding the regulatory authority under which church plans operate.

This bill, which the Senate has already passed, clarifies the legislative language so that State Insurance Commissioners, Federal Regulators, and Church Plan Administrators can do their respective jobs with certainty.

I am pleased that the National Association of Insurance Commissioners and Church Plans, with the assistance of federal regulators, have been able to reach a compromise on this matter.

By clarifying the various roles each party plays, I hope this bill reinforces the success church plans have achieved in providing reliable, high quality health coverage to their enrollees.

CHAMPION "TOPHER" BARETTO

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2000

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, it is in the spirit of tremendous pride that I take the time to pay tribute to Christopher "Topher" Crisostomo Baretto from my island of Guam. Topher is a champion in many ways. He is a great young man and he comes from a champion family led by his parents, Carlos and Marie Baretto. And he is also a champion in the personal watercraft circuit. He has won numerous awards and has finished at the top of

his sport in many local, national and international events. In 1998, he won the International Jet Sports Boating Association championship in Lake Havasu City, Arizona. He will be bringing honor to himself and our island community for years to come.

He currently is in the middle of the U.S. National Water Cross Tour and is currently ranked second in his class. He will compete in San Diego this weekend and the next race will be in Rochester, New York on July 8. As Topher pursues his sport, he rides the waves not only for medals and recognition, but for Guam. He is being sponsored in his tour by the Bank of Guam and the Guam Visitors Bureau. He proudly represents his home island and he is meeting with Guamanian communities throughout the nation to build support for his endeavors. Organizations like the Sons and Daughters of Guam Club in San Diego have welcomed him enthusiastically as he carries the Guam banner on land and in the water.

Go Topher!

IN HONOR OF THE HONORABLE
EDWARD L. THELLMANN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Honorable Edward L. Thellmann upon receiving the Civic Leadership Award from Cleveland State University. Mr. Thellmann has developed an outstanding leadership style, and he has devoted his life to public service.

Graduating from Cleveland's West Tech High School, Edward currently sits in the schools alumni Hall of Fame. In 1959 he received his Bachelor of Arts Degrees from Cleveland State University College of Arts and Science. Edward had made these two alma maters proud by his inspirational civil leadership.

Having served Walton Hills for 13 years as the city's honorable mayor, Edward Thellmann has contributed greatly to his community. In addition to this service, he was also President of the Cuyahoga County Mayors and City Managers Association. This remarkable position enabled Edward to have an impact on the entire Northeast Ohio area. Furthering this objective still, he was also the vice president of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Board of Trustees.

I ask my fellow colleagues to join me in applauding and honoring Mr. Edward L. Thellmann for his lifetime of service, dedication and leadership.

EAST 79TH STREET
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2000

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, please submit the following article into the RECORD.