

of Congress, interested Members of Congress, and the sound recording industry for working to make this legislation possible.

**BULLETPROOF VEST
PARTNERSHIP GRANT ACT OF 2000**

SPEECH OF

HON. FRANK A. LoBIONDO

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2000

Mr. LoBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to come before you today in support of H.R. 4033, the Bulletproof Vest Reauthorization Act of 2000. This noncontroversial, bipartisan legislation was introduced by the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. VISCLOSKY and myself on March 20, and passed out of the full Judiciary Committee by voice vote on July 20.

To me, this is a very simple issue and one that I know well. I firmly believe that when a police officer is issued a badge and a gun, they should also be issued a bulletproof vest. When police officers put their lives on the line everyday protecting our neighborhoods—they deserve the highest level of protection and security, which only a bulletproof vest can provide.

When I first introduced the original Bulletproof Vest bill during the 105th Congress, I modeled the program after the Vest-a-Cop and Shield-The-Blue programs established in Southern New Jersey many years ago. When I was first elected to Congress, then-Sergeant Rich Gray, an Atlantic County police officer in Pleasantville came to me telling me of a program that they had put together in Atlantic County, NJ.

Sergeant Gray, who is now Chief Rich Gray of the Pleasantville Police Department, and a very dedicated group of police officers decided that it was time to do something about those who were defending our citizens every day without protection. They started a program called Vest-A-Cop. The Vest-A-Cop program began to grow in Atlantic County and it was the genesis for the idea that I had and subsequently found out that my colleague, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY), had from his district in Indiana.

At that time, the Vest-A-Cop program was actually raising money in a variety of different ways. They were reaching out to the community asking people to understand the needs of police officers and asking those in the community to contribute. We had Scouts who were basically baking cookies and cupcakes and selling them. We had events of all different kinds that were providing vests one and two and three at a time.

This program is one that we modeled after at, and we realized that doing it piecemeal was not going to really cut it and protect our officers for what they needed.

The current Bulletproof Vest Partnership program has enabled police jurisdictions across the nation to purchase over 180,000 bulletproof vests in the last 2 years—180,000 vests that probably would not have been purchased otherwise. However, due to the tremendous popularity of the program, and the program became much more popular than we ever anticipated, we were not able to meet all of the demands. None of the jurisdictions received the full 50–50 federal/state match this

year, and, in fact, the Department of Justice reported that jurisdictions with under 100,000 residents received a disproportionately low share of federal funds—an average of only .22 cents on the dollar came from the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, that is not what we in this House originally intended, and this legislation helps correct that.

This bill before us today will extend and improve the current Bulletproof Vest program. First, the annual authorization will be doubled from \$25 million to \$50 million per year through the year 2004, extending the program for 3 more years. Extending this program is critical in enabling officers across the nation with the opportunity to take advantage of this program which has been proven to save lives.

Second, language was included in the bill which guarantees smaller jurisdictions a fair portion of funding.

Finally, those jurisdictions and corrections officers who have been waiting for the national stab-proof standard to be approved by the Department of Justice will be able to purchase state-approved bulletproof and stab-proof vests. This is a very big improvement from where we were on the last go-around.

The stab-proof issue is of particular interest to me because it hits very close to home. Corrections Officer Fred Baker of my district in New Jersey was stabbed to death while on duty at the Bayside State Prison. Officer Baker was not wearing a vest at the time. We can only speculate as to whether his life would have been spared had he been given an opportunity to wear a vest, but many of us believe that he been given that opportunity, Officer Baker would be alive today and his wife and child would have a husband and father to come home to.

If Officer Baker had the chance to wear a vest, I am sure that he would not have hesitated to put that vest on.

It is critical that Members vote in favor of this legislation. According to the FBI, an average of over 100 officers are assaulted every day, and in 1999, 139 officers were slain while in the line of duty. There are still thousands of officers on duty who do not have access to these life-saving vests. This is an opportunity for us as Members of Congress, who talk so often about the importance of law enforcement, who talk about what we can do to protect themselves as they keep our citizens safe, this is our opportunity.

This common-sense bill has gained the support of 264 bipartisan cosponsors as well as major law enforcement organizations across the Nation. I would like to commend those involved with bringing this bill to the floor today.

I would first like to thank the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), who put up with my pleas and pestering for so very long about the importance of this bill; the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE); and the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. McCOLLUM).

I would also like to thank my colleague, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), for his help in this effort. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) was influential on the Committee on the Judiciary as we were moving this bill through the legislative process; and saving for last, my colleague, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY).

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY) and I have worked on this bill from

the very beginning. This is probably a great example of a bipartisan partnership developed to move legislation that is meaningful and can do something in a very positive way to save lives. This is the bottom line here.

Mr. Speaker, many times in the House when there are good ideas that come before us, we do not get a chance to act on them. I think, to reiterate what I mentioned earlier, this is a great example of a positive partnership. These are ideas that are generated within our districts from citizens and police officers and law enforcement officers and corrections officers who are in the real world every day, protecting our neighborhoods, as we heard our other colleagues talk about.

Instead of having to have local community groups raise money just a little bit at a time, the officers in New Jersey in the Second District, officers like Dominic Romeo in Cape May County, in the city of Wildwood, Chief Rich Gray, Shield-the-Blue, the corrections officers of PBA-105, all those who are associated with the Vest-A-Cop program can look to us here in Washington and realize that we have joined together in a very special way, in a very bipartisan way, to generate legislation that means a great deal to law enforcement across this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members of this body to vote for this legislation and show their commitment to law enforcement officers by voting for H.R. 4033.

**PRACTICAL FARMERS OF IOWA
(PFI)**

HON. LEONARD L. BOSWELL

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2000

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize a public-private partnership between Iowa State University and the organization Practical Farmers of Iowa. In April this partnership was awarded one of 16 National Awards for Environmental Sustainability by Renew America. Since 1989, Renew America has been bringing national attention to constructive, community based programs through which average citizens are meeting the challenges of sustainable development.

A private, nonprofit organization, Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI) was begun in 1985 as a vehicle to share information from farmer to farmer about how to farm successfully using sustainable methods. The farmers and other agricultural professionals who originated the organization recognized that, while the university system was becoming active in researching alternative farming methods, there was also a wealth of indigenous knowledge among producers. PFI was formed to be a conduit and "amplifier" for that information.

PFI initiated a network of on-farm research and farm field days in 1987 using straightforward protocols that farmers can use to plan, implement, and analyze their own on-farm research. It was at this point that far-sighted leaders at Iowa State University saw the opportunity for collaboration with Practical Farmers of Iowa, and the leadership of PFI responded. Out of the partnership grew the statewide on-farm research program with an ISU Extension agronomist as coordinator.

The on-farm research and dissemination effort has grown to include new kinds of research and new kinds of collaborators, both in

the farming community and within the university. The PFI-ISU partnership is a "lightning rod" allowing the university to respond quickly to new issues, issues as diverse as animal-friendly swine production systems, alternative parasite control methods, local food systems and community-supported agriculture (CSA). The partnership also provides the university with thoughtful and sometimes critical feedback concerning research and technology development.

The PFI-ISU partnership was among the first between a university and a sustainable agriculture organization, and it is among the more successful. It is a credit to the leadership on both sides, reflecting a science-based approach and cordial relationships. The project has drawn in scientists from many disciplines, providing skilled farmer-collaborators and a support constituency for research into topics as diverse as integrated pest management, soil quality, intercropping, energy crops, prairie restoration, synthetic corn varieties, family allocation of labor, deep-bedded swine systems, specialty marketing, and the social impacts of sustainable agriculture. The membership of PFI brings a built-in "conscience" to the collaboration that keeps it focused on the issues relevant to sustaining the land, farm families, and communities. In the past decade as our understanding of sustainable agriculture has deepened and broadened, this partnership has provided a forum through which that process has advanced.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2000

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, due to travel for a funeral, I was not present for several roll-call votes last evening.

Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall Nos. 436, 437 and 438.

A REAL MEDICARE DRUG BENEFIT

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2000

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I wish to share with my colleagues an Op-ed by Paul Krugman that appeared in today's New York Times. This thoughtful piece dispels the myth that prescription drug insurance plans for the elderly are the answer to lower drug prices.

Mr. Krugman bases his conclusion on the fact that the market will not allow for prescription drug only plans, since the cost of premiums to seniors would be prohibitive. He clearly states that the only way to ensure the success of a Medicare prescription drug benefit "is to make the coverage part of a government program."

He adds, "Republican leaders in the House, in particular, are true believers in the miraculous powers of the free market—they are in effect members of a sect that believes that markets will work even when the businessmen actually involved say they won't, and that government involvement is evil even where conventional analysis says it is necessary."

From the start, Republicans in Congress crafted a prescription drug bill that would guarantee only one thing—that the pharmaceutical companies can continue to price gouge seniors. The President and Democrats in Congress want to give seniors a Medicare prescription drug benefit that is universal, voluntary, and affordable, and builds on the current structure of Medicare.

Below is the full text of Mr. Krugman Op-ed.

[From the New York Times, July 26, 2000]

RECKONINGS; PRESCRIPTION FOR FAILURE

(By Paul Krugman)

In denouncing President Clinton's plan to extend Medicare coverage to prescription drugs, and in touting their own counter-proposal, Republicans have rolled out the usual rhetoric. They excoriate the administration plan as a bureaucratic, "one size fits all" solution. They claim that their plan offers more choice.

And for once their claims are absolutely right. The Republican plan does offer more choice. Unfortunately, this is one of those cases in which more choice is actually bad for everyone. In fact, by trying to give people more choices the Republican plan would end up denying them any choice at all.

Where Democrats want to offer drug coverage directly to Medicare recipients, the Republicans propose to offer money to private insurance companies instead, to entice them into serving the senior market. But all indications are that this plan is a non-starter. Insurance companies themselves are very skeptical; there haven't been many cases in which an industry's own lobbyists tell Congress that they don't want a subsidy, but this is one of them. And an attempt by Nevada to put a similar plan into effect has been a complete dud—not a single insurer licensed to operate in the state has shown any interest in offering coverage.

The reason is "adverse selection"—a problem that afflicts many markets, but insurance markets in particular. Basically, adverse selection is the reason you shouldn't buy insurance from companies that say "no medical exam necessary": when insurance is sold to good and bad prospects at the same price, the bad risks drive out the good.

Why can't the elderly buy prescription drug insurance? Suppose an insurance company were to offer a prescription drug plan, with premiums high enough to cover the cost of insuring an average Medicare recipient. It turns out that annual spending on prescription drugs varies hugely among retirees—depending on whether they have chronic conditions, and which ones. Healthy retirees, who know that their bills won't be that high, would be unwilling to buy insurance that costs enough to cover the bills of the average senior—which means that the insurance plan would attract only those with above-average bills, meaning higher premiums, driving still more healthy people away, and so on until nobody is left. Insurance companies understand this logic very well—and are therefore simply not interested in getting into the market in the first place.

The root of the problem is that private drug insurance could be offered at a reasonable price only if people had to commit to paying the necessary premiums before they knew whether they would need expensive drugs. Such policies cannot be offered if those who find out later that they don't require such drugs can choose to stop paying what turn out to be unnecessarily high premiums.

And while in principle one could write a contract that denies the insured the choice of opting out, just try to imagine the legal complications if a private company tried to

force a healthy retiree to keep paying high premiums for decades on end, even though he turns out not to need the company's benefits. As a practical matter the only way to avoid this opt-out problem, to enforce the kind of till-death-do-us-part commitment needed to make drug insurance work, is to make the coverage part of a government program.

All of this is more or less textbook economics. So why are Republican leaders insisting on a plan that almost nobody familiar with the issue thinks will work?

Cynical politics no doubt plays an important role. So does money; the insurance industry is by and large against the Republican plan, but the pharmaceutical industry is very anxious to avoid anything that might push down drug prices, and fears that the administration plan will do just that. But sincere fanaticism also enters the picture. Republican leaders in the House, in particular, are true believers in the miraculous powers of the free market—they are in effect members of a sect that believes that markets will work even when the businessmen actually involved say they won't, and that government involvement is evil even where conventional analysis says it is necessary.

The Republican plan is, in short, an assertion of a faith that transcends mundane economic logic. But what's in it for us heathens?

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE KATY GEISSERT

HON. STEVEN T. KUYKENDALL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2000

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with sadness to remember and honor former Torrance Mayor, Katy Geissert. Katy passed away last week after a courageous fight against lung cancer.

Katy was a pioneer in South Bay politics. In 1974, Katy became the first woman elected to the Torrance City Council. After serving three terms, she became the first woman elected Mayor of the City of Torrance. Katy paved the way for women to hold public office in Torrance. A resident of Torrance for nearly a half-century, Katy was actively involved in the local community.

Her contributions to the Torrance community are numerous. Katy was the Founding President of the Torrance Cultural Arts Center Foundation, past chairman of the Torrance Salvation Army Advisory Board, consultant to the South Bay/Harbor Volunteer Bureau, and charter board member of the Torrance League of Women Voters.

People will remember Katy for her allegiance to the South Bay. She was deeply committed to the local community and its residents. Katy will be missed. The community she represented is a better place to live because of her service.

IN MEMORY OF JAN KARSKI

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 26, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Lantos. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite my colleagues in Congress