

for generations that coral reefs form the fundamental building block of an intricate marine food chain, providing nutrients, food and habitats for a tremendous diversity of fish and other marine animals. And intuitively, we have all come to appreciate that without healthy coral reefs, our abundance of marine resources might soon come to a sudden end.

Unfortunately, the sad reality is that we have discovered that the coral reefs we depend on are under numerous threats. These threats come from many sources, including polluted run off, increased siltation, mining, and destructive fishing practices, notably the use of dynamite and cyanide, to name only a few. We have even come to appreciate that the decline in coral health could be linked to global climate change, and events such as El Nino.

But with recognition of the problem, and with increased resources to address it, we can begin to reverse the degradation of our coral reefs and achieve a sustainable balance towards the long-term conservation of these important marine ecosystems. Several recent activities, including the initiation of the International Coral Reef Initiative, the development of U.S. Coral Reef Initiative and the International Year of the Coral Reef, were all good beginnings. And just last week, the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force published a national action plan to conserve coral reefs. It is vital that we continue this positive momentum.

As the Senior Democrat on the Subcommittee on Fishery Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans, I have enjoyed working collaboratively with Chairman SAXTON and his able staff to address my concerns and issues raised by other Democrats in order to develop this consensus legislation.

The legislation we introduce today addresses many of the priorities I consider essential to any comprehensive coral reef conservation bill. Perhaps most significant, the legislation would codify the Coral Reef Task Force established under Executive Order 13089 to give this panel the authority it needs to address the myriad of problems confronting coral reefs today.

Importantly, this legislation would require the Task Force to initiate fundamental baseline research and management activities, most notably, the mapping of all coral reef resources in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The bill would provide to the Task Force, through a National Program coordinated by the Department of Commerce, up to \$5 million per year for 4 years to initiate this and other baseline activities, especially the development of comprehensive coral reef monitoring and assessment programs. It is expected that scientists and resource managers will gain from this previously unavailable information new insights regarding how human activities and other environmental factors are contributing to the degradation of coral reef ecosystems, and optimistically, how this degradation might be reversed. To ensure the continued comment from a broad range of interests involved in the management of coral reefs, it is anticipated that those Regional Fishery Management Councils established under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act which have corals within their jurisdiction, would be involved.

Of equal significance, this legislation would also authorize a coral reef conservation grant program to assist States and local commu-

nities in the protection, conservation and sustainable use of their coral reef resources. The bill would provide up to \$10 million per year for 4 years for coral reef conservation grants and it is expected that these grants will help improve local capabilities, raise local public awareness, and promote the long-term conservation and restoration of coral reef ecosystems. I am also pleased that this legislation would ensure the equitable distribution of grant funds to applicants in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea.

Allow me to close by simply saying that while this bill is not perfect, it is a fair and honorable compromise. The bill would establish a targeted, focused and locally-driven coral reef conservation program; importantly, a program grounded in science and built upon the ground-breaking and successful work of the Coral Reef Task Force. I commend Chairman SAXTON for his leadership and commitment to coral reef protection, and I thank my Democratic colleagues on the Fisheries Subcommittee who have worked with me throughout these negotiations.

A TRIBUTE—GARFIELD COUNTY 1999 EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take this moment to recognize the career of one of Garfield County's community leaders, and recipient of the Garfield County 1999 Employee of the Year award, Judy Blakeslee. In doing so, I would like to honor this individual who, for many years, has exhibited dedication and experience to the Sheriff's Department of Garfield County.

As a Civil Deputy for the last 18 years, Judy handles restraining orders, evictions, garnishment of wages and custody orders in the county. Before becoming a Civil Deputy, Ms. Blakeslee spent her first year as Garfield County's Animal Control Officer. She took her role as a Civil Deputy to another level. She would go out of her way to aid displaced and needy families to the best of her ability.

As a Civil Deputy for the last 18 years, Judy handles restraining orders, evictions, garnishment of wages and custody orders in the county. Before becoming a Civil Deputy, Ms. Blakeslee spent her first year as Garfield County's Animal Control Officer. She took her role as a Civil Deputy to another level. She would go out of her way to aid displaced and needy families to the best of her ability.

Judy Blakeslee has more than proven herself as a valuable asset to the Sheriff's Department of Garfield County, therefore, receiving this award. This achievement recognizes her compassion, professionalism and dedication to her County.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I say thank you to Judy Blakeslee on a truly exceptional career as a Garfield County employee. Ms. Blakeslee's dedicated service stands out and sets a standard for those who follow.

In conclusion I would note that as a police officer and attorney-at-law I had the privilege to work with Judy. I felt fortunate to have her as a friend and as a coworker.

CONGRATULATING THE U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2000

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the attention of the House to a recent article in the Chicago Tribune about one of our oldest friends . . . the U.S. Government Printing Office. I have a real appreciation of the GPO, having started as a printer's apprentice in 1968 as a member of Houston Typographic Union Local 87.

The article is profuse in its praise of the GPO, stating that while the agency usually "wears a low profile," the service that it provides the Congress and the Nation is absolutely crucial in our democratic system of government. In noting the vast range of publications the GPO handles—from the daily CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to the Findings of Fact in the Microsoft case—the article describes how the GPO has moved from a traditional ink-on-paper factory to a widely heralded provider of Government information over the Internet.

It is a success story that is worthy of everyone's attention.

A generation ago, the GPO had a workforce of 8,500. Today, there are about 3,300, yet not only does the GPO continue to print government publications, it is now a key player in the world of online government information. The incredible success of cutting staff by more than 50 percent while expanding services to Congress and the Nation is virtually without comparison.

The GPO's expert use of technology has made this achievement possible—technology which has transformed the way the GPO processes printing, and technology which makes it possible for the public to download more than 20 million publications a month from the GPO's online service, GPO Access.

Mr. Speaker, this is an incredible achievement, and I include the text of this excellent article for all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

We are fortunate, indeed, to have an agency of this caliber, with its expert workforce and its record of savings and technological achievement, working in support of the Congress and the American people.

[From the Chicago Tribune, Tues., Mar. 7, 2000]

FROM THE STARR REPORT TO WHITE HOUSE
MENUS, GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE IS
PAPERWORK CENTRAL

(By Glen Elsasser)

WASHINGTON—In a fortresslike complex near Capitol Hill, Kenneth Fatkin occupies the front lines of government. Though safely distanced from the frenzy of politics, he still confronts the handiwork of legions of federal agencies, Congress and the White House, handiwork that affects the lives of millions of Americans.

Amid shelves of reference books, Fatkin on a recent morning was scanning a set of proposed rules from the Federal Aviation Agency about the takeoff and landing of airplanes. Despite the abstruse language, he quickly marked up the page.

Fatkin works for the Government Printing Office, an agency that considers itself the largest supplier of government informational materials in the world. Those materials include everything from Independent Counsel

Kenneth Starr's case against President Clinton to a "My Wetlands Coloring Book" for kids.

It also prints the Federal Register, which 100 proofreaders including Fatkin work around the clock to produce. Five days a week, the register provides a complete update of government rules, executive orders, presidential proclamations and proposed regulations.

Within the monstrous federal bureaucracy, the Government Printing Office generally wears a low profile, but a brief moment of fame came in 1998 when, under deadline, heavy security and massive publicity, the GPO published the Starr report. In all, the report and its two supplements took up five volumes totaling more than 8,000 pages.

The sale of the report, which detailed the president's relationship with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky, drew lines of purchasers outside its main bookstore and gave TV viewers a rare glimpse of the GPO headquarters.

More recently, the GPO played a crucial role in circulating the long-awaited findings in the ongoing Microsoft antitrust case. Within two hours after U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson had announced his initial ruling at 4:30 p.m. on Nov. 4, printed copies were available at the GPO bookstore and the electronic version was ready on-line. A printed copy of the 207-page document, and an electronic disk, had been sent to the GPO immediately after his decision.

Another GPO staple is the Congressional Record, which chronicles the daily proceedings in Congress and prints debates verbatim. Requiring all-night production, an average copy of the Record runs 200 pages and must be available on the floor of both houses by 9 a.m. when Congress is in session.

Among the GPO's other key functions is printing the federal budget, which this year was accompanied by five related publications totaling 2,808 pages and weighing 12 pounds. The 2001 budget was also available immediately on CD-ROM and on the Internet.

The GPO prints congressional bills and reports, passports and Civil Service exams, the last of which is done under tight security at the Denver plant. It turns out postal cards, congressional stationery, White House invitations and menus, and the Supreme Court briefs of the Justice Department.

It also runs 24 bookstores in major cities, including Boston, Chicago, Columbus, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, San Francisco and Seattle. The subjects of the publications for sale cover an eclectic mix of titles and are reasonably priced.

Take, for example, the publications recently displayed in the window of the GPO bookstore near the White House.

A number of the titles are clearly self-help and offer practical advice on a variety of problems—"Eat Right to Lower Your Blood Pressure," "A Working Woman's Guide to Her Job Rights," "Marijuana: Facts Parents Need to Know" and "Safe and Smart: Making the After School Hours Work for Kids." All cost less than \$10.

Other titles clearly appeal only to wonks, such as "Investigating the Year 2000 Problem: The 100 Day Report," a summary of findings by the Special Commission on the Year 2000 Technology Problem.

History is also well represented in the offerings: "Boston and the American Revolution," "Rise of the Fighter Generals, 1945-1982" and "The Three Wars of Lt. Gen. George Stratemeyer: His Korean War Diary." There are also art books such as "Language of the Land: The Library of Congress Book of Literary Maps" and titles obviously geared to children, like "My Wetlands Coloring Book."

The GPO maintains a list of its monthly bestsellers, and among the 1999 winners were "21st Century Skills for 21st Century Jobs," "Buying Your Home: Settlement Costs and Helpful Information," "Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents" and the "The Constitution of the United States and the Declaration of Independence."

Overseeing the operation is Michael DiMario, who was named public printer by President Clinton in 1993. He is the nation's 23rd public printer, chief of an agency that dates to the Civil War era but has changed substantially with technology.

"The computer has changed everything and is now fundamental to the printing process," said DiMario, a lawyer who has worked in various posts since joining the GPO in 1971. The only linotype operator left in the 33-acre facility is the one who sets type for book titles in gilt.

"In the late 1960s we moved into electronic photo composition, and the computer was used to compose data for printing," he said. "Today our presses are controlled by the computer."

Even though the computer now does much of the work, however, human skills—such as a broad knowledge of government, its lingo and methods of lawmaking—remain critical to the editing process.

By DiMario's count, the GPO handles 50 percent of the government's printing needs. Notable exceptions are the nation's currency, postage stamps, Treasury securities and certificates, done by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing; and the classified documents of intelligence agencies.

Since 1993, pursuant to a new federal law, the GPO has made the Congressional Record and other government publications available in an electronic format. In 1997, for example, the GPO and the Commerce Department teamed up to offer free Internet access to the Commerce Business Daily, which keeps tabs on government contract and subcontracting opportunities, small business and other set asides, special notices and sales of surplus U.S. property.

Today thousands of publications are available electronically—far surpassing the number of print titles available for sale in the GPO bookstores. In fact, PC Week magazine in 1999 rated the GPO as one of the nation's top technology innovators.

Every month, DiMario estimates, 20 million GPO publications are downloaded from the Internet. During the first hour after the release of the Microsoft ruling, 152,000 successful connections were made on the GPO's popular Internet information service.

"The GPO has about 100,000 titles on-line that are on our own server here, and we provide links through our Web site [www.access.gpo.gov] to an additional 60,000 titles from other agencies," he said. "That's a moving target, and it is growing."

The GPO's publications are also available in electronic and traditional print formats at some 1,350 federal depository libraries. These are located at most colleges and universities, many public libraries and state and local government libraries.

Switching to electronics and decentralizing production has caused a massive reduction in the number of employees at the GPO complex, for many years ranked as the world's largest printing plant. This record, DiMario concedes, now probably belongs to private-sector companies such as Chicago's R.R. Donnelley & Sons.

"When I came here in the early 1970s, we had 8,500 employees," recalled DiMario. "Now we have 3,300 employees. Primarily the change occurred early when we retired the traditional letterpress operations. This transition continued, especially after Congress required the agency to acquire as much of its printing as possible from the private sector."

In recent years the GPO has contracted out 70 to 75 percent of its printing. "We have 10,000 contractors on a bid list to do this work," said DiMario, "and about 3,000 participate on a regular basis through the central office or the 20 regional and satellite printing procurement offices."

During the early years of the Reagan administration, labor relations at the GPO were stormy, with proposed furloughs and pay cuts as high as 22 percent. Things are much quieter now; prominently displayed on DiMario's office wall is an award from the Printing, Publishing and Media Workers Sector of the Communications Workers of America citing him for "maintaining equitable management relations."

Fatkin has seen the GPO go through many of these changes. Hired by the GPO in 1971, his job at first was to repair linotype machines. "Everything switched over after the computer hit big time in 1981," recalled Fatkin, who describes himself as a printer-proofreader. "There was a lot of ongoing retraining. The trouble today is that new people come in who can type 100 words a minute [on a computer] but don't know type faces and sizes. You learn that as an apprentice printer."

MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2000

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, at a time of unprecedented economic prosperity and growth, many American families are left behind. Those families work hard and play by the rules. They deserve a raise. But many of my colleagues on the other side are standing in the way of giving 10 million workers a raise in the minimum wage. Instead, they insist on sending to the President a bill to raise the minimum wage that is tied to a tax giveaway to the rich. As a result, we will see the economic gap expand even more. I applaud the President for making it clear that he will veto this dreadful bill.

This is not a minimum wage increase bill; it is a maximum giveaway to the wealthy. Under their \$120 billion tax cut, the wealthiest 1% of all taxpayers, or those earning more than \$319,000 a year, would get 73% of the total tax cut. This is not a surprise. The leaders of the other party have demonstrated many times during the past year that they would rather pass bills that benefit special interests and the rich instead of hardworking families.

A minimum wage worker earns \$10,700 a year. That means a single mother on minimum wage with two kids earns \$2,600 below the poverty line. Many of my colleagues on the other side would prefer to give her 33 cents a year over 3 years. Their tax plan gives millionaires \$6,128 a year. Is this what Republicans meant by compassionate conservatism?

Sixty percent of minimum wage earners are women; nearly 75% are adults; 3/5 are the sole breadwinners in their families; and more than 50% work full-time. Those who have to take care of our children at daycare centers and our parents at nursing homes deserve better. They deserve more than \$5.15 an hour. A raise in the minimum wage is about economic fairness and social justice. It is a small step in ensuring that all Americans share in our nation's economic prosperity and growth. I urge