

IN HONOR OF RABBI ARTHUR
SCHNEIER ON THE OCCASION OF
HIS 70TH BIRTHDAY

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2000

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to Rabbi Arthur Schneier, an international leader for religious freedom and tolerance and a role model and inspiration to the world. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating his 70th birthday by expressing our nation's deep appreciation and gratitude for his life and work.

Rabbi Schneier has displayed an unshakable dedication to human rights and religious freedom, and a deep devotion to justice and decency for all people. Spiritual leader of the historic landmark Park East Synagogue since 1962, Rabbi Schneier has acted as a diplomat and envoy for four U.S. Presidents. He has served as Chairman of the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad. He was selected by President Clinton to be one of three U.S. religious leaders to meet with President Jiang Zemin and top leaders of the Chinese Government to enter into the first official dialogue on religious freedom in China. Among many other contributions to U.S. diplomacy, Mr. Speaker, Rabbi Schneier negotiated and successfully completed bilateral agreements with the Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, and Ukraine.

Rabbi Schneier is certainly one of this century's great human rights leaders, Mr. Speaker. In 1965, he established the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, an ecumenical coalition of business and religious leaders, advocating mutual understanding, tolerance and peace. Rabbi Schneier has contributed greatly to the peaceful emergence of new democracies in Russia and the countries of Eastern Europe. Through spiritual wisdom, perseverance, and leadership, Rabbi Schneier has quelled ethnic conflict the world over, protecting minorities and securing the reign of peace.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that those in the midst of chaos and destruction, in the aftermath of earthquakes in Turkey and Armenia, floods in Romania, and natural disasters around the globe, rejoiced in the aid Rabbi Schneier was able to provide through organization, inspiration, and faith. His work provided hope to thousands and saved lives in times of great need and suffering.

Rabbi Schneier is an inspiration to all who aspire to lives of hope, peace, and understanding. His convictions are noble and immutable. His faith and his devotion to peace remain undeterred. His influence around the world is a blessing to human kind. Mr. Speaker, I salute the life and work of Rabbi Arthur Schneier and I ask my fellow Members of Congress to join me in recognizing Rabbi Schneier's contributions to the New York community, to our great country, and to the world.

HONORING MR. THOMAS W.
FISCHER

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2000

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the dedicated service of Special Agent Thomas W. Fischer to the people of the United States. Mr. Fischer entered the Naval Criminal Investigative Service in 1977 and demonstrated early in his career that he possessed ambition and integrity that would lead him into a successful lifelong career. Special Agent Fischer began his enforcement career on February 27, 1967, with the Baltimore City Police Department. He served honorably and with valor for 10 years. Due to his considerable skills, tact, courage, and dedication to duty, he was promoted from patrolman to detective, tactical sergeant, detective sergeant, and lieutenant (select). While serving with the Baltimore City Police Department, Thomas W. Fischer received nine official commendations for valor and meritorious service.

In 1977 Thomas W. Fischer began a career in Federal law enforcement as a Special Agent with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. His first assignment was at the Maryland State Capitol in Annapolis. As a seasoned law enforcement veteran he was quickly recognized as a rising star and leader. Continuing in his remarkable career, during the Iranian crisis, Thomas W. Fischer was assigned as the only civilian Federal agent aboard the U.S.S. *Dwight D. Eisenhower*. Tom set the NCIS Special Agent longevity record for at-sea time as a Special Agent Afloat (SAA), with 247 days at sea out of 255 days on deployment. This record remains to this day.

Following his exploits at sea, Special Agent Fischer was assigned briefly to the NCIS office in Washington, DC. In 1981 Special Agent Fischer, ever in search of a challenge, transferred to NAS Cubi Point, the Philippines. After only a year, he was promoted to Squad Leader for the Foreign Counterintelligence (FCI) Squad, Subic Bay. He was subsequently promoted to the position of Assistant Regional Director (FCI) for the Regional NCIS Office, Philippines. In June 1985 Special Agent Fischer accepted an assignment as the Assistant Special Agent in Charge for FCI at the NCIS office at Long Beach, CA. In August 1986, Tom transferred to NCIS Headquarters where he served as a Senior Staff Assistant to the Director as the Special Agent Afloat Program Manager.

In 1987, Special Agent Fischer made history while assigned to the Bobsled Task Force investigating Marine Security Guard espionage activity. Special Agent Fischer traveled to Moscow, U.S.S.R. where he conducted interviews and other inquiries at the American Embassy.

In September 1987, continuing supervisory ascent, Mr. Fischer was named Deputy Special Agent in Charge of the NCIS office in Washington, DC. In October 1988, Special Agent Fischer was named Special Agent in Charge of the Regional Fraud Unit, National Capitol Region, Washington DC. During June 1991, Special Agent Fischer assumed duties as the Deputy Regional Director of the NCIS European Region London, United Kingdom.

He was then promoted to Regional Director where he served with distinction until his selection as Assistant Director for Inspections in May 1994.

During the past 6 years, Mr. Fischer, as an Assistant Director, has brought vision, candor, and insight to many issues instrumental in building the NCIS of today. Special Agent Fischer served honorably and served as a role model and leader for an entire agent corps, who by living according to his high standard, remains as his lasting legacy to the organization he so nobly served.

Special Agent Fischer's career, which includes active duty service in the U.S. Armed Forces from March 1962 to September 1965, spans five decades of service to the people of the United States.

COMMENDING ANTI-DRUG EF-
FORTS OF STATIONS KEZI,
KMTR, KVAL, KEVU AND KLSR

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2000

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call attention to an unprecedented cooperative campaign by several television stations in my congressional district. Earlier this year, stations in Eugene, OR, set aside competition and simulcast a half-hour documentary on the effects of drug abuse, "Drug Wars: One Family's Battle." The documentary was produced by Medford Oregon-based Crime Prevention Resources.

In addition, three stations—KEZI, KMTR and KVAL—also sponsored and simultaneously broadcast a special 1 hour town hall meeting that featured individual stories, a panel of experts and telephone call-ins, all discussing the impacts of drug abuse and methods to combat the problem. This locally simulcast townhall was a first in our community and possibly the nation.

I congratulate and commend these stations and the community on this collaborative and innovative endeavor to combat the serious problem of drug abuse. By saturating our local airwaves for a short time, they were able to ensure this anti-drug message reached the widest possible audience. This impressive feat should be a model for the nation.

Winning the war on drugs requires an extraordinary effort from the grassroots level up. I encourage my colleagues to pursue a similar effort with television stations in their respective congressional districts. It is a unique and rewarding opportunity to work together towards the common goal of ending drug abuse in our communities.

Again, I salute the efforts of these television stations on their historic effort.

IN HONOR OF MAYOR ROBERT
ROSEGARTEN

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2000

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Robert Rosegarten upon his

retirement as mayor of the village of Great Neck, NY, on Friday, March 24th.

Mayor Rosegarten's work in Great Neck has been recognized on both the national and State level. His work to revitalize the downtown Great Neck shopping area is a model for local municipalities nationwide. Under the mayor's dynamic supervision, the village of Great Neck has not only experienced financial success, but is also highly regarded for its aesthetic beauty. Mayor Rosegarten's service to the community will undoubtedly be used as a measuring stick for future Great Neck public officials.

Prior to his distinguished service as mayor of Great Neck for the past 8 years, Mr. Rosegarten held the position of deputy mayor of Great Neck for 8 years and was also a village trustee for 2 years. Mayor Rosegarten has further distinguished himself in the Great Neck community as president of the Great Neck Village Officials Association, commissioner of the Great Neck Central Police Auxiliary and member of the executive board of Great Neck's United Community Fund.

In addition to his work in the village of Great Neck, Mayor Rosegarten has been a successful executive in the advertising industry for over a quarter of a century.

Robert Rosegarten is an avid sculptor and painter, whose art works have gained wide attention by appearing in many local galleries on Long Island. Mayor Rosegarten is a dedicated husband, a loving father of three sons and a proud grandfather to six grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me today in honoring Robert Rosegarten as he completes another milestone in his career and in wishing him many more years of active service to his family and his community.

THE 44TH ANNIVERSARY OF
TUNISIA'S INDEPENDENCE

HON. FLOYD SPENCE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2000

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the citizens of the Republic of Tunisia on the occasion of their 44th anniversary of independence. Despite its diminutive size, Tunisia has exerted a sizeable presence in North Africa, the Middle East, Europe, and North America for many centuries.

Indeed, the United States and Tunisia have enjoyed a remarkable relationship for over 200 years. In fact, we continue to honor a 1797 treaty with the Republic of Tunisia that calls for perpetual and constant peace.

Our relationship with Tunisia has survived civil, regional, and global conflict—growing stronger with every challenge. During World War II, Tunisia supported United States and allied forces as they landed in North Africa. In the ensuing cold war, Tunisia established itself as a steadfast ally in the strategically critical Mediterranean Sea. In the post-cold war years, the Republic of Tunisia has remained our friend and taken steps to develop closer military and economic ties with European allies and NATO.

Today, the Republic of Tunisia continues to make progress toward democracy. Tunisian citizens enjoy universal suffrage, and the na-

tion is considered by many to be a leader among Muslim nations in safeguarding the rights of women and children. Indeed, Tunisia has come so far, so fast, that it is sometimes easy to forget that Tunisia was a French protectorate as recently as 1954, and only gained full independence on March 20, 1956.

The United States was the first great power to recognize Tunisia's independence in 1956, and in keeping with this tradition I would like to be the first to congratulate the Republic of Tunisia on its 44th anniversary of independence this March 20th. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Tunisia on this momentous occasion.

WENDELL H. FORD AVIATION INVESTMENT AND REFORM ACT
FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2000

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the rule and the underlying bill.

Chairman SHUSTER, Ranking Member OBERSTAR and Representatives DUNCAN and LIPINSKI have worked hard to ensure that funds collected in the aviation trust fund are protected and used to support our Nation's aviation system only.

This bill sends a strong message to the American people that we care about improving their lives.

Provisions in this bill:

- authorize desperately needed funds to improve airport infrastructure, to reduce congestion, delays and improve safety;
- enforce passenger's rights;
- establish whistle blower protections for airline employees; and
- improve airline competition.

Again, this bill sends a strong message to airline passengers, airline companies, and our States and that we as a Congress are committed to ensuring safe and efficient air travel.

LIFE AND DEATH: IT'S YOUR
CHOICE IN SURGERY OR "HIGH
VOLUME EQUALS BETTER RESULTS"

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 21, 2000

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, the March 1 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association contains further documentation of life-saving importance: if you are going to have surgery, have it in a hospital that does a lot of it: your chances of survival and good health are much better.

Put another way: avoid hospitals that can't do the procedure in their sleep.

As public policy makers, we should encourage, in every way possible, our constituents and Medicare beneficiaries to seek out the high volume hospitals and avoid the low volume hospitals. The President's Medicare reform proposals move us in that direction.

It really is a matter of life and death. The JAMA article follows:

HIGH-RISK SURGERY—FOLLOW THE CROWD

(John D. Birkmeyer, MD)

Each year a large number of patients die following elective surgery. In the Medicare population alone, 17,000 patients died in 1995 after undergoing 10 types of elective procedures, such as coronary artery by-pass surgery, carotid endarterectomy, and lung resection.¹ Quality improvement initiatives at the local and regional levels may be important for reducing mortality at individual hospitals,^{2,3} but, for many procedures, choosing at which hospitals surgery is performed may be equally important for improving surgical quality.

The idea of concentrating high-risk surgical procedures in high-volume hospitals is not new. Since seminal work by Luft et al⁴ 2 decades ago, large, population-based studies have consistently demonstrated better outcomes at high-volume centers for cardiovascular surgery, major cancer resections, solid organ transplantation, and other high-risk procedures.^{5,8} Lower surgical mortality at high-volume hospitals does not simply reflect the presence of more skillful surgeons and fewer technical errors with the procedure itself. More likely, it reflects more proficiency with all aspects of care underlying successful surgery, including patient selection, anesthesia, and postoperative care.

In this issue of the Journal, Dudley and colleagues⁹ are among the first to estimate how many lives could be saved by regionalization ("selective referral") at the population level. Based on careful review of the extensive volume-outcome literature, they used explicit criteria to identify the single highest-quality study for each surgical procedure or clinical condition that could be considered for regionalization. (The volume-outcome literature is too heterogeneous for formal meta-analysis.) Statistically significant relationships between hospital volume and mortality were identified for 10 procedures and 1 medical condition (care for patients with human immunodeficiency virus infection/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). For example, compared with those at high-volume hospitals, patients undergoing abdominal aortic aneurysm repair at low-volume hospitals (30 or fewer procedures per year) were 64% more likely to die following surgery; children undergoing heart surgery at low-volume hospitals (fewer than 100 procedures per year) were 42% more likely to die. The authors used 1997 California hospital discharge data to estimate the potential benefit of moving patients from low-volume hospitals to higher-volume centers. For 10 surgical procedures alone, it is estimated that regionalization would prevent as many as 500 deaths each year in California. If extrapolated to the nation as a whole, this estimate translates to more than 4000 deaths averted each year.

Two cautions are necessary in interpreting the findings of this study. First, the authors' estimates of the benefits likely to be achieved by regionalization are no more reliable than the volume-outcome studies on which they are based. Much of this literature is outdated or skewed by results from a small number of national referral centers. Additional generalizable, population-based studies are needed. Second, analysis of California data may overestimate the decrease in mortality rates likely to be achieved by regionalization elsewhere. Because California has few restrictions on where surgical care may be delivered, more patients may be