

Democratic Popular Front, a Moldovan party favoring reunification with Romania." While two of the men have been released, four others remain in jail, suffering inhumane living conditions, denial of medical treatment and of visits by international organizations. I cannot make a formal judgement on the merits of the Tiraspol Six case, but I will defer to the findings of international human rights and pro-Democracy organizations. Amnesty International urged the authorities to "conduct prompt, impartial and effective investigations into all allegations of ill-treatment by police and to bring those responsible to justice."

These four men remain in jail today awaiting a fair and open day in court and a right to defend themselves against the charges made against them. The United States should help to promote freedom and democracy in region, by advocating just and fair treatment in court of the people of Moldova.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for rollcall vote No. 183. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on H. Con. Res. 326—the Sense of the House Resolution on the Responsibility of the Federal Government concerning the Los Alamos fire.

FAIRNESS IN ASBESTOS COMPENSATION ACT

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, today I am in opposition of H.R. 1283, the Fairness in Asbestos Compensation Act, which was recently reported out of the House Judiciary Committee. Before it comes to the House floor, I want to make clear my opposition to this bill that creates a windfall for the asbestos industry but denies fair compensation to tens of thousands of American workers and their families.

Bailing out an industry that has caused harm to millions of Americans, is the ultimate slap in the face to the millions of victims affected by the deadly hazards of asbestos. Only because our court system provides accountability for these manufacturers was this deadly threat finally stopped. Now, it is no surprise that asbestos manufacturers want to use the Federal Government to override tort statutes in various States, which have brought them to law. Even more troubling, the bill will prohibit approximately 50 percent of injured asbestos victims from compensation due to new and unreasonable medical standards.

Furthermore, punitive damages would be capped at three times compensatory damages if the victim goes through an administrative hearing. Most troubling, if the victim goes to court directly, punitive damages would be prohibited entirely.

The bill forgets all scientific and health related research that has proven the link be-

tween asbestos exposure and lung disease. The bill creates a strict burden of proof for establishing that asbestos-induced diseases were caused by asbestos exposure. There is no need for this elevated burden of proof since the medical literature by the medical community supports the current substantial level of proof now required. It is estimated that under the bill, about one-half of all asbestos cancer cases now eligible for compensation would be thrown out. For the first time, asbestos lung cancer victims will need to prove that they have no smoking history; if a victim has smoked, they can be denied compensation despite the fact that in the courts this excuse has been repeatedly rejected.

Lastly, the Republican Congress, that so heartily opposes bigger government creates a new federal bureaucracy with this bill. Instead of the 100 asbestos trials a year now moving through the courts, the bill proposes the creation of an entirely new Office of Asbestos Compensation to handle work that is Constitutionally under the purview of the Judiciary system.

We should call this bill what it really is: an Asbestos Industry Preservation and Denial of Victims Act. It is one-sided, pro-defendant, and will throw victims out of court, for the sake of protecting a dangerous industry.

RECOGNIZING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORDINATION OF THE REVEREND JOHN T. KIELB

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Reverend John T. Kielb, pastor of the Church of the Precious Blood in Monmouth Beach, on the 25th Anniversary of his ordination.

Father Kielb is a native of Bayonne, New Jersey, where the seeds of his vocation were sown as an Altar server at Mt. Carmel Roman Catholic Church.

Father Kielb began his journey at Seton Hall University's Divinity Program, where he remained for two years until he was assigned by the Diocese of Trenton to serve his remaining two years at St. Vincent's Seminary.

He graduated in 1974 with a Masters of Divinity Degree and was ordained a Deacon later that year. He spent the following year working in a Pennsylvania parish. On May 17, 1975, Father Kielb was ordained a Priest at St. Mary's Cathedral in Trenton.

Father Kielb's first assignment was to the Sacred Heart Church of South Amboy. Subsequently, he was assigned to St. Robert Ballarmine, in Freehold; St. Gabriels, in Marlboro; and Our Lady of Sorrows, in Mercerville. On September 1, 1989, he was named the pastor at the Church of the Precious Blood in Monmouth Beach, where he has served ever since.

Father Kielb is a great asset to Central New Jersey. I urge all my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Father Kielb and his accomplishments.

LOUIS CARDONI HONORED FOR COMMUNITY WORK

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Louis Cardoni of Plains Township, Luzerne County, in my district, who will be honored by the Plains Rotarians at a dinner May 21 for his role as a community leader.

Lou Cardoni has a long history of community involvement, dating back to the 1940s, when as a youngster, he helped his father develop the Hildale baseball diamond. Since that time, he has worked hard to make Hildale and all of Plains Township a showplace for recreation in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

After returning from his service in the Army, Lou resumed his strong involvement in service to the community. He was a charter member of the Hildale Community Center and is presently a member of the Plans Rotary Club, the Plains American Legion and the ITLO Club. He is a past president of the Plans Rotary and of the Hildale Community Center and is the current secretary of the ITLO Club.

Mr. Speaker, Lou chaired the Plains Recreation Board for many years, and his accomplishments on the recreation board have been a model for the community. Among his most prominent accomplishments was helping to develop the Hildale Baseball Park, which sent many boys on to the professional ranks, including Ed Ott, Randy Martz and Jim Farr, the current baseball coach at the College of William and Mary. Lou also spearheaded the development of the Birchwood Complex, one of Luzerne County's showplaces.

Working with other community leaders, Lou also helped to build three playgrounds, secure a grant for one of the first handicapped-accessible parks in Pennsylvania and obtain grants for roads and water lines in Birchwood Municipal Park and for filling a mine pit which has now been replaced with athletic fields.

Lou and his wife, the former Ellen Dooley of Plains, have three children, Louis Jr., Maureen Riley and Kathy Cardoni, and five grandchildren. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the Plains community in honoring Louis Cardoni for his exceptional service, and I send my best wishes for continued success in all his endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ALTER- NATIVE COMMUNICATION DE- VICES MEDICARE COVERAGE ACT

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will help America's seniors take better care of themselves. This legislation will direct the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) to give Medicare beneficiaries coverage of Augmentative and Alternative Communication Devices ("AAC devices"). AAC devices provide individuals who are unable to speak, use sign language, or write because of cerebral palsy,

muscular dystrophy, stroke or ALS, the ability to communicate—and therefore to lead safer and more productive lives.

I am joined in this effort by my colleagues from California and New York, the Honorable RON PACKARD and JERROLD NADLER, and several other colleagues. In addition, full Medicare coverage of AAC devices is urged by a broad range of the professional medical community, including the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Neurology, and 13 of America's leading disability organizations, including the United Cerebral Palsy Association.

For over a year and a half, I have been working with other Representatives and Senators in hopes of accomplishing administratively through HCFA this goal of AAC device coverage. On Dec. 30, 1999, these 13 leading disability organizations filed a formal request to HCFA for Medicare coverage of AAC devices. On April 26, 2000, the HCFA, after missing its own earlier 90-day deadline for a decision, took only an incomplete and partial step. It withdrew a prior, inexplicable national non-coverage decision of AAC devices, issued in the 1980's, which was an obstacle to granting coverage. However, HCFA failed to take the needed step of granting Medicare beneficiaries coverage of AAC devices.

The legislation we are introducing today will accomplish that goal, and secure AAC device coverage for America's seniors through their Medicare health benefits.

For many of the people who need these devices, the ability to speak and interact with society through a communications device has a profound and positive impact on their lives. One of the most prominent users of these devices is the famed physicist Dr. Stephen Hawking, who suffers from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) or Lou Gehrig's disease. Dr. Hawking's story of how his disease forced him to communicate through an augmentative communication device is best told in his own words:

In 1985, I had to have a tracheotomy operation. After this, I had to have 24 hour nursing care. This was made possible by grants from several foundations. Before the operation, my speech had been getting more slurred, so that only a few people who knew me well could understand me. But at least I could communicate. I wrote scientific papers by dictating to a secretary, and I gave seminars through an

However, a computer expert in California, called Walt Woltosz, heard of my plight. He sent me a computer program he had written, called Equalizer. This allowed me to select words from a series of menus on the screen, by pressing a switch in my hand. The program could also be controlled by a switch, operated by head or eye movement. When I have built up what I want to say, I can send it to a speech synthesizer. At first, I just ran the Equalizer program on a desk top computer.

However David Mason, of Cambridge Adaptive Communication, fitted a small portable computer and a speech synthesizer to my wheel chair. This system allowed me to communicate much better than I could before. I can manage up to 15 words a minute. I can either speak what I have written, or save it to disk. I can then print it out, or call it back and speak it sentence by sentence. Using this system, I have written a

book, and dozens of scientific papers. I have also given many scientific and popular talks. They have all been well received. I think that is in a large part due to the quality of the speech synthesizer, which is made by Speech Plus. One's voice is very important. If you have a slurred voice, people are likely to treat you as mentally deficient: Does he take sugar? This synthesizer is by far the best I have heard, because it varies the intonation, and doesn't speak like a Dalek. The only trouble is that it gives me an American accent.

I have had motor neuron disease for practically all my adult life. Yet it has not prevented me from having a very attractive family, and being successful in my work. This is thanks to the help I have received from Jane, my children, and a large number of other people and organizations. I have been lucky, that my condition has progressed more slowly than is often the case. But it shows that one need not lose hope.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Hawking's story is one of triumph over a terrible disease. But he is not alone.

More than 30,000 Americans suffer from ALS, another 30,000 from cerebral palsy and untold others from various diseases that rob them of their ability to speak. Fortunately, modern technology is making these augmentative communication devices smaller, easier to handle and affordable for many individuals.

However, for those who cannot afford these devices, they are already covered by every state Medicaid program as well as by TRICARE, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and hundreds of commercial health providers. They are not covered by Medicare. The Medicare program remains alone among federal government health care providers in choosing not to cover AAC devices, despite numerous attempts to secure this needed coverage.

We believe that HCFA can and should grant coverage of these devices to Medicare beneficiaries. Our legislation will accomplish that goal. Further delay is a great disservice to Medicare beneficiaries—seniors who often simply cannot speak for themselves—who need access to AAC devices. The challenges suffered by the greatest physicist of our time, Dr. Hawking, made clear to us through his own words, are likewise shared by thousands of other seniors around this country, who, without these devices, cannot speak for themselves. At the most basic level, the ability to communicate with a doctor, pharmacist, or care worker could save a senior's life. Moreover, securing Medicare coverage for seniors to use AAC devices gives voice to Americans who are kept silent, improving the quality of their lives immeasurably.

Attached are letters from the United Cerebral Palsy Association and Sunrise Medical, a communications device manufacturer, supporting this legislation. I urge all my colleagues to join me by co-sponsoring this timely and important legislation to achieve Medicare coverage of AAC devices.

UNITED CEREBRAL PALSY ASSOCIATIONS,
Washington, DC, May 9, 2000.

Hon RANDY (DUKE) CUNNINGHAM,
Attn: Tim Charters, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515.

DEAR REP. CUNNINGHAM: UCP, the nation's largest health charity, is pleased to endorse your forthcoming bill to require the Department of Health and Human Services to issue

a Medicare National Coverage Determination for augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices. Many people with severe speech disabilities, such as those due to cerebral palsy, need these devices to communicate, but requests by UCP and other organizations for Medicare to issue a national coverage determination have not been heeded.

Medicare has failed to act in spite of the compelling case for the efficacy of AAC devices, in spite of physicians who determine these devices are medically necessary for many Medicare beneficiaries with severe speech disabilities, and in spite of the policy of every other health insurer to pay for them. As a result, some Medicare beneficiaries are unable to communicate because they cannot afford to buy these devices themselves.

Thus we believe Congress should enact your bill at the earliest possible time. We look forward to continuing to work with you as this proposal is considered by Congress.

Sincerely,

KIRSTEN A. NYROP,
Executive Director.

SUNRISE MEDICAL,
Carlsbad, CA, May 16, 2000.

Congressman RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM,
Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN CUNNINGHAM: Sunrise Medical appreciates your leadership in introducing legislation to provide Medicare coverage for Augmentative and Alternative Communication devices ("AAC"). These devices provide individuals who are unable to speak, use sign language, or write because of cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, stroke or ALS, the ability to communicate and therefore lead safer and more productive lives.

Sunrise Medical designs, manufactures and markets AAC devices. These devices are covered by every state Medicaid program, as well as by Tri-Care, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and hundreds of commercial health providers. Only Medicare has to date not covered AAC devices.

Full Medicare coverage of AAC devices is urged by virtually the entire professional medical community, including the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Neurology, and the 13 leading disability organizations. These organizations, including Sunrise Medical, filed on December 30, 1999 a request with HCFA for Medicare coverage of AAC devices. On April 26, 2000 HCFA, after missing its own earlier 90-day deadline for a decision, took only an incomplete and partial step. It withdrew the prior inexplicable national non-coverage decision of AAC devices, but it failed to take the needed step granting Medicare beneficiaries coverage of AAC devices. To leave this issue only half way done is a great disservice to Medicare beneficiaries who need access to AAC devices now.

Sunrise Medical supports your sponsoring legislation to provide Medicare coverage of AAC devices to give voice to seniors who cannot speak for themselves.

Sincerely,

STEVEN A. JAYE,
Senior Vice President.

GUAM'S YOUTH ISLAND
LEADERSHIP DAY

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, each year in April, Guam's Department of Education celebrates Youth Month with several activities. An oratorical contest, a student exchange program, a school showcase, and a youth showcase, and a youth conference culminates with the much-anticipated Island Leadership Day, during which students assume the roles of Guam's public, private, and military leaders for a day. In coordination with these sectors of our island community, the activity gives students from Guam's middle schools and high schools the opportunity to experience leadership roles. Island senators, corporate accountants, military colonels and, even, hospital nurses were included in the wide range of career men and women that selected students "shadowed" in order to experience an average day's work in their assigned positions.

On the morning of April 26, 2000, three high school students looking sharp, studious and ready to take on the challenge, walked into my office. William B. Jones, a senior from George Washington High School was Guam's student Washington Delegate for the day while Jonathan Pador, was a G.W. senior, took over as student District Director for my office and Madelene Marinas, a senior from the Academy of Our Lady of Guam, functioned as student Communications Director. Their eagerness was tempered by a bit of nervousness which was not surprising.

These students made me reminisce of my own high school days and the very first Island Leadership Day. Although admitting to the fact betrays my age, I still remain proud I once earned the privilege of being a senator in the Guam Legislature for a day. I remember arriving at the Guam legislative session hall that day back in 1964. I made a bee line for the desk of my hero, Senator Antonio B. Won Pat. I have always admired this man. He later worked to further advance Guam's agenda when he was elected to the office of the Guam Washington Representative in 1965. He was the first and only man to serve in this capacity until the office was replaced by the congressionally created Guam delegate's office in 1972. Mr. Won Pat served as a member of the House of Representatives from 1972 until 1984.

I did not realize it at the time but I look back to that event as the day I took my dreams a step further. I began setting my goals on that first Island Leadership Day in 1964. As Island Leadership Day is intended to introduce and inspire students to leadership positions in the community, I am proud to say I was among the ranks of many who, over the years, found inspiration and realized their goals through this program.

With the enthusiastic support of Guam's public, private and military sectors, more than 300 students from nearly every middle and high school took part in Island Leadership Day 2000. All in all, thousands of Guam's students participated in the various activities of Youth Month, each planned and coordinated by student leaders themselves. In particular, the Youth Month Central Planning Committee,

was made up of students from Southern High School, specifically Cherika Chargualaf, president; Hermaine Alerta, vice president; Erwin Agar, secretary; Joseph Cruz, treasurer; and Angela Tamayo, activities coordinator. In having planned and executed a very impressive and successful schedule of varied events, our youth genuinely embodied this year's Youth Month theme, "I Manhoben I Isla-ta, I Fuetsan I Tiempo-ta—The Youth of Our Island, the Strength of Our Time."

Today's youth embody our future. As we provide training and guidance, their performance is clear indication of the leadership they have to offer for the future. As I look at local students take roles in different career areas, I see a wonderful vision of Guam's future.

TRIBUTE TO DR. ROSCOE C.
BROWN, JR.

HON. JOSE E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with joy that I rise today to pay tribute to and to congratulate Dr. Roscoe C. Brown, Jr., for his dedication to education and human rights, and for his many accomplishments, including his service to America during World War II. He will be honored today at Bronx Community College when the Gould Student Center is renamed the Roscoe C. Brown, Jr. Student Center.

For 16 years, from 1977 to 1993, Dr. Brown was president of Bronx Community College in New York City. During that time, he brought the college to national prominence as a model urban community college devoted to providing opportunities for educational advancement for all.

Mr. Speaker, prior to becoming president of Bronx Community College, Dr. Brown was director of the Afro-American Institute at New York University. In that capacity, he educated students and the general public about the accomplishments of the African American community. It was during that time, too, that Dr. Brown began his career in radio and television, providing a larger public with insights into African American life.

Before his academic career, Dr. Brown distinguished himself as a member of the heroic Tuskegee Airmen, who came through World War II with a commendable record of successes in combat.

Dr. Brown has also been personally involved in the struggles for human rights for all people and has fought against all forms of racism and bigotry.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege for me to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Dr. Roscoe C. Brown, Jr. for his major contributions to our country.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NUCLEAR
POWER PLANT SAFETY EN-
HANCEMENT ACT

HON. SUE W. KELLY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the purpose of introducing a proposal to en-

hance the safety of operations at our nation's nuclear power plants.

As a representative from a district which has three nuclear power plants. I have always held a strong interest in promoting policies which seek to ensure the safety of communities surrounding these facilities. I became acutely aware, however, of the need to strengthen the independent analysis and review of plant safety evaluations just recently.

On the night of February 15, a leak from one of the steam generators at the Indian Point 2 facility in Buchanan, New York, resulted in the declaration of an emergency alert. The distress caused by this incident was serious from the very beginning, and was made far worse by revelations in the weeks following the incident which indicated that previous inspections of the plant's steam generators were "weak and incomplete," according to the NRC's Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research.

This is wholly unacceptable, and my purpose in offering this proposal today is to diminish the threat posed to our communities by insufficient safety evaluations. This legislation establishes within the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Office of the Inspector General a unit charged specifically with auditing the safety analysis and review activities of both the NRC and those entities licensed by the agency.

Given the unfortunate circumstances which have arisen with respect to Indian Point 2, it is only reasonable to question whether or not they are symptomatic of a broader problem. I believe the proposal being offered today goes a long way in taking the necessary precautions against such a possibility, and I urge my colleagues to join me in advancing this initiative.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RONNIE SHOWS

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, I was away from the floor of the House on Tuesday, May 16, 2000, on official business and was unable to cast a recorded vote on rollcall 184.

Had I been present for rollcall 184, I would have voted "yea" on passage of H.R. 4425, the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1089, Military Construction Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2001.

COMPREHENSIVE BUDGET
PROCESS REFORM ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. TIM ROEMER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2000

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 853) to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to provide for joint resolutions on the budget, reserve funds for emergency spending, strengthened enforcement of budgetary decisions, increased accountability for Federal spending,