

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,

accrual budgeting for Federal insurance programs, mitigation of the bias in the budget process toward higher spending, modifications in paygo requirements when there is an on-budget surplus, and for other purposes:

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Chairman, since I have served in Congress, I have always supported commonsense reform proposals that improve the efficiency of Congress and make it more accountable to the American people.

While I support some of the specific proposals contained in the Comprehensive Budget Process Reform Act, such as biennial budgeting and increased congressional oversight responsibility, I voted against the bill because it failed to include these important reform measures.

I was disappointed that the bipartisan amendment to provide for biennial budgeting was defeated. This would have streamlined the budget process, enhanced the oversight of government programs and strengthened fiscal management. With the recent enactment of the other government reform measures, such as the Government Performance and Review Act, which I supported, a biennial budget process would be the next logical step in promoting long-term planning, and improving the efficiency of government and the use of taxpayer dollars.

I was also disappointed that the House adopted on voice vote the second amendment offered by Representative RYAN. This amendment would allow non-Social Security surpluses to be used for tax cuts or changes to entitlement programs. The problem with this amendment, in my opinion, is that it would repeal many of the budget rules known as "pay-as-you-go" requiring that tax cuts be offset with equal cuts in federal spending. Without these rules, critical federal programs could be sequestered, leading to across-the-board cuts in education, Medicare, and farm support programs. This is a dangerous way to change the budget process, and it is not sound fiscal policy.

Mr. Chairman, for these reasons, I voted against H.R. 853, and I am pleased that a bipartisan majority of my colleagues voted with me to defeat this legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO COVER AAC DEVICES UNDER MEDICARE

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, today I join Representative CUNNINGHAM in introducing an important bill to rectify a fundamental unfairness for seniors stricken with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, ALS, and other debilitating diseases that render one unable to speak. Our bill would extend Medicare coverage to Augmentative and Alternative Communication, or AAC Devices, which have been previously unavail-

able to seniors who cannot afford the enormous cost, so that all seniors may enjoy the benefits of communication.

AAC devices are remarkable machines that allow a severely speech-impaired person to speak through a computer. Perhaps the most famous user of these devices is physicist Stephen Hawking, who relies on this device to conduct his brilliant work. Fortunately, he is able to afford an AAC device, but countless others who are stricken with ALS, and similarly debilitating diseases, find themselves without the means to purchase these expensive, yet invaluable, devices.

Amazingly, HCFA, the Health Care Financing Administration, has refused to cover these devices, labeling them "a convenience item." Is it merely a convenience to be able to communicate with your family, your friends, or your caretaker? Is it just a luxury for people suffering with ALS to lead safe, healthy, and productive lives? That is what HCFA must believe by refusing to cover AAC devices.

HCFA's resistance toward covering AAC devices is made even more inexplicable by the fact that every other federal health care provider, like the Veterans' Administration, every state Medicaid program, as well as hundreds of commercial providers cover these unique devices, recognizing that communication is more than a convenience, it's a necessity. It is a cruelty to deny individuals the power of speech, when then devices are readily available.

I first became interested in this cause after meeting with the wife of the late actor Michael Lazo, a constituent of mine, who first told me of HCFA's refusal to cover AAC devices. Over the last year and a half many of my colleagues, particularly Mr. CUNNINGHAM, and I have worked to reverse this short-sighted decision. I am pleased that recently they removed their non-coverage decision, allowing local carriers to cover AAC devices if they determine it is appropriate. However, this decision goes only half-way toward what is necessary. While I have no doubt that coverage is the only reasonable decision these local providers could reach, I feel we must affirmatively cover these devices.

According to HCFA itself, AAC Devices "can greatly improve the quality of life of people who either cannot speak or whose speech is unintelligible to most listeners . . . this technology gives severely speech-impaired people ways to communicate their thoughts to others." I ask them today to listen to their own words and cover AAC devices.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join us in providing the power of speech to those who could benefit from these devices and cosponsor this important legislation.

LUNG CANCER RESEARCH

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the tragedy of lung cancer, which afflicts hundreds of thousands of Americans. I especially want to pay tribute to my constituent, Vivian Feigl of Rego Park, New York, who struggles with this debilitating disease and whose longstanding commitment to helping those with lung cancer is an inspiration to us all. Rarely do I encounter people with as much passion and energy for an issue as Vivian has for finding a cure for lung cancer.

Mr. Speaker, most of us know how devastating lung cancer can be. But few Americans understand how pervasive this disease is. According to the American Cancer Society, lung cancer is the number one cancer killer of American women. More people die of lung cancer annually than colon, breast, and prostate cancers combined. In this year alone, over 164,000 new cases of lung cancer will be diagnosed, and nearly 157,000 people will die of lung cancer. Moreover, whereas early detection can prevent an overwhelming majority of deaths for some cancers, such as cervical and prostate cancer, few cases of lung cancer are caught at an early stage. Overall, the five-year survival rate for all stages of lung cancer is 14 percent. Clearly, we can and must do more to fight this terrible illness.

I have long supported increasing our investment in medical research because it can both save lives and reduce our nation's health care costs in the long run. And as a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education, I have worked hard to ensure that researchers have the resources necessary to continue to make advances in the prevention and treatment of cancer.

Yet while funding for long cancer research has increased to about \$160 million in 1999, our battle is far from over. With so many Americans like Vivian fighting bravely against this disease, we must continue to increase funding for lung cancer research. The Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill that passed subcommittee last week would provide an additional \$1.3 billion for the National Institutes of Health—a badly needed increase. As this bill moves forward, I hope that we'll ultimately provide a \$2.7 billion increase so that we can meet our goal of doubling the NIH budget over five years.

So today, I again commend Vivian Feigl, who has devoted so much of her time and energy to the fight against lung cancer. And I promise to continue my fight to double funding for the NIH so we can find cures for lung cancer and the many of the other diseases and disorders plaguing our nation. Our friends and families depend on our unbending commitment to this critical research, and they deserve no less.