

You are here to enrich the world, and you impoverish yourself if you forget this errand."

As VISTA celebrates 35 years of service, and embarks on year 36 as AmeriCorps VISTA, it is clear to me that the program and its people remain clearly focused on that task—on enabling the world to live more amply, developing a greater vision for all and generating a finer spirit of hope in communities across our nation.

Ultimately, the lives of each of you—and of the people you touch—will all be richer for it. I can guarantee it—and my daughter Katherine would agree.●

IN MEMORY OF DR. MICHAEL ASSEY

● Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr President, I rise today to remember one of South Carolina's finest doctors, Michael E. Assey, who passed away on October 28. A graduate of Georgetown University's School of Medicine, Michael joined the staff of the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) in 1979 and rose to the position of Professor of Medicine, Chief of Cardiology. In 1998, he was named to the "Best Doctors in America" list. He served as governor of the American College of Cardiology and as president of the S.C. affiliate of the American Heart Association. Michael also authored numerous medical articles and medical textbook chapters. While at MUSC, he received the prestigious Golden Apple Award for excellence in teaching. The President of MUSC, Raymond Greenberg, said, "his professional legacy lies in the generation of young doctors who, as Michael Assey's students, not only learned clinical skills, but compassion and commitment." With Michael's passing, the Medical University has lost a great doctor and great teacher and South Carolina has lost a great man. My wife, Peatsy and I send our thoughts and prayers to Michael's devoted wife, Valerie, and their two children.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 6, 1999, the Secretary of the Senate, on October 30, 2000, during the recess of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2498) to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for recommendations of the Secretary of Health and Human Services regarding the placement of automatic external defibrillators in Federal buildings in order to improve survival rates of individuals who experience cardiac arrest in such buildings, and to establish protections from civil liability arising from the emergency use of the devices.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following joint resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.J. Res. 120. Joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2001, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

A message from the House of Representatives, delivered by one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled joint resolution:

H.J. Res. 120. Joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2001, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was signed subsequently by the President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND).

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, October 30, 2000, he had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 614. An act to provide for regulatory reform in order to encourage investment, business, and economic development with respect to activities conducted on Indian lands.

S. 835. An act to encourage the restoration of estuary habitat through more efficient project financing and enhanced coordination of Federal and non-Federal restoration programs, and for other purposes.

S. 1586. An act to reduce the fractionated ownership of Indian Lands, and for other purposes.

S. 2719. An act to provide for business development and trade promotion for Native Americans, and for other purposes.

S. 2950. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish the Sand Creek Massacre Historic Site in the State of Colorado.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-11369. A communication from the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on audit and investigative activities for fiscal year 2000; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-11370. A communication from the Executive Director of the Committee For Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of additions to the procurement list received on October 26, 2000; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-11371. A communication from the Director of the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report concerning the inventory of commercial activities; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-11372. A communication from the Chief of the Policy and Rules Division, Office of Engineering and Technology, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Closed Captioning Requirements for Digital Television Receivers" (ET Docket No. 99-254, FCC 00-259) received on October 27, 2000; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-11373. A communication from the Chief of the Policy and Rules Division, Office of Engineering and Technology, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled

"Amendment of Parts 2 and 87 of the Commission's Rules Regarding the Radio-navigation Service at 31.8-32.3 GHz (ET Docket No. 98-197)" (ET Docket No. 98-197, FCC 00-353) received on October 27, 2000; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-11374. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fisheries; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna; Adjustment of General Category Daily Retention Limit on Previously Designated Restricted Fishing Days" (I.D. 100300B) received on October 26, 2000; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-11375. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Removal of Commercial Haddock Daily Trip Limit" received on October 26, 2000; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-11376. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Highly Migratory Species; Pelagic Longline Fishery; Sea Turtle Protection Measures. Emergency Rule" (RIN0648-A067; I.D.091100A) received on October 26, 2000; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-11377. A communication from the Acting Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management, National Ocean Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Coastal Ocean Program: General Grant Administration Terms and Conditions of the Coastal Ocean Program" (Docket No. 000817236-01) received on October 26, 2000; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-11378. A communication from the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to pilot records; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-11379. A communication from the Associate Administrator for Procurement, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Indirect Cost Rates" received on October 26, 2000; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-11380. A communication from the Director of the Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department to Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medical Devices; Exemption From Premarket Notification; Class II Devices; Triiodothyronine Test System" (Docket No. 00P-1280) received on October 26, 2000; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-11381. A communication from the Director of the Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department to Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medical Devices; Labeling for Menstrual Tampon for the "Ultra" Absorbency" (Docket No. 98N-0970) received on October 26, 2000; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-11382. A communication from the Acting Assistant General Counsel for Regulations, Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Student Assistance General Provisions, Federal Family Education Loan Program, William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program, and Federal Pell Grant Program (Cohort Default Rate)" (RIN1845-AA17) received on October 27, 2000; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-11383. A communication from the Acting Assistant General Counsel, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Special Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership Program" (RIN1845-AA18) received on October 27, 2000; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-631. A petition from a citizen of the State of Texas relative to the "Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act of 2000"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

POM-632. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania relative to "The Mighty Eighth Air Force Week"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 119

Whereas, formed and dispatched to England in 1942, the Eighth Air Force became the largest military unit in World War II, with more than 350,000 personnel; and

Whereas, the Eighth Air Force, which has become known as "The Mighty Eighth," continues to this day as an operational combat unit, having been served by more than 1 million men and women in war and peace; and

Whereas, not a single Mighty Eighth Air Force mission was ever turned back due to enemy resistance; and

Whereas, more than 26,000 men and women who served with the Mighty Eighth Air Force were killed in action, and more than 28,000 prisoners of war and countless veterans are still missing; and

Whereas, during the week of October 8 through 14, 1943, the Mighty Eighth Air Force lost 148 heavy bombers to enemy resistance over the skies of Europe; and

Whereas, despite significant losses, this period is credited as a turning point for the continuation of daytime strategic bombing over Europe; and

Whereas, the Eighth Air Force Historical Society holds its annual reunion each October; and

Whereas, more than 20,000 Eighth Air Force Historical Society members seek to inform younger generations of the contributions and sacrifices of all veterans; and

Whereas, each year during the week of October 8 through 14, Mighty Eighth Air Force veterans and friends display items in memory of fellow veterans and those men and women who made the supreme sacrifice; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania memorialize the President and Congress of the United States to proclaim and designate the week of October 8 through 14 this year and each year hereafter as "The Mighty Eighth Air Force Week"; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the presiding officers of each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from Pennsylvania.

POM-633. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania relative to the Balanced Budget Act of 2000; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 204

Whereas, Medicare was enacted in 1965 as a social insurance program providing health care benefits to older Americans and individuals with disabilities; and

Whereas, the program serves 39 million beneficiaries nationwide; and

Whereas, there are currently 2,129,756 Medicare eligible citizens in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and 589,070 Medicare HMO enrollees; and

Whereas, the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 ensures the financial health of the Medicare program until 2008; and

Whereas, the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 created the Medicare Plus Choice program to expand managed care options for beneficiaries and protect health care access, affordability and quality; and

Whereas, the implementation of the Medicare Plus Choice program has been carried out as intended by Congress; and

Whereas, six of the 13 Medicare insurers in Pennsylvania have announced that they will terminate their Medicare contracts completely or reduce their counties served in 2001 because of inadequate Medicare payment rates and methodology as well as program overregulation; and

Whereas, approximately 58,000 beneficiaries in 29 counties will be impacted, resulting in a 10% decrease in the number of Medicare eligible HMO enrollees; and

Whereas, several Medicare insurers have announced plans to reduce benefit levels and increase premiums in 2001 in response to inadequate payment rates and methodology as well as program overregulation; and

Whereas, hospitals and health systems in Pennsylvania are facing a \$3.6 billion cut in Medicare reimbursements, and more than four out of five hospitals are unable to cover operating expenses with patient revenues; and

Whereas, inadequate Medicare payments as a result of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 are directly impacting beneficiaries' ability to retain health care coverage and choose their healthcare plan; and

Whereas, in light of an anticipated Federal budget surplus, Congress has an opportunity to ensure that the original goals of the Medicare Plus Choice program are achieved and that Medicare beneficiaries have access to affordable, quality health care in their communities; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge Congress to enact additional Balanced Budget Act relief in 2000 through adequate payments to Medicare insurers and Medicare providers.

POM-634. A resolution adopted by the House of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania relative to the strengthening of the Medicare+Choice program; to the Committee on Finance.

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 609

Whereas, the Congress of the United States created the Medicare+Choice program under the Balanced Budget Act of 1997; and

Whereas, the intent of Congress in creating Medicare+Choice was to allow beneficiaries to have access to a wide array of private health plan choices in addition to traditional fee-for-service Medicare; and

Whereas, at the end of 1999, more than 560,000 Pennsylvanians were enrolled in a Medicare HMO; and

Whereas, in late July 2000, the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) released information on Medicare HMO contract renewals, service area reductions and terminations; and

Whereas, in Pennsylvania, these changes will affect approximately 90,000 beneficiaries Statewide; and

Whereas, almost 15,000 of these individuals must return to the Medicare fee-for-service program since there is no other Medicare HMO available in their county of residence; and

Whereas, given the losses Medicare HMOs have experienced over the past several years, the number of HMOs serving Medicare beneficiaries continues to decline; and

Whereas, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MEDPAC) does not support raising the Medicare+Choice floor payment rate to slow the rate of health plan departures from the program; and

Whereas, Medicare+Choice plans are not receiving adequate resources to provide beneficiaries the benefits they need and deserve; and

Whereas, Medicare beneficiaries value the high quality, affordable health care coverage they receive through Medicare+Choice plans; therefore be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives memorialize Congress to enact legislation which strengthens the Medicare+Choice program by reducing administrative requirements in the program, increasing payment rates to HMOs to a level which accurately reflects the costs of providing benefits to recipients in the program and providing for prescription drug coverage; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from Pennsylvania.

POM-635. A resolution adopted by the House of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania relative to the Health Care Financing Administration; to the Committee on Finance.

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 617

Whereas, over a half million senior citizens across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have been severely affected by the problems of Medicare HMO withdrawals, increases in premiums and decreases in benefit packages effective January 1, 2001; and

Whereas, this year 65 managed care companies chose not to renew their Medicare+Choice contracts for 2001; and

Whereas, seniors on fixed incomes who rely on their Federal and State Governments to provide them with some measure of health care protection are now facing extreme uncertainty; and

Whereas, approximately 577,000 Pennsylvania seniors who are members of a Medicare HMO are facing substantial plan coverage changes effective January 1, 2001; and

Whereas, ninety thousand of these seniors in 38 counties across this Commonwealth are being dropped from their HMOs; and

Whereas, thousands of seniors living in a county from which their Medicare HMO is not withdrawing may be dropped from their plan because their county code for Social Security purposes or their zip code, or both the county code and zip code, is identified as being in the neighboring county from which the Medicare HMO is withdrawing; and

Whereas, many of these seniors may not have received information that they need to ensure that these county code or zip code or both code problems are corrected, and other seniors are consistently receiving misinformation from their Medicare HMO regarding the status of their coverage as of January 1, 2001; therefore be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania memorialize the Health Care Financing Administration and health insurers withdrawing their Medicare HMO coverage in any