

This legislation helps bridge the insurance gap between those that can afford a flood policy and those that cannot. The bill would provide discounted flood insurance over a five-year term for low-income homeowners or renters whose primary residence is placed within a Special Flood Hazard Area (flood plain) by a redraw of the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). If their property is worth no more than \$75,000, they would be eligible to receive a 50% discount on their flood insurance premiums for a five-year period.

It also provides for limited retroactivity if their residence is placed within the floodplain within two years of the enactment of the legislation; otherwise, the five years would begin upon the placement of the property within the flood plain. I hope that this legislation will not only increase participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), but make its program more affordable for the economically disadvantaged. It provides an incentive for those who are most vulnerable to huge losses in floods to get the protection they need at a price they can afford.

The NFIP plays a crucial role in lessening the impact of a major flooding disaster, but to make the program operate most effectively we need greater participation. I believe my legislation will extend the helping hand associated with flood insurance down to those people in greatest need of assistance.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that we can speed this bill through the 107th Congress.

AMERICAN SCHOLARS OF CHINESE ANCESTRY

SPEECH OF

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 25, 2001

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support for H. Res. 160, which calls upon the Government of the People's Republic of China to immediately and unconditionally release Li Shaomin and all other American scholars of Chinese ancestry being held in detention. I join in asking President Bush to make the release of these scholars, who include U.S. citizens and permanent residents, a top priority in our dealings with China.

These Chinese American scholars have been accused of spying but no evidence has been produced by the Chinese government. The detainees have even been denied the basic right of meeting with their families and lawyers. Dr. Li Shaomin, Dr. Gao Zhan, Wu Jianmin, Tan Guangguang, and Teng Chunyan have been unjustly imprisoned and denied due process. We must insist on their immediate release.

The harassment and persecution of intellectuals is yet another attempt by the Chinese government to stifle any freedom of expression among its people. China's leaders should be ashamed of its government's abysmal record of human rights abuses but instead remain indifferent to the condemnation of the world community. The Chinese government regularly violates the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which it signed in October 1998.

We must make sure that the Chinese government understands that it will pay a price for

flouting international norms of behavior. This is why I support rescinding Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China and going back to an annual review. I would hope, moreover, that China's human rights record will be a factor in the International Olympic Committee's choice of which country will host the 2008 Olympics.

I urge all my colleagues to send a strong message to the Chinese government by unanimously passing this important resolution.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. MARK JOHNSON

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Mark Johnson, who will be recognized by the New Jersey Medical School's Family Practice Residency Program for his outstanding achievements in the fields of family medicine and medical research. Dr. Johnson will be honored on Friday, June 29, 2001, at a private reception at the Landmark II in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

Mark Johnson graduated from Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where he majored in Black Literature. He furthered his studies by graduating from the University of Medicine and Dentistry at New Jersey's Medical School in Newark, New Jersey. After graduating from medical school, Dr. Johnson spent his family practice residency at the University of South Alabama in Mobile, Alabama. In addition, he was a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he received his Masters Degree in Public Health.

Dr. Johnson's notable career as a family physician and medical researcher has earned him widespread praise from his peers and colleagues. The American Medical Association has recognized him on four separate occasions for his diligent work and exceptional endeavors, by presenting him with the Physician's Recognition Award. New York Magazine designated him one of the best doctors in the State of New York in 1999 and 2000.

Currently, Dr. Johnson is the Chair of the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Medicine and Dentistry at New Jersey's Medical School in Newark. Prior to his tenure at New Jersey's Medical School, Dr. Johnson taught at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of South Alabama, and Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. Mark Johnson for his distinguished service and commitment to family medicine.

GINA UPCHURCH RECEIVES COMMUNITY HEALTH LEADER AWARD

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my congratulations to Gina

Upchurch, one of 10 recipients of the 2001 Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leader Award. Ms. Upchurch has earned this honor for her pathbreaking work with the Senior PHARMAssist Program based in Durham, North Carolina.

Each year, the Community Health Leadership Program recognizes ten individual who have found innovative ways to bring health care to communities whose needs have been ignore or unmet. Ms. Upchurch was selected for this prestigious recognition from a field of 577 nominees.

As founder and executive director of Senior PHARMAssist, Ms. Upchurch created a model to help seniors on limited incomes purchase expensive medications. PHARMAssist monitors the medications of their clients to help prevent life-threatening interactions and provides financial aid to those on limited incomes. The program has helped more than 2,600 seniors get the medications they need and has educated over 800 older adults about safer usage of medication.

The counseling and support provided by PHARMAssist works. A recent study conducted by the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill found that emergency room visits and over-night hospital stays had decreased by almost a third for seniors who had been in the program for at least one year.

Ms. Upchurch graduated from UNC with degrees in pharmacy and public health. She served in the Peace Corps in Botswana before returning to North Carolina to write her master's thesis, a policy analysis which recommended a program to provide health care to seniors throughout the state. This laid the groundwork for what eventually became Senior PHARMAssist. She now oversees a \$500,000 budget and has written a manual to help other communities establish a similar program.

Gina Upchurch has improved health care and helped those in need in our community. I am proud to recognize her achievements today.

DIRECT AIR SERVICE BETWEEN LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AND WASHINGTON'S REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORTS

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I have been joined by a bipartisan group of, my colleagues in introducing legislation to preserve direct air service between Washington's Reagan-National Airport (DCA) and Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

This legislation is necessary because the Department of Transportation (DOT) decided to eliminate this critical service last Friday. Instead of permitting American Airlines, which purchased TWA, to have the TWA slots to continue to fly this route, the Department awarded them to Alaska Airlines, which will use them to start nonstop service between Washington and Seattle.

The Department's decision disappointed tens of thousands of Californians and other passengers who have come to rely on this route and its connections to Bakersfield, Fresno, Monterey, Oakland, Palm Springs, San

Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and elsewhere in the state.

Without this route, Los Angeles will be the largest U.S. city without non-stop air service to Washington's Reagan-National. In fact, California, the most populous state in the Union, will have no direct connection to DCA.

Earlier this year, 57 Members of Congress—including House Majority Leader DICK ARMEDY and Democratic Leader RICHARD GEHRARDT and most Members of the California congressional delegation—wrote the DOT in support of American Airline's efforts to preserve this critical service.

The legislation introduced today allows American Airlines to use two existing slot exemptions for service between Washington's Reagan-National and Los Angeles. As such, it does not increase the total number of flights at Washington's Reagan National and permits Alaska Airlines to fly direct to Seattle.

Mr. Speaker, Californians rely upon nonstop air service between Los Angeles International Airport and Washington's Reagan-National Airport. Without congressional action, this convenient nonstop air service will end in September.

I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation.

**HONORING THE 125 YEAR HISTORY
OF LA VETA, COLORADO**

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay special tribute to La Veta, Colorado on its 125th Birthday. For over a century, the people of La Veta have contributed a rich heritage and cultural diversity to the state of Colorado. I would like Congress to wish the citizens of La Veta a very happy 125th birthday.

In 1862, Col. John M. Francisco, a former settler with the US Army at Fort Garland, and Judge Henry Daigle built Fort Francisco on land purchased from the Vigil-St. Vrain Land Grant, significantly south west of most of the San Luis Valley bound traffic. When Col. John Francisco looked down on the future site of La Veta in the mid 1850's he said, "This is paradise enough for me." The town of La Veta was incorporated on October 9, 1876.

As more settlers moved into this beautiful and fertile valley, the Fort increased in importance as shelter from Indians and as the commercial center for the area. The first Post Office, named Spanish Peaks, opened in the Plaza in 1871. By 1875 the Indian threat was almost completely gone. In 1876 the narrow gauge railroad came through La Veta several blocks north of the Fort on its way westward through the newly surveyed La Veta Pass. In 1877 the permanent rail depot was built beside the rails and the business community slowly moved north toward it. For many years, this stretch of the line between La Veta and Wagon Creek was the highest in the world. The old depot building at the summit is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The mountains of the Sangre de Cristo Range were long known by the Indians of the Southwest. Relics of the Basket Weaver Cul-

ture have also been found within the county. The Spanish Peaks are a historic landmark to travelers—from the early Indians to the vacationer. Besides being the railhead, La Veta has also been the center of local agriculture and coal mining.

Mr. Speaker, the citizens of Colorado are proud of La Veta's 125-year heritage. It is an area rich in culture, history and heritage. For that Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish La Veta happy birthday and wish its citizens good luck and prosperity for the next 125 years.

**HONORING YAKOV SMIRNOFF ON
THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS
CITIZENSHIP**

HON. CHRISTOPHER COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Yakov Smirnoff, who will celebrate his 15th anniversary as a United States citizen on July 4, 2001.

When Yakov left the Soviet Union in 1977, he arrived in the U.S. with less than \$100 in his pocket. But like so many new immigrants, Yakov quickly found a way to put his talents to use in his new country—and in only a few years he became one of America's most recognized comedians.

Yakov's brand of comedy appealed to so many Americans because it carried real insight. He poked fun at the daily consequences of Soviet tyranny, while displaying a remarkably American irreverence for our own foibles ("In the Soviet Union, I'd line up for three hours just to get a tasteless piece of meat and some stale bread; but in America, you can walk into any fast-food restaurant and get the same thing right away"). But he also reminded us of how fortunate we are to live in a free and democratic nation ("What a country!" became his signature line). In fact, Yakov has said that his comedy has helped him "share his attempts at becoming a real American with the audience."

Yakov's dream of becoming an American citizen was finally fulfilled on July 4, 1986, in a ceremony held at the Statue of Liberty. Describing his joy at the occasion, Yakov says: "I suddenly had a new revelation. You can go to Italy but never become Italian. You can go to France but never become French. But you can come to America and become an American."

When freedom came to the formerly captive peoples of the Soviet Empire, Yakov joked that "the end of the KGB eliminated 100 percent of the torture in Russia, 50 percent of the spying—and 30 percent of my punch lines." But in fact Yakov enjoys continued success in his comedic routines. In 1992, he moved to Branson, Missouri, where he owns his own comedy theater and performs to perennially sold-out shows.

Yakov says he will continue to relish having a job that allows him to encourage Americans to cherish the freedom we have to laugh at ourselves—and yes, at our government. "I've learned that the secret to being happy is discovering your gift and having the opportunity to share it with the world," he once said. "As I found out for myself, it can be quite a ride before your gift defines itself and allows you to realize what it is."

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join with me in paying tribute to Yakov Smirnoff on the 15th anniversary of his citizenship. He truly embodies what it means to be an American. As we prepare to celebrate the 4th of July, the United States Congress can all join with Yakov and say, "What a country!"

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2311) making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes:

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the Bonior-Stupak-Kaptur amendment to prohibit expansion of drilling in or along the Great Lakes.

The Great Lakes rank among the most precious environmental treasures in the world. The five lakes hold almost 20 percent of the fresh water in the world, and they hold almost 90 percent of the United States' fresh water supply. The United States' share of Great Lakes shoreline is longer than the coastlines of either the East Coast or West Coast of our nation. Furthermore, the lakes' ecological diversity impacts ecosystems in eight states as well as much of Canada.

All five of the Great Lakes rank among the top eighteen largest lakes in the world. In fact, Lake Superior has the largest surface water of any fresh water lake in the world, and it holds more volume than all of the other Great Lakes combined. We should not put these treasures at risk for a small amount of fossil fuel.

Some colleagues want to compare drilling in the Great Lakes to drilling in ocean waters, but this line of thought compares apples to oranges.

First, the water exchange rate in the lakes is very slow, because they are essentially self-contained. A spill under these circumstances would devastate the ecology for many years, and it simply should not be risked.

Second, drilling in the lakes threatens fresh waters not salt waters, and a spill would compromise drinking water for millions.

Third, drilling in and along the lakes would yield only minuscule increases in energy supply for our nation.

When the risks are so high and rewards so low, it makes no sense to move forward with plans to implement drilling of any kind.

Finally, I wish to highlight an often overlooked fact about Michigan's relationship with the Great Lakes. They are the foundation of our state's robust tourism industry. In fact, tourism is the second largest industry in our state.

Americans from throughout the Midwest and beyond come to our lakeshores for recreation and relaxation. Just as Florida fears significant negative economic consequences when fuel