

specific challenges that individuals in their community face. Public and private, resources are used to create these programs. A balance is created between individuals and organizations which makes these programs all the more better because everyone has contributed.

Thanks to the Mayor, the City Commissioners, the City Manager, the City workers, and community organizations, churches, businesses and residents, the City of Delray Beach is once again an All America City. It is an accomplishment to be named once, but being named twice is a true distinction, which serves as an inspiration to every city in the State of Florida and sets a standard of civic responsibility that serves as a reminder to us all that the effort always counts.

INTRODUCING THE ELECTION WEEKEND ACT OF 2001

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, the National Commission on Federal Election Reform released its report highlighting a variety of reforms that need to occur in our country's faltering election system. While I do not agree with all of the Commission's views, I do agree with the report's recommendation to establish a federal holiday on Election Day.

Today, however, I am taking the Commission's recommendation one step further and introducing the Election Weekend Act. My bill changes our nation's election day from the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November to the first consecutive Saturday and Sunday in November. Furthermore, it expresses the sense of Congress that private sector employers provide their employees with one day off during Election Weekend to allow them ample opportunity and time to cast their ballot without having to leave work.

Each Election Day, employees are faced with the difficult task of balancing their work schedules with their family responsibilities, while trying to find time to make it to the polls. My bill recognizes the undue amount of pressure Americans face when trying to participate in the democratic process. It acknowledges the fact that a great deal of Americans are unable to leave their jobs in the middle of the day and vote because our elections occur on a Tuesday, a day when almost all Americans are working.

As more and more Americans enter the workforce, the choice they are forced to make between working or voting has resulted in decreased voter turnout. In the last election, barely 51 percent of our country's eligible voters actually voted. Also, consider that in the last election, only 48 percent of those who voted cast a ballot for our current President. That means that 48 percent of the 51 percent of people who actually voted last November voted for him. To put it in a different perspective, less than one-quarter of all those eligible to vote voted for our current President—talk about pitiful. Even more, the percentage is even smaller in low and middle income communities where individuals do not enjoy the luxury of taking a three hour lunch to eat and

vote. For many, the hour they lose in wages when they go to the polls may mean the difference between paying the bills or finding themselves out on the street.

It is irresponsible of us to continue forcing Americans to choose between a pay check, family time, or democracy. It is the Constitutional privilege of every American to vote. In moving our nation's election day to the first full weekend in November and extending it from one day to two days, we recognize the responsibility that we have to our constituents and our democratic heritage. We should be doing everything we can to protect the integrity of our election system by not only encouraging Americans to vote, but making it more convenient for them to do so.

CONGESTION THREATENS U.S. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

HON. ROBERT A. BORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to alert my colleagues to the growing danger of gridlock in our transportation system.

Many of the nation's major transportation corridors, both rail and highway, have become increasingly congested in recent years, to the point that congestion already threatens the ability of those modes to provide reliable transportation to the U.S. economy.

Major metropolitan areas that are gateways for U.S. international trade, and hubs in the rail and highway systems, are thick with freight traffic as other vehicular traffic also increases.

Increased international trade—expected to double in the next ten years—and continued growth in the domestic economy will further burden our rail and highway systems in the years ahead, with some question that, despite the best efforts and support of Congress, existing infrastructures in those modes can grow to meet those demands.

Existing rail and highway infrastructure cannot handle all of the projected growth in container movements, and there are obvious limits to how much we can increase the capacity of interstates and rail lines. Major expansion of rail or highway infrastructure in corridors such as that along I-95 on the U.S. East Coast has become both economically and physically difficult to do.

In the coastal corridors a "capacity crunch" is likely in this decade. Federal Highway Administration data indicates average annual increases in highway freight miles of 3 to 4 percent nationally in that period.

For example, it has been estimated that by 2010 there will be an increase of 11,000 fortyfoot containers arriving each day on each coast. While rail may be able to handle approximately 1,000 such units, absent a viable waterborne option, the remaining 10,000 containers would have to be moved by truck. On I-95, this would equate to an additional truck every 270 yards between Boston and Miami.

As corridor densification increases so too will the cost to the economy in lost productivity. This is prompting transportation planners, shippers and transport operators to look for ways to relieve the pressure on moving freight (and passengers) in impacted regions. For the domestic transportation system to

meet the needs of our economy in the 21st Century, we must maximize the efficiency of that system, including, where possible, increasing reliance on waterborne transportation to complement rail and highway systems. The potential options range from increased use of vessels to transport bulk materials to short or long haul intermodal shipping, including high-speed ferries such as are in wide use in Europe and Asia. As transportation agencies and the private sector focus more attention to this option, the federal government should look to means by which to eliminate the barriers to, or to create potential incentives for, development of this complementary means of moving freight and passengers.

The waterborne option presently has unused capacity. Studies to date suggest that as vessel and cargo transfer technologies improve and new vessels come in to service, coastal shipping would be able to provide increasingly competitive service. Such vessels can be built in U.S. shipyards that now have the capacity to construct new designs and do it competitively. One such yard is the Kvaerner Shipyard in Philadelphia. In fact, a shift to the waterborne mode would foster a resurgence in Jones Act shipping and in the process create a new market for U.S. shipyards and American labor.

The expanded use of the coastal waters for moving cargo has some obvious benefits:

It would provide a measure of highway congestion relief,

Some hazardous material movements could shift to coastal vessels,

Vessels have the fewest accidental spills or collisions of all forms of transportation;

The movement of trucks/containers on vessels could foster increased use of intelligent transportation technologies;

Job growth would be stimulated in U.S. shipyards and on vessels;

A healthier U.S.-flag industry assures a future supply of vessels and trained crews for military sealift missions.

With few exceptions, the maritime sector largely has been left behind in Congressional and Administration attention to the transportation modes over the past decade. Policy innovations such as ISTEA, TEA-21 and AIR-21 have served to prepare surface and air transportation for the demands of the next decades. The maritime sector is due the same in order for the national transportation system to meet the demands of the new century. Expanding the use of the waterborne option should be viewed as an enhancement of the nation's transportation system, responding to market demands for relief of congested rail and highway routes, and not as a matter of one mode competing against another. Coastal shipping will not supplant road and rail because of their inherent and respective advantages, e.g. speed of service and flexibility, but it can provide an essential element of new capacity with comparatively smaller investments of public capital.

Analysis to date indicates that there are some likely barriers to an expansion of intermodal coastal shipping such as the harbor maintenance tax on domestic movements, thus requiring the attention of the next Administration and Congress. Likewise, incentives no doubt would facilitate private and public sector investments into establishing coastal corridor operations. It is our duty to do what we can to facilitate and foster coastwise shipping.

HONORING VIRGINIA ANDREW

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to remember the life of Virginia Andrew from Steamboat Springs, Colorado, who passed away on Wednesday, July 25. At the age of 86, many will miss her as we all mourn her passing.

Virginia was a columnist for the Steamboat Pilot, the local paper in Steamboat Springs. She was employed there for more than 50 years. While her original column "Sidney News" was named after an area that no longer exists in the Yampa Valley, her memory will live on in the hearts and minds of the people that she touched. Throughout her career, Virginia covered a wide range of topics ranging from rural news to daily events. She even had issues pertaining to agriculture and politics.

Beyond the life of a journalist, she also operated a Farmers Union Insurance Office for 20 years starting in 1945. She also was a founding partner in the Unique Shop—a cooperative that provided second-hand goods and other items to the elderly population. Amidst all of her activities, the town was always able to recognize her when she drove by in her large blue Oldsmobile sedan.

Mr. Speaker, Virginia Andrews was a person who lived an accomplished life. She always cared for people and wanted only the best for them. I would like to extend my deepest sympathy and warmest regards to her family at this time of remembrance. My thoughts and prayers are with them.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS DAMIEN COUNCIL CELEBRATES 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call the attention of the House of Representatives to the good works of the Knights of Columbus Damien Council No. 598 in Carbon County, Pennsylvania. On Aug. 18, 2001, the members will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the council's founding.

The council is one of the oldest in the Knights of Columbus, being the 598th founded out of the nearly 13,000 in existence today. Under the direction of Father James C. McConnon, a group of 47 men from the small town of Mauch Chunk, now known as Jim Thorpe, chose the name of their council to honor Father Damien de Veuster. Now designated as Blessed Damien following his 1995 beatification by Pope John Paul II, Father de Veuster is remembered for his selfless and courageous efforts to care for the nearly 1,000 lepers abandoned on Molokai Island in Hawaii. Father de Veuster himself died of leprosy in 1889.

Since its founding, Damien Council has served Mauch Chunk, later known as Jim

Thorpe, Leighton, Nesquehoning and the surrounding communities. Among its many accomplishments, the council arranged to televise Advent and Lenten Masses for shut-ins on Blue Ridge Cable TV-13 in the 1970s and 1980s, well before the Catholic cable channel EWTN became available nationwide. The council also broadcast the recitation of the Rosary on WYNS Radio and the Stations of the Cross on WLSH Radio. Damien Council has also provided food baskets for families in need and has honored 39 priests from the area on the occasion of their ordination into the priesthood.

Damien Council continues to aid the church, local communities, families and young people through its various programs. Annual activities include celebrating a Memorial Mass for its deceased members, sponsoring Family Hour of Prayer services, participating in the "Adopt-A-Seminarian" program, jointly sponsoring the Pro-Life Essay Contest with the other councils in the Diocese of Allentown and coordinating the program for Carbon County, promoting the "Keep Christ in Christmas" program, sponsoring the Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship and hosting the District 29 competition, raising funds for ARC, honoring the members' spouses with Ladies' Appreciation "Knight," celebrating the family by naming a "Family of the Month" and "Family of the Year" and presenting awards and altar server certificates to graduating eighth-grade students.

Damien Council has seen two of its members rise to statewide leadership over the years. Both Thomas P. (Patsy) Milan and William F. (Bill) Carroll served as state treasurers. Damien Council is currently led by Grand Knight Michael A. Heery.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to call to the attention of the House of Representatives the good works of the Knights of Columbus Damien Council No. 598 on the occasion of their 100th anniversary, and I wish them all the best.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG AFFORDABILITY ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Prescription Drug Affordability Act. This legislation ensures that millions of Americans, including seniors, have access to affordable pharmaceutical products. My bill makes pharmaceuticals more affordable to seniors by reducing their taxes. It also removes needless government barriers to importing pharmaceuticals and it protects Internet pharmacies, which are making affordable prescription drugs available to millions of Americans, from being strangled by federal regulation.

The first provision of my legislation provides seniors a tax credit equal to 80 percent of their prescription drug costs. As many of my colleagues have pointed out, our nation's seniors are struggling to afford the prescription drugs they need in order to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. Yet, the federal government continues to impose taxes on Social Se-

curity benefits. Meanwhile, Congress continually raids the Social Security trust fund to finance unconstitutional programs! It is long past time for Congress to choose between helping seniors afford medicine or using the Social Security trust fund as a slush fund for big government and pork-barrel spending.

Mr. Speaker, I do wish to clarify that this tax credit is intended to supplement the efforts to reform and strengthen the Medicare system to ensure seniors have the ability to use Medicare funds to purchase prescription drugs. I am a strong supporter of strengthening the Medicare system to allow for more choice and consumer control, including structural reforms that will allow seniors to use Medicare funds to cover the costs of prescription drugs.

In addition to making prescription medications more affordable for seniors, my bill lowers the price for prescription medicines by reducing barriers to the importation of FDA-approved pharmaceuticals. Under my bill, anyone wishing to import a drug simply submits an application to the FDA, which then must approve the drug unless the FDA finds the drug is either not approved for use in the US or is adulterated or misbranded. This process will make safe and affordable imported medicines affordable to millions of Americans. Mr. Speaker, letting the free market work is the best means of lowering the cost of prescription drugs.

I need not remind my colleagues that many senior citizens and other Americans impacted by the high costs of prescription medicine have demanded Congress reduce the barriers which prevent American consumers from purchasing imported pharmaceuticals. Just a few weeks ago, Congress responded to these demands by overwhelmingly passing legislation liberalizing the rules governing the importation of pharmaceuticals. While this provision took a good first step toward allowing free trade in pharmaceuticals, and I hope it remains in the final bill, the American people will not be satisfied until all unnecessary regulations on importing pharmaceuticals are removed.

The Prescription Drug Affordability Act also protects consumers' access to affordable prescription drugs by forbidding the federal government from regulating any Internet sales of FDA-approved pharmaceuticals by state-licensed pharmacists. As I am sure my colleagues are aware, the Internet makes pharmaceuticals and other products more affordable and accessible for millions of Americans. One gentleman in my district has used the Internet to lower his prescription drugs costs from \$700 to \$100 a month!

However, the federal government has threatened to destroy this option by imposing unnecessary and unconstitutional regulations on web sites which sell pharmaceuticals. Any federal regulations would inevitably drive up prices of pharmaceuticals, thus depriving many consumers of access to affordable prescription medications.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to make pharmaceuticals more affordable and accessible by lowering taxes on senior citizens, removing barriers to the importation of pharmaceuticals and protecting legitimate Internet pharmacies from needless regulation by cosponsoring the Prescription Drug Affordability Act.