

OSTEOPOROSIS FEDERAL EM-
 PLOYEE HEALTH BENEFITS
 STANDARDIZATION ACT

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Osteoporosis Federal Employee Health Benefits Standardization Act of 2001. This much needed legislation will provide the same consistency of osteoporosis coverage for our Federal employees and retirees as Congress approved for Medicare in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997.

Instead of a comprehensive national coverage policy, FEHBP leaves it to each of the over 350 participating plans to decide who is eligible to receive a bone mass measurement and what constitutes medical necessity. A survey of the 19 top plans participating in FEHBP indicate that many plans have no specific rules to guide reimbursement and instead cover the tests on a case-by-case basis. Several plans refuse to provide consumers information indicating when the plan covers the test and when it does not. Some plans cover the test only for people who already have osteoporosis. All individuals, whether they work in the public sector or private sector, should have health insurance coverage for osteoporosis screening because this affliction is so widespread but more importantly, because it is preventable when discovered early.

Osteoporosis is a major public health problem affecting 28 million Americans, who either have the disease or are at risk due to low bone mass; eighty percent are women. The disease causes 1.5 million fractures annually at a cost of \$13.8 billion (\$38 million per day) in direct medical expenses, and osteoporotic fractures cost the Medicare program 3 percent of its overall costs. In their lifetimes, one in two women and one in eight men over the age of 50 will fracture a bone due to osteoporosis. A woman's risk of a hip fracture is equal to her combined risk of contracting breast, uterine, and ovarian cancer.

Osteoporosis is largely preventable and thousands of fractures could be avoided if low bone mass was detected early and treated. We now have drugs that promise to reduce fractures by 50 percent. However, identification of risk factors alone cannot predict how much bone a person has and how strong bone is. Experts estimate that without bone density tests, up to 40 percent of women with low bone mass could be missed.

It is my hope that by making bone mass measurements available under the FEHBP, we can minimize the deleterious effects of osteoporosis and improve the lives of our Federal employees and retirees.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

HON. JOHN F. TIERNEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in recognizing February as American Heart Month and in commending the 22.5 million volunteers and supporters committed to

combating heart disease. Clearly, all citizens should "Be Prepared for Cardiac Emergencies. Know the signs of cardiac arrest. Call 9-1-1 immediately. Give CPR."

Paralysis, weakness, decreased sensation, numbness, tingling, decreased vision, slurred speech or the inability to speak, loss of memory and physical coordination, difficulty swallowing, lack of bladder control, mental capacity declines, mood changes, dysfunctional, uncontrollable, and unpredictable movement, shortness or loss of breath, fainting, and fatigue are all signs associated with cardiac arrest.

Immediate response to signs of cardiac arrest is imperative as seconds and minutes make the difference between life, the quality of life, and death. Every 29 seconds, someone in America suffers a heart attack, and every 60 seconds someone dies as a result of the same. While we have the luxury of emergency ambulatory responses as a result of 9-1-1, if we act while waiting on trained professionals to arrive, we can make a meaningful difference. For this reason, we should all encourage broader knowledge of CPR.

As medical professionals have said, when the heart is under attack, blood is not flowing to parts of the body, such as the brain, that solely rely on it for functioning, and permanent damage to the brain can occur if blood flow is not restored within four minutes. As a result, if life is sustained, the quality of life may be significantly diminished as irreversible harm often takes place. I am hopeful that those who have regular contact with loved ones at risk will be trained in CPR.

I applaud the American Heart Association and other organizations nationwide that educate and train all of us to be properly prepared for cardiac arrest by providing education that informs us about the causes and signs of heart disease and the skills necessary to react to these unfortunate episodes when they occur. Also, I thank my colleagues for pausing to recognize these organizations for their ongoing efforts in this vital area.

IN SUPPORT OF THE LAW EN-
 FORCEMENT OFFICERS' HEALTH
 ACT

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Law Enforcement Officers' Health Act to encourage all states to adopt a practice that has served Michigan's citizens and law enforcement officers well.

If a law enforcement officer in Michigan develops heart disease or a lung disorder, he or she is entitled to the presumption for the purposes of the workers' compensation system that the illness is an occupational disease. This recognition of the stressful nature of law enforcement work is also reflected in the workers' compensation systems of thirteen other states (California, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio and Virginia).

There are several reasons for states to grant this presumption to law enforcement officers who suffer from heart or lung problems.

With such a policy, states and municipalities are spared the administrative burden and cost

of extended hearings and proceedings to determine whether or not such illnesses and disabilities are work related.

In addition to the expense, these proceedings frequently become adversarial, unnecessarily creating tension between the employer and employee and ultimately affecting the delivery of public safety services.

Finally—and perhaps most importantly to the law enforcement officer involved—the administrative process delays the treatments for which he or she will eventually be qualified.

Since heart diseases and lung disorders are almost always deemed to be occupational diseases as a result of the administrative process, the proceedings simply waste time and money.

The Law Enforcement Officers' Health Act does not impose a new federal mandate on states or otherwise interfere with states' rights. Instead, it would require states to adopt this policy in order to receive the full amount for which it is eligible under the Justice Department's Local Law Enforcement Block Grant Program. The award will be reduced by 10 percent if the state fails to adopt this presumption. A similar reduction with regard to a state's policy on health benefits for officers injured on the job has been in the law for several years.

The provisions of this legislation will not become effective until eighteen months after enactment so that an affected state will have adequate time to amend its laws or modify its regulations.

I have recently had the pleasure of working with the leadership of the International Union of Police Associations, AFL-CIO, in developing this legislation to ensure that all law enforcement officers receive the same health protections that their fellow officers in my state of Michigan enjoy. I particularly want to recognize Sam Cabral, International President, and Dennis Slocumb, Executive Vice President, for their dedication to this cause.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in sponsoring this legislation.

JAMES J. McGRATH—DEDICATED
 LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

HON. JAMES H. MALONEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to bring to the attention of my colleagues the distinguished career of one of my constituents, James J. McGrath of Ansonia, Connecticut.

Mr. McGrath recently retired from his post as Ansonia Police Chief, a position he held for 19 years. During that time, he presided over the Ansonia police force with integrity, professionalism, and a passionate sense of duty. Chief McGrath ended his career as the State of Connecticut's oldest police chief—and one of its most respected.

He is truly an institution in the city of Ansonia. Born and raised in the city's Derby Hill section, he graduated from Ansonia High School in 1943. Like all residents of this close-knit community, Chief McGrath has developed deep bonds with the community—bonds that will continue to deepen as Ansonia gives him thanks for his years of service.

Chief McGrath began his life of public service during World War II. From 1943–1947 he served in the United States Navy, defending our country as a member of the Submarine Service. After returning to civilian life and graduating college, he began a thirty year career as a Connecticut State Police Officer—where he achieved the rank of Captain. He began his tenure as Ansonia's police chief in 1981, and then held that position for nearly two decades.

Chief James J. McGrath has devoted his life to protecting the well-being of others. He worked tirelessly to ensure that Ansonia was a safe place to live and work for its families, children, and senior citizens. In fact, his dedication was such that during his 19 years as police chief, he never took a single sick day. I know that I speak for all Ansonia residents in saying that the city is deeply appreciative of his work and his leadership.

Perhaps there is no better way to illustrate Chief McGrath's commitment to public safety than to refer to his own words: "I'm as concerned about the welfare of the people of Ansonia as I am of my own family."

Mr. Speaker, Chief James J. McGrath deserves wide recognition for his lifelong dedication to law enforcement. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating this outstanding public servant, and to extend our best wishes as he embarks upon a well-deserved retirement.

GOLDEN TRIANGLE ENERGY
COALITION PLANT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the farmers-members of the Golden Triangle Energy Cooperative on the imminent success of the new ethanol plant in Craig, Missouri. The new plant will add value to members' agricultural commodities through efficient processing and bring renewed economic opportunity to Northwest Missouri. I am honored to have the Golden Triangle Energy Cooperative in my district.

On Saturday, February 17, 2001, we will celebrate the grand opening of the Golden Triangle Energy Coalition Plant. This plant will process 6 million bushels of corn each year, producing 15 million gallons of ethanol. This plant will not only benefit farmers, but also the environment and our consumers across the nation.

I am pleased that farmers in Northwest Missouri are making a positive impact on their rural community by expanding value-added markets, such as ethanol. In the past 10 years, more than 20 farmer-owned cooperatives were constructed nationwide. Today farmer-owned ethanol production facilities are responsible for one third of all U.S. ethanol production.

Farmers in Northwest Missouri are positioned to meet the nation's ethanol needs. Ethanol produced in Craig, Missouri will be sold across the country as a high-octane fuel bringing improved automobile performance to drivers while reducing air pollution. It is a clean-burning, renewable, domestically produced product. The new plant in Craig will cre-

ate jobs and provide value-added markets to bolster agriculture and our rural economy.

Again, I congratulate and commend the farmer-owners of the Golden Triangle Coalition on the opening of the nation's newest ethanol plant. I look forward to working with them in the future.

HONORING ANTHONY F. COLE

HON. JAMES A. LEACH

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extol the virtues and lament the retirement of Anthony F. "Tony" Cole after more than 25 years of federal service.

A scholar and a gentleman, Tony graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the College of William and Mary, earned a Masters in history from Rutgers, and his law degree from the Marshall-Wythe School of Law at William and Mary.

In 1975 Tony joined the staff of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, where he served as Deputy General Counsel of the Depository Institutions Deregulation Committee and later as Special Assistant to the Board as its liaison with Congress.

Leaving these real jobs, Tony came to the Hill in 1986 to serve first as Minority Counsel and then as Minority Staff Director for the House Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs.

During my tenure as Chairman of the House Committee on Banking and Financial Services, from January 1995 to the end of last year, Tony was the Staff Director for the Committee.

Tony's fine hand may be seen in all of the major legislation the Committee considered over the past 15 years, from the reform of the savings and loan industry (FIRREA), to the financial modernization bill (Gramm-Leach-Bliley), to debt relief for the poorest countries in the world.

As my colleagues know, the job of a committee staff director is one of the most demanding on Capitol Hill. It requires assuaging the easily bruised egos of the Members, administering a multimillion dollar budget, managing a 50-member professional and support staff, and coordinating with leadership. All this must be accomplished while having at one's finger tips an encyclopedic knowledge of both current statute and the legislative process.

Nobody did it better than Tony.

A consummate professional, Tony was respected by both sides of the aisle and revered by the staff he led by precept and example. A person of grace and good humor, he gave of himself unstintingly to this institution and in so doing to serving the people of the United States.

The House needs the likes of Tony Cole and he will be sorely missed.

It is with profound gratitude that I wish Tony all the best in a well-deserved retirement.

DEFENSE FUNDING

HON. CAROLYN McCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mrs. McCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, throughout our nation's history, our armed

forces fought bravely to preserve and protect the liberties we cherish. As of late, we have done much to recognize the accomplishments of the generation that fought the Second World War, and rightly so. But we should not forget the equally impressive job our military forces are doing today. They faced down aggression in Iraq; restored democracy in Haiti; and ended ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia. In short, they have much to be proud of

However, we are faced with some serious concerns. This increase in deployments and operations occurred during a time of military downsizing. It is clear to many we cannot, in good faith, ask our forces to be engaged around the world when they are stretched so thinly.

We have no choice but to embrace this opportunity and demonstrate our commitment to our military personnel. In this time of peace and budget surpluses, we must prepare for the threats that loom in the not-too-distant future by modernizing our military forces and investing in programs to recruit and retain quality military personnel.

We have done a great deal to ensure that our military forces are the best in the world, but the world is changing before our eyes—we need to do more. As we move through the budget process, let us show our support for these brave men and women by passing a responsible defense budget.

THE WAGE ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Workers Access to Accountable Governance in Employment (WAGE) Act. This bill takes a first step toward restoring the rights of freedom of association and equal protection under the law to millions of American workers who are currently denied these rights by federal law.

The WAGE Act simply gives workers the same rights to hold decertification elections as they have to hold certification elections. Currently, while workers in this country are given the right to organize and have union certification elections each year, provided that 30 percent or more of the workforce wish to have them, workers are not given an equal right to have a decertification election, even if the same requirements are met.

As a result of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) created contract-bar rule, if 30 percent or more of a bargaining unit wants to hold an election to decertify a union as their representative, they are prohibited from doing so unless the contract is in at least its third year.

In other words, it does not matter whether or not workers want to continue to have the union as their representative. It does not matter whether or not the union represents the will of the workers. It does not even matter if the majority of the current workforce voted for union representation. They must accept that representation.

Mr. Speaker, this is absurd. The lowest criminal in this country has the right to change