

that "In the end, you care a lot more about Los Angeles than you do about Taipei."

China's war planning will take advantage of its strategic alliance with Saddam Hussein. With Saddam as an ally, China will be able to threaten the flow of oil from the Middle East, and threaten Israel. Iraqi troops have infiltrated into Jordan. To further threaten the flow of oil from the Middle East, China has formed alliances with Pakistan and Myanmar, providing itself with access to the strategic strait of Malacca, connecting the Persian Gulf to the Far East.

China is preparing for direct military confrontation with the United States on its own terms. It plans to take advantage of the element of surprise, seeking to attack U.S. satellites, intelligence, communications, and forces in a sudden blow of lightning warfare, seizing the initiative. The effectiveness of China's strategy will be heightened by the lack of U.S. ballistic missile defense and China's corresponding buildup of ballistic missiles of all types—short, intermediate and long-range.

The United States needs to ask itself if it is ready for China's attack especially in a simultaneous confrontation with Saddam Hussein. We must prepare accordingly. Urgency is required.

Very truly yours,

BOB SCHAFFER,
Member of Congress
from Colorado.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RUSSELL VIELE

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute and recognize Russell Viele of Rifle, Colorado and thank him for his contributions to this nation. Russell began his service in the military in the 1950's, and served as a Marine in the Korean War. Upon his discharge, Russell had accumulated over eight years of service to the Marine Corps.

Russell joined the Marines on July 1, 1952 and attended basic training in San Diego. Following graduation, he went on to mechanical school in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. As a mechanical student, Russell graduated at the head of his class and was assigned back to California. It was from there that Russell left for the Korean War where he was assigned to a motor pool in Japan.

Russell's duty, while in the motor pool, was to maintain the large five-ton trucks that were crucial to troop and ration supply for combat units in the theater. He was stationed there for fourteen months, promoted three times, and left the country at the end of the war as a Sergeant. He finished his tour with the Marines in the Mohave Desert of California. Russell now makes his home in Rifle, Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to recognize and pay tribute to Russell Viele for his service to his country during the Korean War. He served selflessly in a time of great need, bringing credit to himself and this nation. Paul Russell is one reason that our country enjoys the freedom that we hold so high today.

RETIREMENT OPPORTUNITY EXPANSION ACT OF 2001

HON. WILLIAM J. COYNE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Mr. COYNE. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation, the "Retirement Opportunity Expansion Act of 2001," that would increase pension participation for workers without pensions, low-wage workers, and women. Joining me in this effort are Congressman CHARLES B. RANGEL, the ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means, and Congressman ROBERT T. MATSUI, the ranking member of the Social Security Subcommittee.

Earlier this year the House passed H.R. 10, "The Comprehensive Retirement Security and Pension Reform Act." I saw that bill as a beginning, a first step, to improve retirement opportunities for workers in this country. But, at that time, I emphasized the need to do more to address the many gaps and shortfalls in pension coverage.

In March 1999, the Oversight Committee of the Committee on Ways and Means held hearings on pension issues. At those hearings, Teresa Heinz, in her capacity as Chairman of the Heinz Foundation Philanthropies, testified that nearly 40 percent of women are dependent on Social Security for almost all of their retirement income because they have fewer opportunities to participate in the retirement plans provided by employers. This is but one aspect of the problems facing our country as the baby-boom generation begins to retire and younger workers lack adequate pension coverage.

I believe that steps must be taken to help employees to fund their retirement accounts, to assist small business owners to start and maintain pension plans for themselves and their employees, and to provide women with improved retirement income protections. To that end, I have included in this bill a refundable tax credit that is substantially the same as that provided for in the Democratic substitute which was introduced by Mr. NEAL in the 106th Congress.

Recently I ask the General Accounting Office (GAO) to look at the extent of pension coverage among American workers and the likely effects of increasing contribution limits in defined contribution plans, the type of pension plan that covers most pension participants. GAO identified what I believe to be disturbing trends in the degree of pension participation among lower-income and women workers. For instance, while 47 percent of all workers participate in some type of a pension plan, only 38 percent of workers earning less than \$40,000 per year participate in a pension plan. Fully 70 percent of workers earning between \$40,000 and \$74,999 participate in a plan. GAO also revealed that 56 percent of female workers do not participate in a pension plan.

The disparities in coverage are even greater when looking at defined contribution plans. In a defined contribution plan, the employee may provide all or a portion of the funds and decide how to invest the money. There is no guaranteed benefit amount or formula as there are in traditional defined benefit plans. Of all workers who earned less than \$40,000 per year, 28 percent participated in defined contribution plans. Only 32 percent of all female

workers participated in defined contribution plans. Further, GAO found that only 8% of all defined contribution plan participants would likely benefit directly from increases in statutory contribution limits. Thus, it is clear that changes in contribution limits will do little directly to promote or extend coverage to workers lacking pension coverage.

Clearly greater effort is needed to encourage and facilitate pension participation, especially among lower-income workers and women.

After considering GAO's findings and revisiting the issues raised during our consideration of H.R. 10, I am introducing a pension bill which addresses the following issues: The expansion of pension coverage for workers without pensions; the expansion of coverage for low-wage workers; the improvement of pension coverage for women; and the creation of additional incentives for small businesses to provide pension coverage for employees.

These are the very issues I emphasized in May during our deliberation of H.R. 10.

Because the findings of the GAO and the research of other groups such as the Pension Rights Center and the Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER) demonstrate that lower-income and female workers are much less likely to be participants in pension plans, I believe we must direct our focus to these workers who often toil at the margins of pension coverage. Specific efforts are needed to help women secure the pension benefits which all manner of their contributions have earned for them.

The Pension Rights Center, a nonprofit consumer rights organization dedicated to promoting retirement income security, has expressed its "strong support" for the Retirement Opportunity Expansion Act of 2001, noting that this legislation would "encourage the creation of new private retirement plans for those lacking such coverage, particularly low and moderate wage earners." WISER, a nonprofit organization that seeks to ensure that poverty among older women will be reduced by improving the opportunities for women to secure retirement benefits, stated that they are "extremely gratified" about the introduction of this bill. They have urged support for the bill in order to "improve the alarming retirement situation for older women . . . where millions of women are retiring into poverty, despite a lifetime of work and caregiving for their families."

Earlier initiatives provided a starting point to improve the pension system we have. It is now time to develop the pension system that we need. I would urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation and ensuring its passage during the 107th Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I am attaching a summary of the provisions of the "Retirement Opportunity Expansion Act of 2001."

THE RETIREMENT OPPORTUNITY EXPANSION ACT OF 2001 SUMMARY

TITLE I: EXPANSION OF PENSION COVERAGE TO WORKERS WITHOUT PENSIONS

The purpose of this section is to provide an incentive for low- and middle-income individuals to save for retirement.

Section 101: This section would provide a refundable tax credit to low and middle income workers of up to 50% of annual contributions made to a traditional, deductible IRA or an employer-sponsored pension plan (e.g., 401(k), 403(b) or 457 plans).

Eligible contributions could not exceed the maximum annual allowable contributions to

a deductible IRA. The credit would be phased out as the income of the eligible taxpayer increases. (Eligible taxpayers defined as married filing joint returns would receive the maximum credit on AGI of \$30,000 and the credit would be phased out at \$37,500; head of household returns would receive the maximum credit on AGI of \$22,500 and the credit would be phased out at \$37,500; single and married filing separate returns would receive the maximum credit on AGI of \$15,000 and the credit would be phased out at \$25,000.)

An eligible taxpayer would be required to earn at least \$5,000 during the tax year and to have attained the age of 18 by the close of the tax year and could not qualify as a dependent child of another taxpayer or be a full-time student.

TITLE II: EXPANSION OF COVERAGE TO LOW-WAGE WORKERS

The purpose of this section is to expand pension participation among lower-paid workers.

Section 201: This section would allow contributions of up to \$2,000 made to an IRA through payroll deduction generally to be excluded from an employee's income (and not to be reported on the employee's form W-2) if the taxpayer is otherwise eligible for a deductible IRA.

TITLE III: IMPROVEMENT OF PENSION COVERAGE FOR WOMEN

The purpose of these sections is primarily to expand pension benefits to women and individuals who have spent time out of the workforce to raise children or care for parents or spouses.

Section 301: This section would require pension plans to provide the option of a "joint and 3/4 survivor annuity" for participants who so elect. Under the option, a widowed spouse would receive 75 percent of the pension benefit received during the life of the other spouse.

Section 302: This section would require spousal consent on 401(k) distributions of more than 10% of the value of the account.

Section 303: This section would provide full vesting of pension benefits upon the death or disability of the plan participant.

Section 304: This section would prohibit plans from making changes in 401(k) investments or giving lump sum distributions during the 90-day period from the date the plan is notified of the preparation for a domestic relations order.

Section 305: This section would require the Secretary of Labor to conduct a study to determine the participation rate of women and other underrepresented minorities in pension plans and to make recommendations to the Congress for way to increase participation among these groups of workers.

Section 306: This section would count family and medical leave time hours of service for purposes of meeting pension participation, vesting and accrual thresholds.

TITLE IV: INCENTIVES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES TO OFFER PENSION BENEFITS

The purpose of this section is to encourage small businesses to offer retirement benefits to their employees.

Section 401: This section would give businesses with 100 or fewer employees a tax credit of up to 50 percent of employer contributions made to a pension plan during the first three years.

Section 402: This section would establish the Secure Money or Annuity Retirement Trusts (SMART). SMART plans are simplified, tax-favored pension plans that combine the features of both defined benefit and defined contribution plans. The plans would provide participants with a minimum guaranteed benefit at retirement.

Section 403: This section would simplify the definition of "highly compensated employee."

ATTACKS ON INDIAN PARLIAMENT

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, very early this morning, a suicide squad of six terrorists attacked the Indian Parliament. Prime Minister Vajpayee and Members of the Cabinet and Parliament were thankfully safe. Unfortunately, seven people, including guards and workers, were killed and at least 17 people were injured at the hands of one suicide bomber and other assailants equipped with grenades and guns.

The United States has come forward and declared this raid "an outrageous act of terrorism". Not only was this an attack on India, it was a brutal attack on the largest symbol of democracy worldwide. I am shocked and appalled at this extreme act of terrorism and I express my deepest regards towards India at this time.

India is a country that has been sadly afflicted for 50 years by the loss of countless innocent citizens at the hands of cold-blooded murder by terrorists. For the past decade, India has fallen victim to terrorist attacks by groups that belong to the same terrorist network responsible for the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

Since September 11th, there has been a flurry of terrorist attacks in Kashmir taking place on a daily basis. On October 1st in particular, a suicide car bomb exploded in front of the Jammu and Kashmir State Assembly while it was in session and 38 people were killed. Since this incident, a clear pattern of cross-border terrorism in Kashmir has manifested and Islamic terrorist groups are to be blamed for these terrorist activities.

The atrocious attack on the Indian Parliament falls within this familiar pattern of attacks by active terrorist forces in Kashmir. The suicide attack on democracy in Srinagar was clearly a precursor to this morning's attack on democracy in New Delhi. However, terrorist groups have crossed the line this time. This attack on diversity, vibrancy, equality, democracy and all characteristics of India's open society, goes too far.

The parallel that can be drawn between the United States and India at this time is remarkable. The U.S. and India are not only friends, but they are also two nations that serve together as pillars of commitment to democracy. The U.S. was brutally attacked by terrorists in an attempt to break down our democratic ideals and we are retaliating with a successful war effort in Afghanistan. Similarly, the attack on Indian Parliament is impetus for India's retaliation against the relentless terrorism taking place in Kashmir and now in New Delhi. These punitive actions undoubtedly will help in the global war on terrorism and the current effort to eliminate the Al-Qaeda terrorist network. The citizens of India deserve to live their lives without violence and terror. The Government of India deserves to exercise its strong democratic ideals.

HONORING THE IDA TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the patriotic citizens of the Ida Township Volunteer Fire Department, which has served Ida and the surrounding area for over 63 years. Mr. Speaker, these local Michigan heroes stand ready to put their lives on the line in service to their community. They are a brave, professional and dedicated group, providing a lifeline to all whose lives are in danger.

The tragic events of September 11, 2001, have brought to light the important role firefighters and other first-responders play in protecting this country from numerous threats. Not only are they prepared to safeguard our communities from everyday tragedies such as fires and accidents, but they serve as the first line of response in the event of major catastrophes, including terrorism.

I am proud to represent these courageous individuals and on behalf of our local community, thank them for their service. Therefore, it is with great pride that I submit the following names of the Ida Township Volunteer Fire Department into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in recognition of their past and continued service:

Chief Ed Wertenberger, Lonnie Wertenberger, Troy Stein, Randy Stanifer, Paul Metz, Mark Mruzek, Dale Longnecker, Jim Longnecker, Kirt Horn, Rocky Oberski, Tim Mata, Scott Desbrough, Shawn Geyman, Mike Geyman, Chad Metz, Curtis Durocher, Scott Weeman, Adam Booker, Scott Ducharme, Carl Arnold, Curtis Stanifer, Jim Longnecker Sr., Tim Wertenberger, Corey Jones and Tyler Stern.

Mr. Speaker, I note that their hard work is not limited to their local community. Two days after the September 11 terrorist attacks, Curt Stanifer, Randy Stanifer, Carl Arnold, Scott Ducharme, Mark Murzke, Ed Wertenberger, Dale Longnecker, Troy Stein, Rocky Oberski and Curt Durocher traveled to New York City, to assist in the rescue and recovery efforts. They make this trip at great personal sacrifice and risk to their own lives. Accordingly, I salute them for their courageousness and commitment to serve others, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing these brave individuals.

TRIBUTE TO TROY ELEMENTARY

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Troy Elementary in recognition of their achievement as an "exemplary" school.

Troy Elementary has been selected as one of the top 50 schools of West Virginia, "Exemplary" status is based on Stanford Achievement Test results, attendance, drop out rates, and writing exam scores.

I commend the leadership and faculty on their dedication to the children that walk through their doors each day. They have set