

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

an incredible example for the other 817 schools in West Virginia.

I equally commend the students and parents of Troy Elementary for their commitment to a quality education and a bright future.

Efforts to bring superior education to all of West Virginia and America are among our top priorities. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Troy Elementary.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO BOB PARKS

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 recognize an extraordinary man who has repeatedly defied the odds and has embodied the spirit of my district in Colorado. The man I am referring to is Bob Parks and the odds he defied was whether he would live or die. Bob suffers from cancer and by all accounts, he should not be with us today.

Bob has much to be grateful for these days. Over a year ago, he was diagnosed with a cancerous tumor in his lung. Relying on an oxygen bottle, Bob was given little hope for recovery. Following a turn for the worse and with no salvation in sight, Bob learned of a clinic in Tijuana, Mexico that specialized in alternative medicines. He arrived last December and fell into a coma soon after arrival. His prognosis was grim and friends and family in Durango were informed yet again that his life was in jeopardy.

Bob held on, and with hope and prayer, he has unexpectedly recovered his strength and continues to defy his illness. Residents of Durango, Colorado, recently collected funds to fly Bob home for a visit and noted, in an article in the Durango Herald, that he looks stronger than ever and his recovery is nothing short of a miracle. Bob, who is a former psychology professor at Fort Lewis College and a greeter for the Wal-Mart, believes his recovery is due in part to an optimistic attitude and prayer from his family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, we hear everyday stories of survival, hardship, and recently terror. It's gratifying at this time in our nation's struggle that a story unfolds about a man unwilling to give up his most cherished gift, his life. As so many suffer in this nation and around the world, let some of these people look to Bob Parks as a model to never give up on life, no matter what the odds faced. It is an honor to tell his story to this body and Congress and I wish him the best in the coming new year.

REGARDING THE SMALL BUSINESS ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACT

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, on November 27, 2001 I introduced the Small Business Economic Recovery Act to help struggling small businesses survive.

Countless small businesses have suffered significant economic injury since the Sep-

tember 11 terrorist attacks. Some suffered direct economic injury as a result of closed and damaged buildings. Many more have suffered from the economic fallout caused by an economy that has plunged into a recession.

Small businesses are hurting and need help. The National Bureau of Economic Research announced that the United States entered a recession in March 2001. The Gross Domestic Product fell to 1.1 percent in the third quarter, and the unemployment rate has risen to 5.7 percent.

Prompted by the widespread economic impact of the terrorist attacks on New York City and the Pentagon, on October 18, 2001 the Small Business Administration widened access to Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) for small businesses throughout the country. To qualify for these loans, small businesses must have suffered direct and substantial economic injury due to the terrorist attacks or the federal government's response to the attacks. This notion of "direct" injury will severely limit the Small Business Administration's ability to help all suffering businesses. Clearly a small business in an airport will qualify, but small businesses dependent on tourism may have a harder time proving that they were directly affected by the terrorist actions.

Even though 11,659 small businesses outside of New York City and Arlington, Virginia have requested Economic Injury Disaster Loans applications, the Small Business Administration has only granted 100 loans. Small businesses who are suffering because the attacks plunged the economy into a recession cannot prove a direct relationship to the terrorist attacks. They cannot get the Small Business Administration's emergency loans. We must make sure there are no ambiguous rules that confuse applicants or make it difficult for the Small Business Administration to grant loans to struggling businesses.

I have introduced a bill that removes any ambiguities and ensures that the Small Business Administration can help all small businesses that need assistance. The Small Business Economic Recovery Act does not require businesses to prove that they suffered a "direct" injury as a result of the terrorist attacks. It permits any small business that has suffered "substantial economic injury" to obtain Economic Injury Disaster Loans from the Small Business Administration. Normally, businesses must be in a federally designated disaster area to receive these loans. My bill temporarily waives the federal disaster area requirement. Businesses will only have to prove that they suffered substantial economic injury. It will help businesses that cannot meet obligations as they mature, and pay necessary operating expenses.

The act will authorize the Small Business Administration to provide up to \$1.5 million in disaster assistance to a suffering small business. The interest rate on the loans will not exceed 4 percent per year, and the loan terms cannot exceed 30 years. This emergency assistance program will expire on September 11, 2002.

Small businesses represent more than 99% of all employers and employ 51% of private-sector workers. We must provide immediate assistance to help this vital sector of our economy.

I urge my colleagues to help small businesses and cosponsor this important legislation.

HONORING THE CITY OF BLACKFOOT, IDAHO, ON ITS CENTENNIAL

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a place I call home. Blackfoot, Idaho is celebrating its centennial and as a resident of Blackfoot, I'd like to share with you what makes it an all-American town.

Nestled in the Snake River Plain, Blackfoot, Idaho in Bingham County produces more potatoes than any other place in the world. The "famous" Idaho potatoes that the world enjoys come from Blackfoot and the numerous potato fields that surround it. In fact, Blackfoot offers "free taters for out of staters" at its Idaho Potato Expo Museum. It's made Blackfoot the Potato Capitol of the World by producing more than 200 million pounds of potatoes every year.

While Blackfoot is celebrating 100 years of incorporation, its history expands to the early 1800s. The first reference to Blackfoot is found in the 1818 journals of the Hudson Bay Company. In 1860, Grove City, where Blackfoot now sits, was settled to accommodate freight wagons bound for mines in central Idaho. Like many western settlements, the establishment of the Utah and Northern Railroad opened expansion and immigration. Then in 1878, the train arrived in Blackfoot on Christmas Day.

Using the Snake River to irrigate the fertile lava soil, pioneers and settlers found Blackfoot to be a prosperous agriculture community. Blackfoot became the county seat for Bingham County and at one time held the largest population in the state with 13,575 people. In 1901, Blackfoot was incorporated and now celebrates its centennial.

As many of you know, when I'm not serving in Congress, I go home to Blackfoot. I grew up there, graduated from Blackfoot High School and chose to return after completing dental school. I started my political career in Blackfoot, serving on the city council for four years.

My wife, Kathy, and I have witnessed the kind heart and gentle spirit of many who live there. It's truly a place where everyone knows your name. I salute this community that has given me so much over the years. While it may be the potatoe capitol of the world, it's a place I prefer to call home. Congratulations to Blackfoot on 100 years of excellence.

HONORING MR. GEORGE ALVIN TERRY OF NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 75TH BIRTHDAY

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. George Alvin Terry of Nashville, Tennessee, on the occasion of his 75th birthday, December 19, 2001. A native Tennessean, Terry is a graduate of Columbia Military Academy and the University of Tennessee.