

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR OF THE DIGNITARIES
FROM ACHILL ISLAND, IRELAND

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 27, 2001

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the dignitaries Ireland who are spending St. Patrick's Day in my home district of Cleveland. My city is honored to have them with us on such an important holiday.

Our four distinguished guests hail from Achill Island, Ireland. They are: Mr. Thomas McNamara, Achill Tourism Chair; Father Pat Gilligan, Achill Tourism Committee Member; Ms. Karen Grealis, Achill Tourism Manager; and Ms. Adrian Kilbane, Achill Tourism Public Relations Officer. Together, they have left their homes to spend a very important holiday with us.

Rich with cultural heritage and diversity, the city of Cleveland includes a very important Irish population. Never forgetting their roots, the Cleveland community never forgets to celebrate ethnic holidays. Saint Patrick's Day, traditionally a day of lavish celebration and remembrance of one's heritage, is revered by the City of Cleveland by an extensive parade. My city is lucky this year to have with us a delegation of dignitaries from Achill Island, Ireland to assist us in the festivities. Visiting to help us remember our shared past, these people should give us all pause to remember our families and our heritage.

It should be of great joy to everybody in Cleveland that we have such honorable people visiting us on such an important holiday. My fellow colleagues, please join me in honoring the distinguished delegation of visitors from Achill Island, Ireland.

INCREASED FUNDING FOR ALZHEIMER'S, AUTISM, AND LYME DISEASE

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 27, 2001

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I testified before the Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Education Appropriations Subcommittee on the importance of setting aside sufficient funding for critical life-saving and life affirming medical research.

First Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend President Bush for continuing the commitment to double biomedical research funding in five years by providing a \$2.8 billion increase for the National Institute of Health (NIH) in his budget proposal to Congress. The President's proposal provides the largest annual funding increase in NIH's history, and it is my hope that Congress follows in the President's footsteps.

Today I am here to represent the interests of those afflicted with Alzheimer's disease, au-

tism, and Lyme disease. These devastating diseases have left the elderly helpless, the children voiceless, and people across the nation getting weaker and sicker.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

As co-founder of the Bipartisan Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease, I am seeking support for increased funding of the National Institute on Aging so that it could accommodate an additional \$200 million in Alzheimer's research. This appropriation will help us reach our goal of funding Alzheimer's research at \$1 billion by fiscal year 2003 and allow us to launch an all-out assault on Alzheimer's disease.

This year, Mr. Speaker, we hope to increase funding for research to discover ways in which to prevent Alzheimer's for two critical target populations. The first target is people who will have clinical Alzheimer's disease 10 to 20 years from now. Researchers must find ways to slow or alter the changes that are already taking place in the brain so that symptoms of Alzheimer's never develops. The second target population is those persons who are already suffering with the disease. Researchers need more resources to help them find ways to prevent the health crises, the unmanageable behaviors, and the rapid functional decline that leads to hospitalization and nursing home placement. We are aware of the tremendous cost Alzheimer's already brings to bare on society. Not only is there an economic burden, but Alzheimer's also destroys the quality of life for the patient and the caregiver alike.

An increased investment from the government will allow for researchers to search for simple, practical, widely available, and affordable ways to detect the earliest changes in the brain. This is the only way physicians will be able to identify who needs the treatment that will help alter the course of the disease while there is still enough time to make a difference. It will also allow for additional large-scale trials aimed at prevention of Alzheimer's disease, including studies of persons with mild cognitive impairment and new longitudinal studies of persons who are aging successfully. Part of the answer to Alzheimer's may lie in discovering why many live well into their 90s with their cognitive abilities intact. Furthermore, appropriate funding will permit us to establish additional large-scale clinical trials of early intervention to slow or prevent decline. Scientists have many more sound ideas for effective treatments that they can test with increased funding.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen that the Alzheimer's investments Congress has made over the past decade are now paying off in rapid discoveries regarding the basic mechanisms of the disease, the complex interplay of genetic and environmental risk factors, and the treatments and interventions that can slow decline. Discoveries in the past year alone have generated great excitement in the field of Alzheimer's. For instance, scientists have developed a third FDA-approved drug designed for the treatment of the disease's cognitive symptoms. In addition, scientists have com-

pleted Phase 1 of a clinical trial involving humans in which they used a vaccine that appears to prevent in the brains of mice the amyloid deposition that forms plaques which characterize Alzheimer's disease.

The United States enters the 21st Century facing an imminent epidemic. By 2050, 14 million of today's baby boomers will have Alzheimer's disease. For most of them, the process that will destroy their memories, their lives, and their savings has already begun. The annual cost of Alzheimer's diseases will soar to at least \$375 billion, overwhelming our health care system and bankrupting Medicare and Medicaid. The only way to avoid this crisis is to act now.

AUTISM

As the co-founder of the Coalition for Autism Research and Education (C.A.R.E.), I am seeking support for the provision of \$5 million for the Center of Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help the states conduct autism epidemiology research.

Autism is a developmental disorder that has robbed at least 400,000 children of their ability to communicate and interact. The disorder affects at least one in every 500 children in America. Currently, there is limited information on the prevalence, cause, or treatment of autism.

To address the lack of understanding Mr. Speaker, CDC began conducting epidemiological research on the incidence and surveillance of autism in two metropolitan areas in Georgia and my home state, New Jersey. Last year, Congress made a major and vital investment in the centers of excellence, and as a result, CDC expanded its research to include data collection in West Virginia, Arizona, South Carolina, Maryland, and Delaware. CDC's efforts in these states seek to identify the prevalence rate of autism and to verify that these cases are accurately diagnosed. The studies also seek to establish any relevant environmental or other exposures in these communities.

The basic data collection and verification is integral to better understanding the incidence of autism, the factors which may contribute to a higher rate of incidence, and effective treatment. The challenge is that effective analysis of this data must wait for the data collection efforts to expand to an additional 24 states.

CDC must receive the funding to collect data from approximately 30 states before it can move forward with a comprehensive analysis of trends that may reveal correlative factors, potential causes, and hopefully effective treatments and cures for autism.

LYME DISEASE

As a Member of Congress who has been active on the subject of Lyme disease for nearly two decades, I believe there are two critical areas we must focus upon if our nation is to better control the disease. First, I am seeking support for an increase of \$8 million at the NIH, which would bring total Lyme disease funding to \$32 million. NIH would use this infusion of funds to make the development

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

and improvement of direct detection tests for Lyme a priority. Second, we must double the funding at CDC and bring total Lyme disease funding to \$16 million. The CDC has admitted that "the (Lyme) disease is greatly under-reported." Thus, we must urge CDC to re-examine its surveillance system to see where improvements can be made and accurately enhanced. In order to do this, they need adequate funding and oversight.

Lyme disease continues to harm tens of thousands of Americans who engage in outdoor activities, both from work and from recreation. Symptoms of Lyme disease can include a reddish skin rash, chills, flu-like symptoms, headaches, joint pain and fatigue. Without treatment, Lyme disease can result in acute headaches, arthritis, and nervous system and cardiac abnormalities. The CDC notes that Lyme disease is the leading cause of vector-borne infectious illness in the U.S. with approximately 15,000 cases reported annually. Over 125,000 cases of Lyme disease infection have been reported since 1982, and some studies indicate cases of Lyme may be under-reported by as much as 10 or 12 fold. Furthermore, various estimates of the cost of Lyme disease on our society at between \$500 million and \$1 billion annually.

Consequently, I believe funding to address detection and surveillance would greatly assist Congress in ensuring the constituents in Lyme disease endemic areas that Lyme disease research is on the right track.

The case is amply made that extra monies for Alzheimer's disease, Autism, and Lyme disease will be very well put to use and represent a small payment toward preventing future health care costs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members of Congress to support increased funding for Alzheimer's, autism, and Lyme disease.

IN HONOR OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE IRON WORKERS LOCAL 17

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 27, 2001

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, please join me in saluting the hard working men and women of Iron Workers Local 17 of Cleveland, Ohio as they celebrate their 100th Anniversary.

The brilliant craftsmanship of the thousands of dedicated men and women who comprise the Iron Workers Local 17 is evident across the landscape of Northern Ohio. The bridges that span Ohio's beautiful rivers and The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame are both fine examples of the permanent imprint that Iron Workers 17 has cast on thousands of structures in the state. This community of working people who understand the value and importance of family are committed to creating a tradition of excellence. Performing one of the ten most dangerous jobs in the world, courageous ironworkers brave the tough Cleveland weather and risky working conditions to build the office towers, sports stadiums, and highway bridges that illuminate the skyline.

Early on when structural steel construction was in its infancy, ironworkers often worked ten hour days and seven day weeks for as little as twenty cents an hour, only expecting to

hold positions for ten years before death or major injury ended their career. When Local 17 gained its charter in 1901 money was tight, but the union persevered and provided help to its members. In the turbulent years that followed, union iron workers learned how to deal with steel industry giants, often initiating strikes to gain fair labor practices. By the end of World War I, the unions successfully established the eight-hour day and five-day work-week.

Local 17 thrived in the midst of the great industrial expansion of the 1920's. In this decade, the largest building project in Cleveland's history, The Cleveland Union Terminal complex including the landmark Terminal Tower, was completed. During World War II, ironworkers, dedicated to the ideals of the United States, served in all branches of the military and were even recruited to work as "seabees" by the Navy to repair aircraft carriers and battleships. Iron workers on the homefront assisted in war munitions production or worked around the country building power plants, hydroelectric facilities, and dams needed in the war effort. In the decades following the war, iron workers were busy rebuilding the bridges and highways in disrepair after many years of use. Presently, Local 17 is enjoying renewed respect with growing membership and cordial relationships with contractors.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in saluting the thousands of dedicated men and women that brave tough conditions at great personal risk to keep Cleveland growing.

PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER MEDAL OF VALOR ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2001

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 802, the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Act, which would create a national medal for public safety officers who exhibit extraordinary heroism in the line of duty.

As someone who once aspired to serve in law enforcement and a proud member of both the Congressional Law Enforcement and Firefighters Caucuses, I deeply admire those who devote their lives to public safety.

We are blessed to have dedicated men and women public safety officials throughout this nation who consistently risks their lives on a daily basis to protect our families and communities. It is absolutely critical that we recognize these loyal public servants and ensure that the risks that these brave individuals assume in the course of their duties are not taken for granted.

Although many local public safety organizations honor those who have demonstrated bravery, the federal government does little to reward and recognize these individuals. By passing the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Act, Congress would have the unique opportunity to express its appreciation for the unnoticed acts of valor committed by public safety officers who have gone above and beyond the call of duty. Further, this legislation will help send a positive message across the country that our public safety officers deserve

our utmost respect for their service and sacrifices.

I will continue to applaud the courage and dedication to duty of all public safety officers and would strongly urge my colleagues to support the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Act.

INDEPENDENT TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONSUMER ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. EVA M. CLAYTON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2001

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Independent Telecommunications Consumer Enhancement Act of 2001. This bill would provide regulatory relief to small and mid-sized telephone companies that generally serve small town and rural communities. The current regulatory burdens on these small companies are the same as those placed on large companies; but, because of their size, these regulations are very costly and time-consuming.

These regulatory burdens tend to discourage competition in rural communities by impeding the entry of new companies into these markets. These burdens also pose obstacles to the development in rural communities of advanced services such as broadband Internet access.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 provided for reduced regulations and greater competition in our country. This has fostered many new telecommunications and information services including advanced services. However, the benefits of these technological advances have been enjoyed by urban and suburban communities much more than by persons who live in small towns and rural communities. Large telephone companies and other entities tend to have the resources required to develop these advanced services and find the urban and suburban markets more attractive. The deployment of advanced services in urban areas contrasted with the difficulty of small companies offering these services in rural areas has exacerbated the digital divide in our country.

We must find ways to bridge this divide. Relieving certain regulatory burdens may help achieve this objective. The proponents of this bill and many small telephone companies promise that they will use the savings resulting from the elimination of these regulatory burdens to extend advanced services. Some question whether the savings resulting from this measure would simply increase profits of the small telephone companies with no corresponding increase in services. Some note that this bill does not impose a reciprocal obligation to extend services following the relaxation of current regulatory requirements, and does not include any enforcement mechanisms. We hope that the small telephone companies which benefit from the adoption of this bill will do the right thing and act in the best interest of the communities in which they operate. That is the intent of this measure and the