

approach to the delivery of medical care to Indian people, most of whom live in isolated, sparsely-populated and under-served areas of our country. Subsequent reauthorization, has amended the Act to reflect advancements in health care delivery, respond to the desire of tribes for greater responsibility of programs, and target the high incidence of certain diseases that have plagued this segment of the American population.

The bill we introduce today is based largely upon recommendations made by the Indian health community—including tribal leaders, tribal health directors, health care experts, Native patients themselves, and the Indian Health Service. Its primary objective is to improve access to quality medical care for this population.

In this bill we maintain the basic framework of the IHCA, including its provisions that target diseases for which Indian Country shows an astonishingly high rate—such as diabetes, tuberculosis, infant mortality, and substance abuse. We have included a greater role for Indian tribes in setting local priorities for health care delivery and provide for innovative options for funding of Indian health facilities. This legislation authorizes a nationally certified Community Health Aide program to supply medical care in under-served, remote areas and strengthens health programs that serve Indian people in urban areas. In addition, this bill will provide for the consolidation of substance abuse, mental health and social service programs into a holistic system for behavioral health services.

We have certainly made improvements in the health status of Indian and Alaska Native people since IHCA was first authorized including; infant mortality which has decreased by nearly 55 percent. Native people, however, still suffer death rates from some diseases at rates many times higher than the national population such as; diabetes at 249 percent higher, tuberculosis at 533 percent higher, and substance abuse at 627 percent higher.

I will push for immediate action on this important legislation in the Resources Committee where I serve as the Ranking Democratic Member and look forward to working with my colleagues and Indian Country as we proceed.

INTRODUCTION OF DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT

HON. SHERWOOD L. BOEHLERT

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2001

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce the Department of Environmental Protection Act, important legislation that redesignates the Environmental Protection Agency as an executive department in the executive branch.

Like many of my colleagues, I believe the time has come to elevate EPA to cabinet-level status. This is not a new idea, but it continues to be a good idea. Rep. Jim Florio and I introduced legislation in the 101st Congress (1988) to elevate the agency. I introduced a similar bill again in the 103rd Congress. Several of my colleagues also introduced EPA elevation bills and, in 1993, there was significant debate surrounding Senate-passed and House Com-

mittee-passed bills. The problem wasn't so much the concept behind the bill, but the "baggage" attached to the bill. It became a magnet for controversial provisions and pet projects.

And so, today I'm introducing a baggage-free EPA elevation bill. I believe the bill steers clear of controversial issues that could sidetrack the broader effort. It also combines features from previous legislative efforts, particularly those of the former Chairman and Ranking Member of the Government Operations Committee, Representative JOHN CONYERS and former Representative Bill Clinger.

The Department of Environmental Protection Act should help start the discussion in the 107th Congress. There is at least one bill introduced in the Senate. The subject also came up during Administrator Whitman's confirmation hearings. But there needs to be much more discussion and, most importantly, action.

It may be an "old" idea but it's still a good idea. EPA's mission is too critical for the agency not to be an official part of the cabinet. The idea was good under a Republican President in the late 1980's, a Democratic President in the 1990's, and now a Republican President at the start of the 21st Century.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of the effort.

TRIBUTE TO MS. JENNIFER LUCIANO

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2001

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ms. Jennifer Luciano. Ms. Luciano has spent the last five months doing an internship in my Congressional office. As she prepares to leave Capitol Hill tomorrow and return to Loyola University to complete her education I wish her well.

On behalf of the constituents of the Seventh Congressional District I want to commend and congratulate Jennifer for doing an outstanding job. During her internship Jennifer responded to constituent mail, drafted ideas for legislation, prepared "Dear Colleagues" and assisted the legislative staff.

In particular, Jennifer thought of the idea for a Minority Women's Statue to be displayed in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol. Currently, there are no depictions or Statues that represent the accomplishments of Minority Women to the history of America. In addition, she thought of a bill to expand Medicare coverage to cover eyeglasses and hearing aids for the Medicare eligible population. These are just two of the outstanding ideas that Jennifer worked on.

I am certain that Jennifer will do well in her future endeavors if she continues to work as hard as she has worked on behalf of the people of the Seventh Congressional District and the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join with me in congratulating Jennifer Luciano as she prepares to go back to Chicago, Illinois.

ANNIVERSARY OF AQUI EN EL VALLE

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2001

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to *Aqui en el Valle* newspaper, headquartered in Bloomfield, New Mexico, and its founder, LaVerta Valdez-Johnson, on its recent one-year anniversary. In that short period, this newspaper has delivered dedicated service and commitment to the Hispanic community in the Four Corners area.

Aqui en el Valle, or "Here in the Valley," is typically focused on positive local news and information that benefits the Hispanic community. The paper also focuses on Southwestern history and profiles of successful Hispanics. The newspaper is even used in Bloomfield elementary and high schools for Spanish language classes.

The *Aqui en el Valle*, however, would never have become a reality without the persistence and vision of LaVerta Valdez-Johnson. She was told by the business community that a Hispanic newspaper was not a sound investment. Undeterred, Mrs. Valdez-Johnson, with the help of her husband, Wesley and son, Russ, the monthly paper has gone from 1,000 copies in March, 2000, to a circulation today of more than 5,000. It has established a strong and diverse base of support and serves a vast area of 11 New Mexico towns that stretch from Bloomfield to Santa Fe.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending LaVerta Valdez-Johnson for not backing down from her dream and to extend best wishes for continued success in the coming years.

THE MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE PROFICIENCY PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 2001

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2001

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing a bill to authorize the Director of the National Science Foundation (NSF) to establish a demonstration program under which the Director awards grants to qualified schools.

The grants received by these schools will be used to develop a program that builds or expands mathematics, science, and information technology curricula; purchase equipment necessary to establish such a program and provide teacher training in such fields. The act also allows the private sector to contribute goods and services, such as the donation of computer hardware and software; the establishment of internship and mentoring opportunities for students who participate in the mathematics, science, and information technology program; and the donation of scholarship funds for use at institutions of higher education by eligible students.

The need for this legislative proposal to provide grants to qualified schools is beyond doubt, and the case supporting this bill can be simply stated:

Mathematics and science education is a vital link to connect today's students with the information age and to the workplace of the 21st century.

Today's United States economy depends more than ever on the talents of skilled, high-tech workers and in order to sustain America's preeminence, we must take drastic steps to change the way we develop our workforce.

It is estimated that more than half of the economic growth of the United States today results directly from research and development in science and technology.

The nexus between scientific and technological advances and education has been noted by several entities. Yet, according to the National Commission on Mathematics and Science Teaching for the 21st Century, the performance of our country's students from both the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the National

The National Education Association (NEA), an endorser of this bill, recognizes that quality math and science education is essential to prepare our students to compete in the 21st century. The NEA stated,

By authorizing grants to Local Education Agencies for expansion of math, science, and technology curricula, purchase of technological equipment, and teacher training, this legislation will help enhance math and science education. The resources provided for teacher training will help ensure the high quality professional development critical to world class math and science teaching. In addition, the bill's special focus on schools with the greatest economic needs will help level the playing field for disadvantaged students, who often lack access to technological and other resources necessary to maximize math and science learning.

Texas Instruments, another endorser of this bill, believes that the need for additional emphasis in the fields of mathematics and science education is clear. Texas Instruments stated,

In this age of rapidly advancing technology, math and science education is a vital link that prepares students to thrive in the new, information and technology driven economy. More than ever, U.S. economic and technological leadership depends on our ability to ensure that students graduate with the skills and knowledge they need for 21st century jobs.

We must acknowledge that the effectiveness of the United States in maintaining this economic growth will be largely determined by the intellectual capital of the United States.

The education of America's students is critical to developing this resource. American students consistently demonstrate average and below average performance compared to their international peers in their skills in mathematics and science. According to the 1999 edition of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, also known as the Nation's Report Card, the trends in mathematics and science are characterized by declines in the 1970's, followed by increases during the 1980's and early 1990's. However, performance has remained unchanged since the early 1990's. Several findings of the Report Card deserve mention, including the following:

In 1999, the average science score for 17-year-olds was lower than the average score in 1969 for the same age group.

In 1999, the average science score for 13-year-olds was similar to the average score in 1970 for the same group.

In 1999, White students had higher average mathematics scores than their Black and Hispanic peers. Although the gap between White and Black students narrowed since 1973, there is evidence that the gap may be widening since 1990.

In 1999, males outperformed females in science at ages 13 and 17.

A greater percent of 13-year-olds in 1999 than in 1986 reported that the content of their science class was general rather than focused on earth, physical, or life science.

In an age now driven by the relentless necessity of scientific and technological advancement, the current preparation that students in the United States receive in mathematics and science is, in a word, unacceptable. Proficiency in mathematics and technology is necessary to prepare American students for participation in the 21st century and to guarantee that the United States economy remains vibrant and competitive. Now is the time to set the stage for advancement in mathematics and science proficiency. The United States must expect more from our educators and students.

In order to achieve this, it is important that we show interest in economically disadvantaged students who have not been provided with opportunities that will improve their knowledge of mathematics and science. Many economically disadvantaged students in urban and rural America share a common need to receive a quality education, but often their schools lack the needed resources to prepare them for the 21st century global community. The schools and businesses serving these communities are strategically positioned to form a unique partnership with urban and rural students that will increase their mathematics and science proficiency for the benefit of the Nation. If our Nation continues failing to prepare citizens from all population groups for participation in the new, technology-driven economy, our Nation will risk losing its economic and intellectual preeminence. Finally, America's students must improve their performance in mathematics and science if they are to succeed in today's world and if the United States is to stay competitive in an integrated global economy. It is clear that we must provide American students with the competence and confidence to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, The Mathematics and Science Proficiency Partnership Act of 2001 provides an unprecedented opportunity to redefine the federal role in K-12 education that establishes clear national priorities, provides incentives for change, disseminates best practices and targets assistance effectively. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ASIAN AND PACIFIC AMERICAN WWII VETERANS

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2001

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to our WWII veterans of Asian and Pacific Island ancestry.

Half a century ago, these young members of the Greatest Generation answered this country's call to fight in Europe, North Africa

and Asia, on the Atlantic and the Pacific. They selflessly served in support of a greater cause, and all too often were called upon to give the greatest sacrifice of all—their own lives.

The willingness of these young service members to serve and die in support of the war effort is made even more poignant by the racial inequalities experienced by their families at home in the United States. Many of these Asian and Pacific Islander WWII veterans went into service while their families were simultaneously being forcibly relocated to internment camps across the country, solely because of their ethnic origins.

The generous service of these WWII veterans is truly remarkable. It is a privilege to recognize their contributions to this country on the House floor today, in celebration of "Asian and Pacific American Veterans of WWII Day."

I wish to also commend the Asian American Student Union of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This group of committed students has worked diligently to ensure that the memory of these veterans' sacrifices, selfless service, and patriotism is never forgotten, and they have helped to make this day of recognition a reality in Wisconsin.

THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
NEW YORK COLLEGE OF
PODIATRIC MEDICINE

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2001

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the 90th anniversary of an important institution in my Congressional district, the New York College of Podiatric Medicine. In view of the fact that podiatric doctors are assuming a growing and significant place on the Nation's health care team, the College means even more to our community.

The College was founded in 1911 in East Harlem by Dr. Maurice J. Lewi, medical physician and educator, former Secretary to the New York State Board of Medical Examiners and first president of this institution. Dr. Lewi drafted the first legislation creating the New York College of Podiatric Medicine and its clinical training arm, the Foot Clinics of New York to provide educational and training programs and the establishment of the first standards of podiatric clinical care.

The College is the first and largest college of podiatric medical education in the Nation, having treated literally hundreds of thousands of people in its foot clinics over the 90 years of its existence. Graduates of the College account for 25 percent of the Nation's practicing podiatrists. Forty percent of the current student enrollment are minorities, 45 percent of whom are women. The college is affiliated with the New York Presbyterian Healthcare System, Lincoln and Harlem Hospitals, Metropolitan Medical and Nassau County University Medical Centers—a clear reflection of the outstanding reputation the college has earned in the health care community. In October, 2000, the college affiliated with Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons to provide improved access to patient care, academic programs for