

foster children, the Children's Network has evolved into the leading voice for all young people in Solano County. It is the convener of California's first and among its most effective inter-agency coordinating councils dedicated to improving the lives of children.

The Children's Network works to educate people in Solano County about the needs of children and to bring together those who can help achieve the best outcomes for kids. In promoting the health, education, and well-being of all children in the county, the Children's Network conducts and disseminates research, offers training, administers grants, coordinates county agencies, advocates for policy changes at all levels of government, and works to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of county services for children and families.

The Children's Network partners with a variety of private and public organizations to improve the lives of local children. Through contracts with Solano County, the Children's Network also provides staff support—such as budget development, research, training and administrative support—for three councils appointed by the Board of Supervisors (Children's Network Council, Child Abuse Prevention Council, and the Child Care Planning Council), as well as for a network of the county's Family Resource Centers.

Accomplishments of the Children's Network include:

Developed and helped foster successful passage of a California state law permitting funding for "family preservation," which provides support and allows appropriate families to stay together in cases where children might otherwise be placed in foster care.

Provided the leadership to establish the Solano County Children's Trust Fund, which raises more than \$100,000 annually for child abuse prevention services in Solano County.

Worked to create a system of Family Resource Centers, which provide family support services in every city in the county for more than 4,000 at-risk families each year.

Advocated successfully for the county to maintain and increase the amount of money available for child care for families in the state's welfare-to-work program, who today receive more than \$8 million annually in child care subsidies.

Persuaded the County Board of Supervisors and all seven local city councils to adopt a set of Policy Principles that provide a framework for successful delivery of children's services.

Convinced the Board of Supervisors to adopt the goal of improving the lives of children as its top priority for 2001-2003.

Provided child development training and/or stipends to more than 400 early education professionals to support high quality child care in the first year of the Compensation and Retention Encourage Stability (CARES) program.

Helped develop and coordinate the Integrated Family Support Initiative, a home-visiting program that allowed for nearly 1,000 visits to isolated, at-risk families in its first year, 2001.

Raised awareness of children's needs through publication of The Children's Budget and The Children's Report Card, which drew attention to state and federal funding shortfalls that affect local families and provided data for grant proposals, thereby increasing funds for local children's services.

Organized an annual Child Abuse Prevention Conference that has provided high-caliber

training to approximately 900 government officials, parents, service providers and community members for each of the last four years.

Current activities of the Children's Network include:

Researching and publishing The Children's Budget, a series examining how government funding for children is allocated and spent in Solano County, and The Children's Report Card, a compilation of data about the county's successes, challenges, and progress in serving children.

Involving parents and community members in forums to discuss what can be done to improve the lives of children.

Established a strong child advocacy and fund-raising presence in Solano County as the action arm of the first children's inter-agency coordinating councils in the state.

Seeking creative budget strategies in partnership with county agencies to achieve better, more efficient, and more effective investments in services for children and families.

Encouraging officials at the local and state levels to consider the needs of children in policy decisions.

Administering the county's program to provide stipends and child development training for child care professionals.

Coordinating a home-visiting program present in all Family Resource Centers to provide family support countywide.

Mr. Speaker, we know we speak for all the members of the House of Representatives when we congratulate the Children's Network for twenty years of effective advocacy on behalf of children in Solano County.

TRIBUTE TO THE TIBBITS OPERA HOUSE OF JACKSON, MICHIGAN

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 8, 2002

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise to recognize the Tibbits Opera House, in Coldwater, MI, which celebrated its 120th anniversary on September 21, 2002. Having opened in 1882, the Tibbits is one of Michigan's oldest theaters. Built for a cost of \$25,000, the Tibbits was one of the finest opera houses of its day.

Through the years, the Tibbits has provided the residents of Michigan's seventh district with a wide range of entertainment offerings: hosting operas, plays, wrestling matches, silent pictures and movies. Famous acts like John Phillip Sousa and his band, Guy Lombardo, the Glen Miller Orchestra and Buffalo Bill and his Cowboys all performed on its stage.

Fellow Representatives, I am happy to report that after all this time, the Tibbits is still going strong, thanks to the Tibbits Opera House Foundation and Arts Council, which purchased the theater in 1963. Every year, thousands of people flock to the Tibbits to see plays like Camelot, The Last Night of Ballyhoo, A Connecticut Yankee, and A Grand Night for Singing. In addition, the Tibbits offers programs for children, professional touring musicians, and art exhibitions, and also plays host to a variety of community activities.

The Tibbits is a community landmark and an important piece of our country's rich theatrical

heritage. It is a testament to the residents of Coldwater that it has been preserved for 120 years, and continues to thrive.

THE RETIREMENT OF CONGRESSMAN BENJAMIN GILMAN

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 8, 2002

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound respect and admiration that I bid my good friend, esteemed colleague, and fellow New Yorker, Congressman BENJAMIN GILMAN, farewell as he retires after 30 years of service to the House of Representatives.

Congressman GILMAN has been devoted to public service and helping others his entire life.

From the time he lost family members in the Holocaust, and witnessed persecution by Nazi Germany as a young soldier in World War II, Congressman GILMAN has been unwavering in his commitment to human rights.

He fought for human rights before the fight became popular.

Congressman GILMAN was first recognized for his human rights work in 1978, thanks to his successful efforts to free several prisoners in East Germany, Mozambique, Cuba, and several other nations.

But he didn't stop there.

Two years later he fought for the release of 30 U.S. citizens from the political imprisonment by the Cuban Government.

It is these courageous feats, among countless others, that contributed to the tremendous leadership he provided to the International Relations Committee.

As a ranking minority member on the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee, Congressman GILMAN earned a reputation as a leader and a fighter for safe and equitable workplaces for civil service and postal service employees.

Now the senior Republican on the Government Reform Committee, on which we serve together, I have had the honor of working with him on issues that are not only important to our state, but to the country.

Last year, I proudly worked with the Congressman to fund an environmental study on the potential causes of high breast cancer rates in our state.

Whether it was in Hudson Valley or one of many countries around the world, Congressman GILMAN has never hesitated to help those in need.

Although he may be unsure where his path will now take him, I have no doubt that his determined spirit and renowned kindness will continue to be appreciated by many.

Even though the Congressman and I have always stood on opposite sides of the aisle—we have rarely stood on opposites sides of an issue, most importantly matters that affecting New York—and I am proud to have served with him.

Beloved by both Republicans and Democrats, "Gentle Ben"—you will be sorely missed by your constituents, by fellow New Yorkers, and by fellow Americans.

IN RECOGNITION OF LAWSUIT
ABUSE AWARENESS WEEK: SEP-
TEMBER 30—OCTOBER 4, 2002

HON. ROBERT L. EHRLICH, JR.

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 8, 2002

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Maryland Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse, MDCALA, and to congratulate them on their efforts to raise public awareness about frivolous litigation and the need for personal responsibility during the recent Lawsuit Abuse Awareness Week.

MDCALA is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, legal watchdog organization dedicated to improving the civil justice system. Over the last 7 years, MDCALA has worked to educate Marylanders about the cost of frivolous litigation. With more than 10,000 supporters statewide, MDCALA emphasizes the negative consequences that lawsuit abuse has on the public.

Maryland is home to many large corporations and family businesses. Yet, the constant fear of lawsuits threatens the economic vitality of our State. Small businesses simply cannot afford one frivolous lawsuit. In order to compensate for potential legal bills, businesses are forced to raise prices to protect their bottom line. Lawsuit abuse, therefore, results in higher prices, increased medical expenses and loss of business growth.

As a former member of the Maryland General Assembly, I worked hard to reform our legal system at the State level. During my tenure in Congress, I have supported efforts with respect to product liability reform, securities litigation reform, and reform of the federal Superfund program. More importantly, I sponsored legislation that has helped reduce, in my view, frivolous class action lawsuits brought against mortgage brokers.

Legal reform is a very complex issue. The legal system must function to provide justice to every American. This does not mean, however, that the status quo is necessarily perfect. When lawsuits and the courts are used in excess or to the detriment of innocent parties, the system should be reviewed and reformed if possible.

For their efforts, let me acknowledge MDCALA Chairman, the Honorable Phillip D. Bissett; Board of Directors—Joseph Brown, Jack Doll, Janna Naylor, Vikki Nelson, Gary Prince, the Honorable Joseph Sachs, Dr. Michael Saylor, and the Honorable Michael Wagner; and Executive Director Nancy H. Hill.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I remind our citizens that frivolous lawsuits—nationwide—clog our courts and prevent access to legitimate litigation. We must work together to implement common sense reform in order to restore fairness and justice to our legal system. I commend these citizens, and all involved in this worthwhile effort, for their dedication and commitment to public awareness on the serious issues associated with lawsuit abuse.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 8, 2002

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was unavoidably absent and missed rollcall votes

No. 442, No. 443 and No. 444. If present I would have voted "yea."

**I SALUTE TAIWAN ON ITS
NATIONAL DAY**

HON. EARL F. HILLIARD

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 8, 2002

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the leaders of Taiwan on their forthcoming National Day. In the last 2 years, President Chen Shui-bian has accomplished a great deal for Taiwan.

In these 2 years, Taiwan has continued to reduce its trade surplus with us and maintained its healthy economic growth. Internally, Taiwan's process of democratization is continuing and has drawn wide praise from Western press.

On Taiwan's National Day, we should recognize Taiwan for what it is—a prosperous democracy, worthy of respect and admiration. I have enjoyed working with Ambassador C.J. Chen and his staff. They have kept me informed of the developments in Taiwan. They are exemplary diplomats.

Happy Birthday to Taiwan.

**TRIBUTE TO SAN FRANCISCO
NETWORK MINISTRIES**

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 8, 2002

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor San Francisco Network Ministries on the occasion of its 30th anniversary. Since its founding in 1972, this group has had a significant impact on the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco, a neighborhood that 25,000 call home and a neighborhood that has been No. 1 in homicides, assaults, drug use, and incidence of HIV.

The mission of SFNM is a true reflection of who they are and of their significance in the Tenderloin: "San Francisco Network ministries is devoted to the people of the Tenderloin neighborhood with whom they work cooperatively for the empowerment of all, proclaiming good news for the poor and seeking liberty for those who are oppressed. SFNM believes that everyone has been given gifts for the common good, and they seek to draw out and affirm those gifts through personal, face-to-face ministry."

The work of Network Ministries' focuses on serving the multicultural population of the Tenderloin neighborhood as well as 6,000 frail elderly persons and 4,000 children. Programs include a computer training center, construction of and services to low income apartments, SafeHouse for women leaving prostitution, memorial services for the poor and homeless, a residential hotel ministry, an AIDS Resource Center, and a support program for volunteers in pastoral care among the frail elderly.

Network Ministries has always drawn together partners and entered into coalitions to work on specific issues of importance to the people of the Tenderloin and other poor people. This approach enables the organization to

be a leader in bringing compassionate, effective service to those who need it. It has fostered and/or created other agencies, serving as a role model for those who believe that you can get a lot more done when you don't focus on who gets the credit.

Mr. Speaker, San Francisco Network Ministries is an inspiration to its partners, to the community it serves, and to all of us who care about our fellow human beings. I am proud to honor the work they have been doing for 30 years, important work that will continue to have an impact on the lives they touch. And, I am particularly honored to be the long-time friend of the Rev. Glenda Hope who, with her late husband Scott Hope, founded this exemplary organization.

**TRIBUTE TO RONALD McDONALD
HOUSE CHARITIES OF CENTRAL
NEW YORK**

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 8, 2002

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central New York. I am proud to say this "home-away-from-home" located in the heart of my district, has opened its doors to thousands of families who have found themselves in need of medical care.

When a child is ill, parents and family members should have the ability to focus on the task-at-hand, returning the child to full health. The Ronald McDonald House provides a strong support system, affording families a safe haven and a meal on the table while they are working through difficult times.

I commend the Central New York chapter of the Ronald McDonald House as they celebrate 20 years of unconditional love and assistance. The work that you do will have a lasting effect on the children from our country and throughout the world. The lives that you touch will hopefully inspire others to follow your lead in assisting those who are working through difficult situations. The cycle of support that you have developed, will definitely live on forever.

Thank you, and congratulations.

**HONORING PAUL HEIDEN, FINANCE
DIRECTOR OF ROLLS-ROYCE**

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 8, 2002

Ms. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, as the House meets tonight in Washington, the Board of Directors of Rolls-Royce North America, whose largest manufacturing facility is located in my district in Indianapolis, is meeting at its corporate headquarters in northern Virginia.

Rolls-Royce is one of our most distinguished corporate citizens, and one of the largest private-sector employers in Indiana; it employs more than 8,000 workers and produces more than \$2.4 billion in North American sales annually. A global company with a British heritage and a major American presence, Rolls-Royce can attribute much of its