

A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING  
RON DEREWECKI

**HON. ROBERT W. NEY**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 16, 2002*

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, Whereas, Ron Derewcki is a professional teacher of science at Coshocton High School; and

Whereas, Ron Derewcki has been selected to receive a Governor's Award for Excellence in Youth Science Opportunities by the Ohio Academy of Science in cooperation with the Office of the Governor and the Ohio Department of Education; and

Whereas, Ron Derewcki should be commended for reaching this milestone, for his devotion to his students, and for his ongoing efforts to extend science education opportunities beyond the classroom;

Therefore, I join with the residents of the entire 18th Congressional District of Ohio in honoring and congratulating Ron Derewcki for his outstanding accomplishment.

HONORING THE MID-SOUTH SAFE  
KIDS COALITION

**HON. HAROLD E. FORD, JR.**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 16, 2002*

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding achievements of the Mid-South SAFE KIDS Coalition and to pay tribute to this organization for its tireless dedication to preventing childhood injuries.

Each year 6,700 children in this country die from preventable injuries while another 120,000 suffer permanent disabilities. In the Mid-South region alone, 20 children die each month due to injury, while at the Le Bonheur Children's Medical Center in Memphis, TN there are more than 12,000 children admitted to the hospital due to preventable injuries every year.

The Mid-South SAFE KIDS Coalition, housed at the Le Bonheur Children's Medical Center, has for the past ten years sought to reduce these unnecessary tragedies by sponsoring a variety of outreach programs designed to educate parents and caregivers about safety and injury prevention.

Established in 1992 as part of the National SAFE KIDS Campaign, the Mid-South Coalition is part of the first and only nationwide childhood injury prevention effort. The Coalition has combined community action, public awareness, and public policy initiatives to bring about a systematic, ongoing response to bring about a systematic, ongoing response to child injury in Mid-South Communities.

Recently, the National SAFE KIDS Campaign signed a formal agreement with the Mid-South Coalition and the Le Bonheur Children's Medical Center to help build and sustain a broad-based children's injury prevention effort designed to reduce the number of preventable injuries affecting children in the Mid-South.

Through this agreement, the Le Bonheur Children's Medical Center has become one of the nation's leading childhood injury treatment

centers, providing services from pre-hospital care, to in-hospital treatment, to outpatient follow-up care.

In addition to treatment services, the Mid-South Coalition provides equally valuable prevention services including initiatives like the Buckle Up program, Cycle Smart, Project Get Alarmed, and Safety in the Home.

The service the Mid-South SAFE KIDS Coalition provides to local children's safety is immeasurable, although a recent study of childhood injuries published in the August 2002 issue of Injury Prevention Journal noted that the implementation of the Mid-South SAFE KIDS Coalition was associated with a 30 percent decrease in the rate of severe motor vehicle occupant injuries treated at Le Bonheur.

Before the establishment of the Coalition, severe unintentional injury rates in Shelby County mirrored national rates, yet, the decrease in Shelby County injury rates after the establishment of the Coalition was markedly greater than national averages.

The results of this study were so significant that the researchers, including Susan Helms, the coordinator of the Mid-South Coalition have been invited to present their findings before the National SAFE KIDS Leadership Conference this week here in Washington.

The Mid-South SAFE KIDS Coalition has proved to be an invaluable asset to my district and the Mid-South region. Its efforts to prevent childhood injury have directly led to a substantial increase in safety education and a vast reduction in preventable injuries to area children. They have truly provided a model for other children's protection agencies to emulate.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to honor the Mid-South SAFE KIDS Coalition today for its unbounded dedication to the prevention of childhood injury and its innumerable services to area children.

WE MUST ACTIVELY AND CONTINUOUSLY ENGAGE CONTROL ASIA

**HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 16, 2002*

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce two bills that will provide increased aid to an important region of the world.

Central Asia, specifically Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, is a beautiful region with a rich cultural heritage and an immense potential for stability and prosperity.

In the years following the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, there was hope and optimism about the future of Central Asia. Unfortunately, the United States stood back and watched without any consistent or substantive policy for the region.

One by one, Central Asia States, most notably Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, have taken multiple and swift steps backwards toward oppressive police regimes that strangle freedom and democracy.

But we must not lose sight of the progress that many of these countries have made over the past decade.

The people of Central Asia are hungry for democracy, thirsty for economic prosperity, and strongly desire close relations with the U.S. If we do not comprehensively engage this region, the U.S. will have no standing to effect positive change and the downward trend will continue.

We must build relationships with these countries—both economically and politically, and show them that freedom and democracy leads to prosperity. In doing this, we need to be an honest partner with them. We need to highlight when positive steps toward change are taken and send a clear message when respect for human rights is violated.

With this said, I am introducing two bills that will promote engagement in the region. The first will authorize a pilot exchange program of academic internships in public policy for future leaders of the republics of Central Asia.

This needed program will provide young people from this critical region with experience to better understand our form of democracy and public service, and practice their skills at working within associations, NGOs, and government.

This initiative is intended to complement our existing exchange programs with Central Asia by targeting undergraduate and graduate students for six-month internships in public positions and utilizing a proven model that combines a four-day-a-week, on-the-job practicum with a day of class work.

Today, demand for scholarships, exchanges, and fellowships for students from Central Asia far outstrips supply. Thousands of students—high school through graduate—have applied for limited slots.

My bill will take the next step in expanding these opportunities.

Central Asia has a high population of young people and the future of the region rests in their hands. If democracy is to succeed, if economic prosperity is to be realized, if human rights are to be protected, then we must patiently engage this region and provide its young people with greater opportunities.

My second bill, entitled the "Central Asia Child Health Improvement Act," will provide assistance for the prevention, treatment, and control of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, polio and other infectious diseases affecting children in Central Asia.

Specifically, this bill will establish a series of partnerships between U.S. medical institutions and health service providers and such institutions and providers in the countries of Central Asia to carry out various child health programs.

These partnerships will provide a telehealth network of medical information, services, and support to ensure health service providers in Central Asia can adequately respond to health concerns in the region.

Like my previous bill establishing internship exchanges, this bill utilizes a proven model that is implemented elsewhere in the world.

Mr. Speaker, we must actively and continuously engage Central Asia. The legislation I am introducing today takes an important step in this direction.

Child health and education are two pillars to a prosperous, free, and democratic society. Let's begin to build these pillars in Central Asia.

I urge my colleagues to support and co-sponsor these bills.