

The Republicans defeated it. On October 24, 2001, the House considered H.R. 3090, the Republican Economic Stimulus bill, and Mr. RANGEL, Ranking Democratic Member of the Committee on Ways and Means, offered a Democratic Substitute amendment to the bill that included H.R. 3166. The Republicans defeated it, on a largely party-line vote, to accelerate their tax breaks for the rich.

Even in those cases where Democrats and Republicans have worked together to design legislative proposals to invest in America, the House Republican Leadership has thwarted those bipartisan efforts. For example, on June 12, 2001, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure unanimously reported H.R. 1020, the Railroad Track Modernization Act of 2001, by voice vote. The bill authorized \$1 billion of grants to short-line and regional railroads to help them upgrade their railroad tracks and bridges to be able to carry safely the 286,000-pound railcars that are becoming the standard in the railroad industry. One study found that the Nation's smaller railroads need \$7 billion in new capital to make their necessary upgrades. Our failure to help keep these smaller railroads viable could have dire consequences for those in the industry and much of rural America. Despite these facts, for the past year and a half, the House Republican Leadership has refused to schedule the short-line railroad infrastructure bill for consideration by the House.

Another, even more dramatic case in point, was the proposed legislation to provide funding for the development of high-speed rail. Republicans and Democrats spent more than a year working together to craft bipartisan, compromise legislation that effectively blended the best elements of two high-speed rail bills, one bill originally advanced by Mr. YOUNG, the Chairman of the Committee on the Transportation and Infrastructure, and another bill advanced by a bipartisan group of 190 Members and me, the Committee's Ranking Democratic Member. The proposed compromise legislation, H.R. 2950 ("RIDE 21"), as favorably reported by the Subcommittee on Railroads, would have provided \$79 billion over 10 years to finance the construction of high-speed rail in America. By using a combination of tax credit bonds, tax-exempt bonds, loans, and loan guarantees, the bill's cost to the Federal Treasury would have been significantly less than \$79 billion. However, the Republican Leadership made clear that, like the short-line railroad bill, it would not let the House consider the bill and it died in Committee.

Similarly, on March 20, 2002, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee unanimously ordered reported H.R. 3930, the Water Quality Financing Act of 2002. The bipartisan legislation authorizes \$20 billion to invest in our Nation's wastewater infrastructure and helps ensure the protection of our Nation's streams, lakes, and coastal areas for generations to come. H.R. 3930 increases wastewater infrastructure investment and provides increased flexibility for local communities to tailor their programs to meet local water quality needs. Such investment is necessary if our communities are ever going to meet many of the goals of the Clean Water Act. However, the House Republican Leadership made clear that the House would not be allowed to consider this legislation, placing at risk this Nation's 30 years of effort to "restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters."

What has frustrated these efforts to invest in our Nation's infrastructure, stimulate the economy, and create family-wage jobs? Why has the Republican Leadership opposed virtually every attempt to invest in America? The answer is simple. The Republican Leadership opposes Davis-Bacon. Specifically, it opposes Davis-Bacon provisions in these infrastructure investment bills and refuses to schedule any bill containing these provisions for consideration by the House, despite the fact that these bills would create good-paying jobs for American workers and would stimulate the economy.

Davis-Bacon ensures that construction projects financed by Federal tax dollars pay those who work on such projects the prevailing wage in the area where the construction takes place. Davis-Bacon provisions have been a part of infrastructure bills since the 1930's, but they are anathema to the House Republican Leadership and reflect a fundamental, philosophical difference between the Republican Leadership and, I believe, the majority of this House. The Republican leadership wants to roll back the clock. Prior to the 1930's, Federal contracting practice required that "the lowest reasonable bill" be accepted. While this may sound like an innocuous money-saving measure, in practice this meant that projects would be undertaken without any regard for the wages paid to workers or the conditions under which the work would be performed. In effect, this made the Federal government a collaborator with unscrupulous firms that sought to gain government contracts by exploiting workers. In 1931, Republican President Hoover signed the Davis-Bacon Act, so named for its two Republican sponsors, to help stabilize the construction industry and secure fair wages for construction workers.

Today, the Davis-Bacon Act prevents cut-throat competition from "fly-by-night" firms that undercut local wages and working conditions and compete unfairly with local contractors. Davis-Bacon also helps stabilize the industry to the advantage of both employers and employees alike. In addition, Davis-Bacon assures the contracting agency of higher quality work as the employers are likely to hire the most competent and productive workers if they are required to pay the prevailing wage. As a result of Davis-Bacon, contracting agencies get better craftsmanship, less waste, more timely completion, reduced need for supervision, and fewer mistakes requiring corrective action. Thus, Davis-Bacon has the potential for actually saving the taxpayers' money on public construction projects.

It is irresponsible for the House Republican Leadership to refuse consideration of these infrastructure investment bills simply because they include Davis-Bacon provisions. Members of Congress deserve the opportunity to vote for or against these bills on the merits of the legislation. Moreover, I encourage the House Leadership to schedule these bills under an open rule that allows all Members an opportunity to offer amendments to the bill. If the Republican Leadership or any other Member wants to offer an amendment to strike the Davis-Bacon provisions from these bills, so be it—let the votes be counted. That is our democratic system.

Our Nation needs an economic stimulus program that creates jobs in hard hit sectors of our economy, rehabilitates our basic infrastructure to allow us to remain competitive in

world markets, addresses the infrastructure security needs of our transportation and environmental systems, and helps to revise our stagnant economy. In response to these immediate needs, the Republican Leadership and the Bush Administration have provided tax breaks for the rich and renewed threats to the Social Security Trust Fund and have prevented Congress from even considering real economic stimulus legislation.

The American people deserve better. As the people's representatives, we must do better. I call on the House Republican Leadership to give this House the opportunity to consider these bills to reinvest in American and its infrastructure.

HONORING EDWARD MILES
BROOKS, D.D.S.

HON. KEN BENTSEN
OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 24, 2002

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Dr. Edward Miles Brook upon his receipt of the State of Israel Maimonides Award from the Texas Medical and Health Professions Division of State of Israel Bonds. The Maimonides Award, the highest honor for a member of the Health Professions, salutes the recipient's outstanding involvement in the Jewish community, in addition to their continued dedication in the field of health care.

Dr. Brook has always shown a remarkable academic aptitude with a dedication to scholastic success. Born in Brooklyn, New York, Edward arrived in Texas to attend University of Texas at Austin and St. Mary's University in San Antonio. He continued his studies in the field of dentistry at the University of Texas Dental Branch, graduating in 1956. Upon completion of his dental degree, Edward Brook went on to serve his country as a captain in the U.S. Air Force.

Dr. Brook has been a valuable asset to the medical profession. Besides being a member of the Houston District Dental Society, Texas Dental Association, and the American Prosthodontic Association, Dr. Brook is known for his compassionate manner and the dutiful care that he provides to his patients. He has shared his exceptional talents with the Houston community by generously volunteering his dental services. Having served as President of Congregation Emanu El, Dr. Brook has utilized his dental skills on behalf of the Houston Jewish and greater Houston communities. As a result of his critical efforts in establishing the free care dental program at Seven Acres Jewish Geriatric Center, both its residents and the board have honored him for his volunteer dental care. His work with geriatric patients precipitated his appointment to the Jewish Federation of Greater Houston's Commission on Aging, serving as its first chairman. Dr. Brook has also volunteered his invaluable dental assistance to the Depelchin Children's Center, Houston Area Women's Center, and the Jewish Family Service, where he was a member of the board of directors and Refugee Advisory Committee. His dedication to the access of quality dental care for all people also carried him to China, where he participated in a two week medical mission, supplying essential training for Chinese physicians and dentists.

Dr. Brook's involvement in the Houston Jewish community began in 1959 when he joined the board of the Congregation Emanu El Brotherhood. From there, Dr. Brook continued his support for the congregation by serving as chairman on both the Religious School Committee and the Administration and Personnel Committee. In addition, he was a member of the Board of Trustees from 1973–2000, demonstrating his leadership as board treasurer, vice president, senior vice president, and then president of the Congregation Emanu El from 1989 until 1991.

Additionally, Dr. Brook has been extremely active in the Jewish community nationally, playing an instrumental role in the establishment of several programs, including the Becker Preschool Program. As chairman of the Leadership Planning Conference of the Presidents of Large Congregations at the Union of American Hebrew Congregations from 1990 to 1998, Dr. Brook demonstrated his commitment to the larger Reform movement through his exceptional leadership skills.

Ed Brook's compassionate demeanor stretches far beyond the care he provides to his patients, as he is a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. He and his wife Darna are the loving parents of Julie and Drew Alexander, Helen and John Brook, and Sara Brook, as well as the proud grandparents of five.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Edward Brook is truly a committed civic leader, as well as a distinguished health care professional. I applaud the Texas Medical and Health Professions Division, State of Israel Bonds in recognizing his selflessness and commitment to the public good. I also commend Dr. Edward Brook on receiving this award and more importantly, his work to provide necessary dental services to the residents of the Houston community and to promote the health of citizens from all walks of life.

TRIBUTE TO ANNALISA MOLINE

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 24, 2002

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Miss Annalisa Moline of Denver, Colorado. Annalisa is the first resident at the fifth, and newest, Colorado State Veterans Home located at the old Fitzsimons VA facility in Denver.

An immigrant from Sweden, Annalisa Moline grew up in South Dakota where she graduated from high school in 1924. Upon graduation, she moved to New York to become a nurse and in 1940 joined the Army because she said, "I thought I should always do something better."

Mr. Speaker, Annalisa Moline was stationed in Paltava, Russia where she cared for American pilots sent on bombing runs in Europe. It was here that she helped set up a field hospital for the injured while weathering attacks from German bombers. For her courage and honor during this period she was awarded the Bronze Star for valor. She came home from World War II with the rank of major and put in another ten years of service with the Veterans administration. In 1995, Annalisa was awarded the highest honor for nurses in Colorado, the Nightingale Award.

Annalisa has not only made her community proud, but also her state and country. On behalf of the citizens of Colorado, I ask the House to join me in extending thanks and congratulations to Miss Annalisa Moline for her service and contributions to the United States.

COMMENDING THE LAO AND HMONG-AMERICAN COMMUNITY OF RHODE ISLAND

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 24, 2002

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, concerned individuals and organizations from the Laotian-American community in my district in Rhode Island and throughout the United States participated in key sessions of the U.S. Congressional Forum on Laos, held on both July 17 and October 1, 2002, in the U.S. House of Representatives. They presented testimony and provided critical information to the Congress about the deteriorating human rights situation in Laos and the plight of missing Lao student leaders, political and religious dissidents as well as the ongoing persecution and horrific massacre of minority peoples, including the Hmong people in the closed areas of Saysamboun Special Zone and Xieng Khouang Province.

Mr. Speaker, right now many Laotian and Hmong-Americans in Rhode Island have family members who are still suffering and dying in Laos under the brutal Pathet Lao regime. I am concerned that Laos remains a one-party Communist system that has nearly bankrupt the nation—both economically and morally, in terms of the lack of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms, including lack of religious freedom.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to honor and thank Mr. Thongsavanh Phongsavanh, and his colleagues from North Providence, Rhode Island, who have helped to so honorably represent the Laotian-American community in Rhode Island as well as the Lao-American Council and the Lao Progressive Institute of Rhode Island. I also want to recognize and commend Mr. Philip S. Smith, Executive Director, of the Center for Public Policy Analysis for his important work and leadership in helping to coordinate the U.S. Congressional Forum on Laos with Members of Congress as well as assisting the freedom-loving people of Laos in Rhode Island and elsewhere in the Laotian Diaspora community. Special recognition and thanks also to: Mrs. Nouamkham Khamphylavong, Mr. Aly Chantala, Mr. Oudong Saysana and the members of the "Lao Students Movement for Democracy"; Mr. T. Kumar, Amnesty International; Ms. Christine Hines and Mr. John Tai, of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom; Mr. Paul Martin, U.S. Department of State; Mrs. Kay Danes, former Australian political prisoner in Laos; Mr. Makram Ouais, National Democratic Institute; His Excellency Kat Dittavong, former Royal Lao Ambassador to Thailand 1973–75; Mr. Prakian Viravong, of the "December 14" organization, as well as a distinguished Lao poet and author; Mr. Khampoua Naovarangsy, of the Laos Institute for Democracy; Mr. Bounchaloune Phouthakhanty; Mr. Alan Sananikone, Col. Bounmee Sananikone,

Mr. Bounthone Rathigna, Mr. Thongchanh Boulum, Col. Khamthene Chinyavong and Baramy Mitthivong, of the United League for Democracy in Laos, Inc.; The Honorable Dr. Sin Vilay, of the Royal Laos Foundation; Mr. Bounleung Ngonevolalath; Col. Khambang Sibounheuang—decorated officer and "White Dragon Two" author—and his colleague, Mr. Eugene Prater, of the Lao Nationalist Reform Party; Bon and Laura Xiong, Hubert Yang, Chuhu Xiong, Xieng Xiong and Ying Xiong, of the Hmong International Human Rights Watch and Hmong Reform Party; Mr. Moua Sao, of Lan Xang Democracy, Inc. and son of the legendary Hmong resistance leader Cher Pao Moua; Dr. Kayasith Rattanavongkoth, of the national Laotian-American Association; Jacqueline Sun; Dr. Edward Samada, International Buddhist Fellowship; Pastor Pat Kearney; Pastor Sidney Kahn; Mr. Kingsavanh Pathammavong, researcher, Lao history and culture; Mrs. Bounchan Senthavong, Lao Community Advisor; Col. Thai C. Vang, Col. Wangyee Vang, Chertzong Vang, Mr. Chang Ger Xiong, Nao Lue Kue, Mr. Toua Kue, Xia Xu Kue and many others from the Lao Veterans of America, Inc.; Touy Manikham, former RLAF pilot; Professor Onsy Inthavong, Mr. Vanhlang Khamsouk, Manisakhone Sinhbandith and Nick Hanthaley, of the Federation for Free Elections in Laos; Mrs. Yer Ly, daughter of missing Hmong-American, Mr. Houa Ly; Mr. Bee Moua, Representative, Chao Fa Party; Mr. Bounheuang Manivong, Editor, Phendin Lao Magazine; Miss Ratdavone Yotharath, President, Miss Lao-American, Inc. of Rhode Island; Mr. Vue Lee, Hmong Community Advisor and businessman; Mr. Southalavong Boutah, Lao Veterans Association; and, George Vue and Dr. Houa Yang, of the Hmong National Council, Inc. as well as so many others.

Mr. Speaker, I remain deeply concerned about the plight of the suffering people of Laos and the deplorable human rights and economic situation under the current Pathet Lao regime. I join my colleagues in Congress in commending the Lao and Hmong-American community and the U.S. Congressional Forum on Laos for the important effort they have put forward to help raise further awareness about the difficult situation in Laos, including human rights violations, religious and ethnic persecution—and the terrible plight of missing Lao student leaders and Hmong-Americans.

HONORING MARTY DRIESLER

HON. DAVID VITTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 24, 2002

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, it is such an honor and privilege to serve in the United States House of Representatives. This honor and privilege is made all the greater by the people I work with on a day to day basis, particularly my Chief of Staff, Marty Driesler.

Marty has toiled for the betterment of her country for more than thirty years by working as the chief of staff of two members of Congress, a campaign consultant, a political fundraiser, and in various high level administrative jobs working with key state and local government officials.

For the past three years, I have been fortunate to benefit from her service as my chief of