

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize the Centennial Junior High School ninth grade class before this body of Congress and this nation for their outstanding service to the State of Colorado and this country. The documentary video they are producing will be distributed nationwide, providing indispensable guidance to a countless number of Americans. There is no telling how many homes and lives their efforts will save in the years ahead. I thank them for their dedication to their community and our environment.

TRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY LABORATORY

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 13, 2002

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call attention to another achievement of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, based in Golden, Colorado. It is appropriate that on its 25th anniversary, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) has garnered yet another award recognizing its contributions to the development of clean energy technologies.

In its December issue, *Scientific American* magazine has named NREL one of the *Scientific American* 50—the magazine's first list recognizing annual contributions to science and technology that provide a vision of a better future.

NREL, along with Spectrolab Inc., was selected by the magazine for its work in increasing the efficiency of photovoltaic solar cells. NREL's research into multi-junction solar cells for more than a decade has led the way to ever more efficient cells, offering the potential of cheaper electricity from the sun.

The magazine noted that all the recipients of the *Scientific American* 50 have "demonstrated clear, progressive views of what our technological future could be, as well as the leadership, knowledge and expertise essential to realizing those visions."

I continue to be proud of the tremendous contributions that the National Renewable Energy Laboratory has made—to Colorado, our country, and our world. Congratulations to all at NREL on this important award.

IN HONOR OF THE JOINT PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE FOR OLDER ADULTS

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 13, 2002

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Joint Public Affairs Committee for Older Adults on the occasion of its 25th anniversary. Since 1977, JPAC has been committed to ensuring a voice for older New Yorkers in community change and the policy-making processes that affect their lives. I have been proud to stand with JPAC many times through the years, and it is my great pleasure to congratulate JPAC on this occasion and to join their celebration.

For 25 years, JPAC's citizen leaders have worked tirelessly to improve the lives of all

New Yorkers by empowering older adults to advocate on their own behalf. JPAC educates older adults on legislative and consumer issues, in addition to providing them with important information on benefits and entitlements for which they may be eligible. JPAC has enabled a growing number of older people to participate in efforts to influence public policy while leading senior centers around the city to incorporate education and advocacy into its programs in innovative ways. Over the years, JPAC has come to play a significant role in promoting cooperation within the aging community around issues of shared concern.

Among the programs I find most valuable is JPAC's ten-week intensive leadership training program, known as the Institute for Senior Action. For eight years, the Institute for Senior Action has given seniors the skills necessary to become more effective advocates in our community. Having had the opportunity to join JPAC at several of the Institute's graduation ceremonies, I have seen firsthand the pride, enthusiasm, and commitment to the community that JPAC's programs instill in participants.

From consumer protection, to community safety, to health care and coverage, JPAC has contributed to the quality of life of all New Yorkers. I congratulate JPAC's staff, leadership and volunteers on a quarter century of success, and I wish them the very best for the future.

TRIBUTE TO DR. LURA POWELL

HON. DOC HASTINGS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 13, 2002

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, two years ago, Battelle selected a new leader for the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in my home community of the Tri-Cities, Washington. She came to our Washington from a distinguished government career in the "other" Washington, the Nation's Capitol, as director of the Department of Commerce's Advanced Technology Program. Her tenure there, and her training as an analytical chemist, brought unique talent to serve this laboratory. She is also the first woman selected to serve as director of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. I am, of course, speaking about Dr. Lura Powell. Dr. Powell announced recently that she will step down as director at the end of this year, and I want to thank her for her commitment and leadership in the community.

Among her accomplishments, Lura will be remembered for her commitment to leverage the capabilities of the Laboratory to develop academic partnerships in the region. While Director, she signed Memorandums of Understanding with the University of Washington for the Institute for Nanoscience, the Joint Institute for Cell Signaling, and the Center for Global Security; a Northwest Bioproducts Research Institute with Washington State University, University of Idaho, and the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory; and The Collaborative Research and Education program with Oregon State University and the Oregon Health Sciences University.

Dr. Powell's commitment to the Tri-Cities community and the state of Washington is evi-

denced by her many activities and board memberships. At home, she has been a tireless promoter of economic growth and science education. She helped create and advocate a vision for the Tri-Cities that calls on everyone to stretch the limits of what is possible. She serves on the board of directors of the Kadlec Medical Center, the United Way of the Benton-Franklin Counties, the Tri-City Industrial Development Council and the Three Rivers Community Roundtable and the Junior Achievement of the Greater Tri-Cities. For the State of Washington, she is a member of the Washington Roundtable and serves on the Washington Technology Alliance Board.

I want to thank Lura for her leadership these past two and a half years and to wish her, her husband, Art, and her daughters much happiness and good health. I hope they will make their home in the Tri-Cities so that we may all continue to benefit from their involvement.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 5712

HON. ROBERT A. BORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 13, 2002

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to introduce today H.R. 5712, a bill to improve roadway safety for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and workers in proximity to vehicular traffic.

In this Congress we have spent, and likely for years to come will spend, a great amount of time trying to secure our homeland from terrorist threats. But, we will never be truly secure, if our families and communities continue to face daily the risk of disabling or life threatening motor vehicle crashes—today's leading killer of American young people. Motor vehicle crashes kill more than 42,000 people and injure more than 3 million people every year. These crashes cost our economy more than \$230.6 billion a year or an average of \$820 for every person living in the United States.

We have learned a great deal about making our roadways safer for the traveling public, since we began the national Interstate construction program nearly fifty years ago. Among the most successful federal safety programs is the Section 130 Railway-Highway Grade Crossings program. The U. S. Secretary of Transportation's "1996 Annual Report to Congress" found that this single program prevented 8,500 fatalities and 38,900 non-fatal injuries since 1974. This Report also stated that fatal, nonfatal-injury, and combined fatal-plus-nonfatal-injury accident rates have been reduced by 87, 64 and 68 percent, respectively. The Department of Transportation no longer compiles this data, but the program continues to save lives everyday.

We have much work ahead of us to improve further roadway safety in America. This bill that I am introducing today will expedite the use of proven solutions to reduce the likelihood of crashes, injuries, and fatalities and I urge its rapid adoption.

Since their inception, the Section 130 program and the Section 152 Hazard Elimination program have made available to States significant funding to reduce risks on dangerous roadways. Increasing State flexibility and re-allocating, funding; clarifying and expanding project eligibility, and improving data collection, analysis, and reporting will further enhance their effectiveness.

This legislation will improve the safety of workers whose duties place them on or near a federal-aid highway and will maintain the free flow of vehicular traffic. Workers who wear high visibility garments in such risky environments greatly reduce the chance of a vehicle collision and subsequent serious injury. Vehicle collisions are one of the most frequent causes of traffic congestion and place large demands on scarce police, fire, and emergency response personnel. Actions that reduce the likelihood of crashes also reduce congestion and these resource demands.

The major provisions of the legislation are funding provisions, program eligibility, data collection and analysis, and worker protection.

To increase State flexibility and reallocate funding, the bill eliminates the confusing 1991 reference that annually sets Section 130 at \$155 million and Section 152 at \$162 million. Some viewed the provision as a limit of funds available for important safety improvements, rather than as a minimum as intended. The bill eliminates the "Optional Safety" category and splits funding equally for the two programs. Also, the legislation changes the minimum Section 130 funding level for protective devices, such as grade crossing gates and signals, from a floating 50 percent to a fixed \$150 million per year. This provision increases options for the States, because \$150 million is less than the current 50 percent share.

I want to emphasize that the funding provisions in this bill maintain the flexibility States currently have to transfer up to 25 percent of the difference between the fiscal year 1997 funding level and the current funding level out of the Sections 130 and 152 programs to other projects States want to give higher priority. Transferred funds are available for Interstate Maintenance, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), National Highway System (NHS), Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program (Bridge), and Recreational Trails. For example, in fiscal year 2002, States collectively could transfer up to \$92 million. If my bill had been enacted, States would still have been able to transfer that same \$92 million as they see fit.

This legislation makes several improvements related to the eligibility of projects for funding under Sections 130 and 152. First, in the definition of a safety improvement project, I include, as another option for States, installation and maintenance of fluorescent yellow-green signs at pedestrian and bicycle crossings and school zones. The current "*Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*" permits either yellow or fluorescent yellow-green pedestrian, school, and bicycle crossing signs. Federal, State, and local government studies indicate that fluorescent yellow-green signs, compared to yellow signs, increase motorists' awareness of highway crossings and allow motorists to recognize the crossing signs with greater accuracy at up to 40 percent greater distances. Any signs installed under this amendment would have to comply with the "*Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*."

The bill further builds on the Section 130 program's success to date in increasing the number of at-grade railway-highway crossings with protective devices and signage by including maintenance of protective devices as an eligible use of funds.

To curb overly expansive interpretations of the current Section 152 program, the bill clarifies that this money is reserved for projects

that target real safety problems and produce real safety benefits. Under the bill, Section 152 projects must reduce the likelihood of the most frequent types of crashes and risk factors—road departures, intersections, pedestrians, bicycles, older drivers, or construction work zones.

Another new State optional use of Section 152 funds in the bill is police assistance for traffic and speed management in construction work zones. Experience around the country shows that the presence of even one marked police vehicle greatly increases motorists' compliance with construction work zone traffic patterns and speed limits, thereby increasing safety for both workers and motorists and improving mobility.

No program can run efficiently and effectively without accurate and timely data and analysis. This bill replaces the annual report referenced above that Congress terminated with a new biennial report about both the Section 130 and Section 152 programs, without creating, an unfunded mandate. With these amendments, States can use these funds to fulfill all data compilation, analysis, and reporting requirements. The Secretary of Transportation will summarize State projects and spending, analyze the effectiveness of the projects in achieving program goals, assess the adequacy of funding and spending relative to the need for safety improvement projects, and recommend funding and program improvements to continue reducing the number of high hazard locations.

Finally, the bill directs the Secretary of Transportation to issue a rule requiring workers who work on or near a federal-aid highway to wear high visibility garments. The Secretary may also require other worker safety-related items deemed appropriate.

Roadway construction zone crashes killed 1,079 people in 2001, up from less than 800 in 1995, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation. Factors contributing to the increase in fatalities include construction work being done in traffic and on compressed schedules requiring more night work. In just five years (from 1995 to 1999), work zone crashes injured about 39,000 people.

This rulemaking provision levels the playing field for contractors bidding on projects on or near federal-aid highways. Contractors will no longer have an incentive to skimp on the availability of workers' high-visibility garments so they can underbid other contractors.

The bill also recognizes that not only construction workers are at risk from vehicular traffic. Roadway and roadside maintenance workers, as well as some utility workers and others, frequently perform duties that put them at high risk of injury from passing motorists. High visibility garments, such as retroreflective vests, help motorists see these workers while drivers can still take precautions to avoid collisions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to move quickly to improve the safety of America's roadways.

IN HONOR OF THE LATE SERGEANT JAMES P. CONNOR, DELAWARE MEDAL OF HONOR, RECIPIENT

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 13, 2002

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Sergeant James P. Connor, Delaware's 14th Medal of Honor winner and the only Medal of Honor recipient to be buried at the Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Summit, Delaware.

This medal was presented to Sergeant Connor, in honor of his distinguished service to this country during WWII. The Medal of Honor, since its inception after the Civil War, remains the country's highest military decoration.

Sergeant Connor was Delaware's only living Medal of Honor recipient, having received the medal for his dedication and leadership to his men on a campaign to protect an Allied landing during WWII. After being seriously wounded by a hanging mine, Sergeant Connor continued to lead his troops onto a French beach, in order to knock out the German positions. In the midst of additional assaults, Sergeant Connor's troops achieved their objective and captured 40 prisoners. Following his retirement from the military, Sergeant Connor continued to be very active in helping to ensure that other Delaware veterans would be remembered.

On November 13, 2002, the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs will hold a ceremony to dedicate the circular drive and unveiling of a historical marker at the Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery, in honor of Sergeant James P. Connor.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to recognize today, Sergeant James P. Connor, for his valor and commitment to his Country and as an outstanding United States citizen and Delaware resident.

At a time when our Country is facing the possibility of war, it is very fitting for us to remember Sergeant James P. Connor, a soldier who was tremendously dedicated to preserving our Country's freedoms. His commitment to the United States during World War 11 has earned him a permanent place in Delaware's and our Country's history, and I want to commend and thank his family for sharing his tale of heroism with us.

TRIBUTE TO SHERIFF RIECKE CLAUSSEN

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 13, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to take this opportunity to honor Sheriff Riecke Claussen of Mesa County, Colorado on the occasion of his retirement from the Mesa County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Claussen has given countless hours of service to the communities of Mesa County over the years and I am honored to pay tribute to him today before this body of Congress and this nation.

Riecke is a homegrown leader, growing up in the Grand Valley, graduating from Mesa