

IN HONOR OF GREEK
INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2002

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, as we read daily about the difficult fight for freedom that our armed forces are undertaking around the world, let us consider the similarly difficult mission that the people of Greece fought 181 years ago.

On March 25, 1821, Greek citizens, who were at that time living under the oppressive tyranny of the Ottoman Empire, united together to rise up and courageously fight an overwhelming enemy. Though they were many times outnumbered on the battlefield, they endured and ultimately defeated the Ottomans because of the values for which they fought, namely independence and freedom. More powerful than the weapons of the Ottomans, these values provided the inspiration to fight with conviction and purpose.

Today, the United States of America and Greece unite together in a stand against the forces of terrorism. Though this time the numbers of those fighting are to our advantage, our enemy is extremely deceptive, unpredictable, and willing to attack innocent people.

The noble War of Independence that the Greeks fought reminds us today that freedom and independence do not come without cost. We call upon these righteous values held by Greeks and Americans alike to endure these difficult times. Just as Greece defeated its enemy and gained sovereignty, we will defeat our enemy and preserve our freedom.

I stand today to reaffirm our solidarity with Greece and to celebrate their Independence Day from which we can draw much inspiration during our own time of war.

ON THE 110TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE DAILY CARDINAL

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2002

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to the oldest student newspaper on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus, The Daily Cardinal, on its 110th anniversary on April 4. The Daily Cardinal is a steady and celebrated component of campus life—as vital a presence as the Union Terrace, Camp Randall, or Bascom Hall.

For more than a century, The Daily Cardinal has informed students, faculty, and staff on the UW-Madison campus. Through the years, the paper's staff has met serious challenges with courage and determination while maintaining standards of journalistic excellence.

The success of The Daily Cardinal must be attributed to its hardworking staff members, past and present, who juggle their roles as students and journalists or businesspeople, often with little or no recognition. The enduring success of The Daily Cardinal is most certainly due to their dedication and hard work.

It's truly an honor for me to represent the students, faculty, and staff of the UW-Madison

and especially those who sustain its award-winning student paper, The Daily Cardinal.

THE MEDICAL COST DEDUCTION
ACT OF 2002

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2002

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my friend and colleague Mr. Johnson of Texas to introduce the Medical Cost Deduction Act of 2002. This legislation makes health care more affordable by allowing individuals to deduct most of their medical expenditures that exceed 2 percent of their Adjusted Gross Income (AGI).

The rising costs of health care are a major concern for many Americans. Whether it is increased costs in health insurance premiums or the high cost of prescription drugs that seniors pay out of their own pocket, if it is unaffordable, many of these individuals will go without necessary health care treatment. The Medical Cost Deduction Act will help lower the tax burden and help families defray the rising costs of health care.

Since 1942, taxpayers that itemize have been able to deduct health care costs that are in excess of a statutory percentage of their AGI. The current threshold where deductions begin is after 7.5 percent of AGI. Because of this relatively high floor, few taxpayers that itemize can reduce their taxable income through the existing deduction because their unreimbursed medical expenses are unlikely to exceed 7.5 percent of their AGI. For instance, under current law, a taxpayer with an income of \$30,000 would need to have out-of-pocket health care costs of \$2,250 before they could begin taking deductions. Under my proposal that reduces the AGI requirement to 2 percent, that same taxpayer can start taking medical care deductions after \$600 in expenses.

Back in 1954 when the threshold for deductibility of health expenses was lowered from 5 percent to 3 percent, the House Ways and Means Committee included in its report that there is a "general agreement that limiting the deduction only to expenses in excess of 5 percent of AGI does not allow the deduction of all extraordinary medical expenses." By lowering the deduction for medical expenses to 2 percent of AGI seniors may be able to better afford necessary medications and individuals may be better able to afford increased health care premiums. Mr. Speaker, I ask for my colleagues for their consideration and support of the Medical Costs Deduction Act.

CANADA LOVES NEW YORK

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2002

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, as we passed the six month mark since September 11th, I was reminded of one of the more exuberant showings of support from one of our nation's strongest allies. Our good neighbor to the north, Canada.

On September 11, 2001, Canadians shared the pain brought on by the events of that morning. Many Canadians wondered what they could do. Our good friend, Canadian Senator Jerry Grafstein, Co-Chair of our U.S.-Canada Interparliamentary Group, was one of the first to contact me to express his condolences and to commiserate. He, like everyone, wanted to know what he could do to help.

Then, following Mayor Giuliani's speech at the United Nations where he invited the world to come to New York to help get things back to normal, Jerry and many of his friends decided that the best thing they could do would be to organize a weekend for Canadians to visit New York en masse, contribute to the economy of New York, and physically show their support.

Almost immediately, Jerry, his wife Carole, and a handful of outstanding volunteers from the Toronto area went to work.

Publishers of the leading newspapers in Toronto ran full-page ads. TV and radio quickly followed suit. Canadian stars in sports and entertainment rallied to create several ads in support of the venture, each taping 30–60 second spots at no cost. Even movie theater owners offered to run the ads when the Harry Potter movie opened in cinemas across Canada.

Other businesses made in-kind and monetary donations to the effort including Air Canada, who made discount air fares to New York available from across Canada.

New Yorkers also made generous donations to the effort. The Roseland Ballroom was made available at a very nominal rate and venue insurance was donated. Owners of the large screens in Times Square offered to run the ads for free to attract the thousands of Canadians living in New York to the event. Mayor Giuliani issued a proclamation declaring December 1, 2001, "Canada Loves New York Day" in New York City. President Bush also sent a message commending the volunteers for their efforts.

It was thought that three to four thousand Canadians would attend the rally on December 1st. It is estimated that over 26,000 people actually did attend. Many of them didn't even get near the Roseland Ballroom, but no one complained. It was a tremendous event—one that I will not soon forget.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to thank Senator Grafstein and all of the volunteers who worked tirelessly to make that effort a tremendous success. It is another in a long list of reasons as to why the United States and Canada are the closest of allies.

TRIBUTE TO MONMOUTH COUNTY
FOODBANK

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2002

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call the attention of my colleagues to the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties in the 6th District of New Jersey.

On Friday, February 22, the FoodBank formally celebrated the opening of its new 42,000 square feet warehouse facility at 3300 Route 66, Neptune Township. Member charities and invited guests toured the new facility. A dedication ceremony honored Arthur M. Goldberg,

for whom the facility is named, for his generosity as a major contributor to the building campaign.

Other guests included major contributors, member charities, volunteers and political dignitaries who have played important roles in enabling the FoodBank to build the facility.

The FoodBank currently distributes over 2.5 million pounds of emergency food annually to more than 200 church and synagogue food pantries, soup kitchens, shelter for the homeless, shelter for abused women and children, day care programs for low-income children and homes for the elderly and disabled throughout Monmouth and Ocean counties.

The new facility will enable the FoodBank to provide more food for those in need. With the additional space, new programs will also be started that impact on the root causes of hunger. These include a job skills program in culinary arts and community gardens that will help people to grow some of their own food.

For continuing to make a difference in the community fighting hunger, the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties warrants praise. Their new warehouse facility is a great step forward in their cause.

HONORING THE 46TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2002

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the Republic of Tunisia's 46th anniversary on March 20, 2001. It was 46 years ago that the Republic of Tunisia was formally established as an independent country. Over the years, Tunisia has forged a strong and solid relationship with the United States that extends beyond bilateral ties to issues of world peace and economic partnership.

The close and solid relationship between Tunisia and the United States at the bilateral level has steadily grown from U.S. assistance to the young Tunisian nation in the early years to a constructive and fruitful partnership between two countries for the sake of development and prosperity. This relationship entered a new important phase when Tunisia joined the coalition to fight the scourge of terrorism in the wake of the September 11th attacks.

The population of Tunisia numbers approximately 9.6 million inhabitants, with more than 62 percent in urban areas. The official language of Tunisia is Arabic, while French and Italian are also spoken. Increasingly, English is also spoken among a growing number of Tunisians. The overwhelming majority of the population is Muslim, and the official religion is Sunni Islam. Christian and Jewish communities practice their faith freely and contribute to Tunisia's rich cultural diversity. The family remains the basic unit of Tunisian society. Enjoying total equality of rights with men, women have gained a good measure of autonomy and are able to pursue their own careers on an equal footing with men. Tunis, the capital, with a population of about one million, is one of the principal cosmopolitan urban centers of the Mediterranean.

Strengthened by economic achievements in recent years, Tunisia is starting the new mil-

lennium with confidence and serenity. It expects to reinforce and deepen the reforms it has initiated in order to face the challenges of the new stage and integrate its productive system into the world economy. Tunisia continues to be a model for developing countries. It has sustained remarkable economic growth and undertaken reforms toward political pluralism.

Mr. Speaker, Tunisia continues to preserve the safety and security of its people and to protect its borders while moving ahead with deliberate and steadfast conviction to further strengthen the democratic values that our two countries share as foundations for free and open societies. I wish to congratulate the citizens of Tunisia and its elected officials as they commemorate their 46th Anniversary and wish them the best for many more years of continued peace and prosperity.

COMMEMORATING THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE USA

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2002

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, last week marked the 90th anniversary of the Girl Scouts of the USA. Founded on March 12, 1912, with the belief that all girls should be given the opportunity to develop physically, mentally, and spiritually, Juliette Gordon Low assembled 18 girls from Savannah, Georgia, for the first Girl Scout meeting. From its initial 18 members, the Girl Scouts flourished to today's membership of over 3.8 million.

The mission of the Girl Scouts is to provide a venue where young girls can learn and develop the necessary skills to help them reach their full potential. They have also implemented successful programs, opening up more opportunities for girls in areas such as sports, technology, and science.

Girl Scouts are given the self-confidence that is important to developing active citizens and superior leaders. President Bush recently requested that every American perform 4,000 hours of community service over their lifetime and the Girl Scouts are in step with the President's challenge. The San Diego chapter boasts a volunteer rate of 90 percent among its girls in such projects as helping out in hospitals and planning nature trails.

I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating the Girl Scouts for providing 90 years of positive guidance to our nation's young women and future leaders.

POSTHUMOUS TRIBUTE TO THE LATE REV. JOSEPH COATS

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2002

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of our community's most genuine and unsung leaders, the late Rev. Joseph Coats. Indeed, he was also one of the noblest of God's faithful servants. His untimely demise last Sunday, March 3, 2002 leaves a deep void in our leadership toward our ongo-

ing struggle to achieve equality of opportunity and unity among all people.

Born in Alamo, Georgia on January 28, 1927, he married Catherine Coats in 1949. Eight children were born out of this blessed union, with one son preceding him in death. He received his Theology degree from South Bible Seminary, and was subsequently ordained a minister on April 23, 1966. He was then assigned the pastorship of the Glendale Baptist Church in South Miami's Richmond Heights community. In the early days of his ministry his congregation numbered only 150 members. He would pick up in his old station wagon other members who had no way to get to church.

Historic milestones defined Rev. Coats' life of service. In 1969 he led his church in becoming the first African-American church to join the white Southern Baptist Convention. Predictably, his fellow Black ministers castigated him to no end for this move. They even ostracized him. When queried about this stance, he was wont to firmly state that "... we simply taught Christ here—not black and white. I preached impartiality and unity, and our members saw people as people..."

With great Faith in pursuing God's mission for him, he courageously persevered during that very trying period until such time when many more African American churches joined the Convention. Rev. Coats served as Pastor of Glendale for 30 years before he retired. Upon his retirement the congregation grew to some 3,000, although thousands more continue to flock to his revered church eager to hear him preach God's good news of salvation and redemption.

My state of Florida and most specifically, Miami-Dade County on the southern end, will surely miss his wisdom and expertise. The longevity of his commitment to the well-being of the less fortunate among us, particularly the voiceless and the underrepresented, has indeed become legendary. When I think of his early work in his church's involvement with the civil rights movement, it parallels much of Florida's and the nation's history as we struggled through the harrowing challenges of racial equality and simple justice.

I came to know this quintessential man of God in his understanding of and commitment to the underdogs of our community. Blessed with a lucid common sense and a quick grasp of the issues at hand, Rev. Coats was also blessed with the rare wisdom of recognizing both the strengths and limitations of those who have been empowered to govern. The acumen of his intelligence and the timeliness of his vision were felt at a time when our community and the state of Florida needed someone to put in perspectives the simmering agony of disenfranchised African-Americans and other minorities yearning to belong and pursue the American Dream.

I vividly recall the times when government and community leaders met to douse the still-burning embers of Liberty City and Overtown during the racial disturbances in the early 1980s. His was the firm voice of reason and the steadying influence of conscience. Wisely, he articulated his credo that we have got to learn to live and reach out to each other, or run the risk of shamefully reaping the grapes of wrath from those who have been left out.

Rev. Coats truly exemplified a calm but reasoned leadership whose courage and advocacy appealed to our noblest character as a