

IN HONOR OF THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE U.S.A.

HON. JOSEPH M. HOFFEL

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. HOFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. This valuable organization has been empowering young women to develop leadership skills, along with a sense of determination, self-reliance and teamwork since 1912.

Today, the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. have over 3.8 million members throughout the United States. In my district alone, 10,000 Girls Scouts are able to acquire the self-confidence and expertise that is needed to distinguish themselves as leaders in their communities.

I commend the Girl Scouts of Southeastern Pennsylvania and the Girl Scouts of Freedom Valley for their outstanding accomplishments in the areas of leadership, community service and personal development. Both of these chapters offer young women in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania the opportunity to develop life skills that will enable them to become confident and caring adults.

For 90 years, the Girls Scouts of the U.S.A. have had a positive impact on the lives of countless young women nationwide. It is my hope that the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. continue these strong traditions for the next 90 years and beyond.

THE MENTAL HEALTH EQUITABLE TREATMENT ACT

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today celebrating introduction of the Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act with my good friend from New Jersey, Mrs. ROUKEMA. Too many Americans have been waiting too long for equal access to the health care they need. I hope by introducing this compromise mental health parity bill we can make it happen this year.

I could give you statistics about the prevalence of mental illnesses and cost of insurance discrimination, but the bottom line is that parity is about people's lives. Tracy Mixson of Asheville, North Carolina watched the downward spiral of her friend, Jeff. He exhausted his health insurance and ran out of medication. He tried to see another doctor, but couldn't afford the costs and had to stop going. In her words, "I watched him suffer for a little while, and then it was over. He ended his life."

This issue is not complicated. Our bill is a civil rights bill. It recognizes that prejudice distorts the markets and requires intervention. It reflects the best values on which this country was built, principles of inclusion and opportunity for all Americans.

Discrimination in any form is a stain on the equality that makes this nation great. And make no mistake, discrimination is at the heart

of this issue. The question for Congress to decide is whether we continue to indulge our old, deep-seated prejudices against the mentally ill or whether policy catches up with science.

We will hear that parity is too expensive. I am confident that nobody in this Congress would countenance rationing health care for cancer or asthma. Like mental illnesses, these are potentially fatal, frequently treatable, chronic diseases. Unlike cancer and asthma patients, however, most Americans suffering from mental illnesses find that their health plans hinder access to necessary medical treatment.

If we would not tell asthma or cancer patients that their coverage is too expensive, why would we say that to the mentally ill? Essentially, we are asking our constituents with mental illness to sacrifice potentially life-saving treatment in order to keep health care costs down for everybody else. The unfairness of that request is manifest.

We don't ask cancer patients to bear that burden. We don't ask any other patients to bear that burden. And that's why this debate is not about cost. It's about prejudice.

We will hear that if we pass parity, mental health care will be abused. This argument is a red herring. It is an invocation of the stereotypes that good people rely on to justify looking the other way in the face of injustice. We should not fall for it.

We have a strong science base and the authority of the Surgeon General, NIH, AMA, and Nobel Laureates saying mental illnesses are diseases on par with physical ailments. We have experience in dozens of states and the federal employees' health program showing that parity results in a more efficient use of mental health resources.

So I ask you, as you consider the merits of this bill, don't let the issue get muddled. I believe the choice is simple. On the one hand is the status quo. It's the denial of medically necessary care because of stereotypes and prejudice. It's suicide and lost jobs and broken lives. It's stories like that of Molly Close from Louisville, Kentucky, who wrote:

In 1998 I was hospitalized 3 times for depression with suicidal intent. Each hospitalization was terminated, not because my doctor felt I was ready to leave, but because my insurance company refused to pay for further treatment. When I left the hospital the last time, I was still severely depressed. I was not healthy enough to return to my teaching career of 24 years. Since I had exhausted all my leave days, I was forced to resign my job. . . .

It is time to end the discrimination that the Molly Closes of this country face.

Our earlier parity bill, H.R. 162, has 203 co-sponsors. We have heard the concerns of employers about cost and the need for flexibility and that's why we are here today introducing this compromise bill. This new legislation makes a major concession in dropping substance abuse. It contains explicit guarantees that plans can manage benefits. It protects the rights of health plans to set medical necessity criteria. A majority of the House supported these parity provisions last year during the appropriations process and I'm hopeful that we will have a chance to see whether a majority will support it on the Floor this year.

Let's give the 54 million Americans with mental disorders full access to the American Dream. This bill is the right thing for them and the right thing for our nation. I look forward to

working with my friends on both sides of the aisle to give all Americans the health care they need and deserve.

HONORING JERRY LEE BRYANT, COMMUNITY LEADER AND FRIEND

HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the City of Rome, Georgia, as well as the entire north-west Georgia community, lost a great friend, a member of the Rome City Commission, and a champion to many who grew up spending much of their time at the Rome YMCA. On March 5, 2002, Jerry Lee Bryant, as described by the Director of the local YMCA, was a "Living Legend," passed away.

A native of Corbin, Kentucky, Jerry graduated from the University of Louisville after serving with the U. S. Air Force during the Korean War. He began his career with the YMCA in Waycross, Georgia, in 1953. In 1960, he was one of 32 "Y" directors from across the United States chosen to serve as a leader for the YMCA World Youth Conference in Holland.

Jerry had a passion for the YMCA, his church, his community, the City of Rome, and its schools and young people. Many men who grew up in the Y thought of him as a substitute father.

Jerry and his lovely wife Martha came to Rome in 1962. Jerry became Director of the Rome YMCA and Martha served as the Y's program director. He remained with the local Y for 30 years, and during that time he led the YMCA board in a building project that doubled the size of the Y facility. He was instrumental in leading the YMCA in its purchase of Camp Glen Hollow in 1989. Grown men now remember Jerry as their "daddy"; a hero; one who made an impression on their lives; a second father. Following his retirement in 1991, Jerry spent the majority of his time serving his community and assisting his wife, Martha, in her business, Bryant & Garrett Travel Agency. He was the first chairman of the Heart of the Community Board of Governors, a Seventh District STAR Student chairman, and he served on the board of the Floyd Medical Center Health Care Foundation. Jerry also was a past president of the Rome Rotary Club, and served as chairman of the Administrative Board and Board of Trustees of Rome First United Methodist Church.

Jerry's wife, Martha, his children, Chuck Bryant and Lee Ann Bryant Edwards, as well as two grandchildren, have lost a wonderful husband, a tremendous father, and a grandfather, who loved them dearly. The citizens of Rome and Floyd County have lost a great leader. I have lost a good friend.

DELAY IMPLEMENTATION OF FARM SECURITY ACT UNTIL NEXT YEAR

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I understand that yesterday the lead negotiators for the

Farm Bill informed us that they would "be in a position to make the final farm bill decisions in public meetings of the Conference the week of April 9," according to a joint statement released by the top conferees.

April 9th is far too late to begin implementing this complex legislation, as was March 22nd or even January 1st, and I believe that it is now essential to delay implementation of the Farm Security Act until next year.

The planting season has already begun in many states across the country. As each day passes by without a new bill, America's farmers are digging themselves into deeper and deeper holes.

We all know that farmers are not just planters, but planners, and most farmers thought it to be vitally important to have the farm bill in place at the end of last year. Now that it may be mid-summer before the USDA is effectively able to administer the provisions in the new Farm Bill, it could prove to be overwhelmingly detrimental for our agricultural community, especially in southeastern Virginia.

In addition to helping the farmers by delaying the bill one more year, we will be saving the government an estimated \$299 million dollars by delaying the new "peanut subsidy program" and continuing to use the current system, which has no net cost to the government.

A Farm Bill is certainly needed, but the timing is important. Implementing the new Farm Bill this late in the season would be an incredible injustice to our farmers.

INTRODUCING H.R. 4012 THE RURAL WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2002

HON. BARBARA CUBIN

OF WYOMING

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, rural America. We often hear of the unique challenges that face those of us who live and work in the unspoiled expanses of this great nation. As someone who represents the least populated state in the country, let me say that we wouldn't trade those challenges for all the urban conveniences in the world.

There are, however, basic needs deemed necessary to conduct our everyday lives whether you live in Brooklyn, New York or Basin, Wyoming. One of those essential, and obtainable, requirements is access to modern and efficient telecommunications. Telecommunications is an important component by which we can run small businesses, visit distant relatives, or just order a pizza.

During the last two Congresses, I have been successful advocating for wholesale changes in the way the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulates small and mid-size telecommunications companies. Those bills have passed the House but languish in the Senate.

The basic tenet of the bills is to ensure that the FCC writes separate regulations for companies that are smaller than their oftentimes much larger competitors. Common sense should tell us that identical regulations imposed on telecommunications companies regardless of size translates into the over-regulation of the small and mid-size companies. Al-

though the FCC initially fought these changes, I am pleased to report that most of the changes in the bills have ultimately been incorporated by the FCC.

This leads me to the introduction of the bill I bring before the House today. The "Rural Wireless Telecommunications Enhancement Act of 2002" will bring about significant changes by which the FCC regulates small wireless telecommunications companies.

If you've been fortunate enough to travel through the state of Wyoming, you may have been surprised to find that your wireless phone did not work or that it received marginal coverage at best. One way in which we can address the comprehensive development of wireless telecommunications infrastructure in rural areas is to stop the FCC from burdening small wireless companies with onerous, one-size-fits-all rules meant to regulate the largest wireless carriers. That way small wireless companies can put their resources into developing new technologies and deploying their infrastructure instead of spending it on high-priced Washington lobbyists and regulatory attorneys.

The goal of the "Rural Wireless Telecommunications Enhancement Act" is simple: to give rural wireless customers better service and more choices.

TRIBUTE TO CASEY ROATS

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to convey my deepest appreciation to a member of my Washington, D.C. staff for his tireless efforts on behalf of the good people of Oregon's 2nd Congressional District. Casey Roats will conclude his internship in my office this week to continue his studies at Oregon State University and assist in the operations of his family's business, Roats Water System, Inc. in Bend, Oregon. As he leaves our nation's capital, I wish Casey well in his future endeavors, and I know that his intelligence and discipline will bring him success in whatever calling he answers.

Casey was raised in Bend, Oregon, growing up in a family with indelible ties to central Oregon. He is, in short, a son of the American west. As a youngster he developed an interest in horsemanship, where he excelled as he does in every pursuit that I have witnessed him attempt. Casey's success in rodeo competitions provided him with the resources to attend his first year of college at Oregon State University. The travel required by these competitions allowed Casey to become familiar with much of eastern Oregon, which strengthened both his ties to the land and his appreciation for the western way of life. Moreover, his intimate knowledge of the issues that are so important to the people of Oregon has made him an invaluable asset during his tenure in my office.

Mr. Speaker, Casey's early involvement with the Oregon chapter of Future Farmers of America provided a foundation of civic participation that he continues to build upon. His contributions to the Mountain View Chapter and the Central Oregon District soon earned statewide attention, and Casey was elected

Vice-President of the Oregon Future Farmers of America for the 1999-2000 term.

Throughout his internship, Casey has endeavored to learn more about his native state, as well as the workings of the federal government. His interest in the latter has been insatiable, leading him to pepper my staff with thoughtful questions about how things work in Washington, D.C. and why. His fascination with the legislative process, coupled with a firm ideological underpinning, promises to carry him far in the arena of public service if he chooses to embark on such a career.

Mr. Speaker, Casey exudes competence, and he welcomed visitors to my office with the same friendly and forthright manner that is so common of Oregonians. My trust in him to complete tasks flawlessly and without supervision was vindicated time and time again. My staff reports that Casey ranks among the finest items ever to serve in my congressional office. Simply put, Casey was a delight to work with and always demonstrated a high level of professionalism and attention to detail during his service on Capitol Hill.

It goes without saying that Casey will be difficult to replace. While I am deeply sorry to see him leave, I am confident that he will continue to make central Oregon proud in whatever career he chooses in the future. Thank you, Casey, for a job well done.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGARDING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. MELISSA A. HART

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2002

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Women's History Month, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the life and work of Susan B. Anthony, and to celebrate the 182nd anniversary of her birth, which took place last month. Susan B. Anthony is remembered as one of our greatest foremothers in the drive for women's rights. However, what many have forgotten, or chosen to ignore, is that she was amongst our Nation's first and most passionate pro-life advocates. For Anthony, the rights of the unborn were inseparable from the rights of women, and opposition to abortion was an essential part of the cause of women's rights.

This month as we honor the women who have strived to improve the lives of women in America and throughout the world, let us remember the life and achievements of Susan B. Anthony and what she has done to guarantee full rights for both women and their unborn children.

CELEBRATING THE 46TH ANNIVERSARY OF TUNISIAN INDEPENDENCE

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today, March 20, 2002, the Republic of Tunisia celebrates the 46th anniversary of its independence.