

Mr. Speaker, please join me and the many friends, family and colleagues of P.J. Corr in commending P.J. Corr for his lifetime of service to this nation, his community and his family. We look forward to his continued leadership and inspiration in the years to come and we wish him continued happiness and success.

HONORING UNITED NATIONS
INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE
ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DIS-
CRIMINATION

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. As the world celebrates this day, we must reflect and take action against the existing discrimination and hate within our borders. Since the terrorist attacks on September 11th, thousands of assaults have been reported across the country on people of South Asian, Arab, Muslim, Sikh, and Jewish backgrounds. By October 11th, the Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee had already collected more than 700 reports of hate crimes in the month following September 11th. People have been physically and verbally attacked, others shot and killed, temples were firebombed, and houses were vandalized. Innocent Americans, touched by the devastation of September 11th like the rest of us, must not be singled out for hate just because of their skin color or religious beliefs.

We in Congress condemn this hate and violence. But we must do more. It is time to take the next step and strengthen our current laws to protect victims who are chosen because of their gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, or disability. It is our duty. It is especially important that our children learn that hate crimes will not be tolerated. This is why we must pass H.R. 1343, The Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2001, which would elevate the status of hate crimes within federal law and ensure that state governments and local police have the tools needed to fight and prosecute these crimes. This bill would not take away the ability of state and local authorities to continue prosecuting most hate crimes. It would allow federal officials to assist overstretched states and local officials investigate and prosecute these crimes. It would also provide states and localities with grants designed to combat hate crimes committed by juveniles.

Sadly, the prevalence of hate crimes goes beyond the backlash from September 11th. The Southern Poverty Law Center estimates that last year alone, over 50,000 hate crimes took place. In the summer of 1999, the Midwest, including my district in Illinois, was rocked by the killing spree of Benjamin Nathaniel Smith. A follower of the World Church of the Creator, Benjamin Smith killed Ricky Byrdson, an outstanding role model in the community and a constituent, and Won Joon Yoon, a student at Indiana University. The Jewish Community in my district was also assaulted on the Sabbath with rounds of gunfire.

The weekend after the September 11th attacks, I marched in solidarity with the South Asian, Arab, Muslim, Sikh, and Jewish com-

munities to stand against the terrorist attacks and the attacks on the community. I saw not only overwhelming sadness, but the fear of violence on the faces of those walking with me. Members of my community and the district that I represent were afraid to send their children to school. They did not want to leave their homes even to go grocery shopping. But I also saw the commitment from community members to combat bigotry and racism.

Those who commit hate crimes perpetuate the sense of terror in our communities and undermine the ideals of our nation. This is why it is so important that hate crimes be recognized for what they are and punished accordingly. These crimes not only devastate victims and their family and friends, but they devastate the community to which the victim belongs. This community becomes stricken with grief as well as the fear that they could be next. The violence inflicted on those based solely on skin color or religion violates the very essence of what our nation is about. Our country represents tolerance and acceptance. We must pass the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act. I am proud to represent one of the most diverse districts in the nation and I will work to protect and honor the civil rights of all our people, without any exceptions.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE
AND MEDICAID NURSING FACIL-
ITY QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
ACT OF 2002

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Medicare and Medicaid Nursing Facility Quality Improvement Act of 2002.

This session, legislation has been introduced on numerous important long term care issues ranging from criminal background checks for nursing home staff to additional funding for the Medicaid program that provides the lion's share of financing for long term care. A variety of other financing and regulatory proposals have been introduced or are being discussed. This gives us an important opportunity to discuss a broad range of options intended to improve the quality of care provided to residents in long term care facilities. Today, I am introducing legislation that would improve the quality of care in our nations nursing homes where thousands of our most frail and elderly seniors live. It is my hope that these provisions perhaps combined with other valuable proposals can be enacted into law.

My legislation will provide incentives for the best facilities to improve and give facilities experiencing quality of care issues additional opportunities provide better care for residents. I believe the changes will also focus regulatory efforts on improving outcomes, fostering innovation and ensuring that the federal and state oversight system is more fair and accurate, to the benefit of residents and providers alike. This legislation would:

Alleviate the shortage of well-trained staff. The legislation would restore the ability of more facilities to train nurses aides in order to help hundreds of facilities in Michigan as well as many others across the nation respond

more effectively to the shortage of long term care workers and to the needs of their residents. Unfortunately, current law prevents nursing facilities from training nurses aides on site for a full two years after the original problem that led to the prohibition on training is remedied. This penalty is highly counterproductive. It does not serve the interests of residents and hinders rather than enhances the provision of quality care.

Flexibility and Innovation. The legislation would allow for an eight state survey and certification waiver demonstration program so states can adopt innovative regulatory process for nursing homes that focus on improving resident outcomes. States should work together with consumers, providers, labor representatives and other involved parties to craft innovative systems that can improve the quality of care. For example in the state of Washington there is broad support among all key stakeholders for such a waiver, and I believe other states would come forward with valuable waiver applications if such a process were available. In addition, states would be given some narrow additional discretion to work within the current enforcement process to avoid any unintended consequences of current law which could harm resident quality of life.

Establish incentives and additional opportunities for technical assistance to help all facilities improve the quality of care. The legislation would establish a range of incentives to encourage nursing homes that are providing the best possible care to exceed their already high standards, while facilitating the provision of technical assistance and advice on best practices to facilities that need to improve care for residents. Such measures will help both good facilities to implement even more effective care practices and assist those that face challenges in their efforts to provide excellent services. Current law provides many penalties to deter and punish those who provide low quality care but strangely absent are incentives for the overwhelming majority of responsible nursing facilities to improve the quality of care.

Insure fair and accurate survey results. Residents, families and health care providers are best served if all disputes concerning surveys of long term care facilities can be resolved quickly and cost-effectively through an independent review process. In fact, in my home state of Michigan providers and regulators are able to resolve many disputes through an independent dispute resolution process. Unfortunately, in many states the process is not independent enough of the state regulatory agency to provide for fair and impartial review. Our independent process in Michigan, as well as the independent systems in several other states can offer many lessons for the nation. Michigan also believes additional steps are needed to insure that all citations, even those that do not result in the immediate imposition of a penalty, can be subject to an appeal. Basic fairness and the principles of due process require us to allow nursing facilities to appeal all publicly reported deficiencies.

Ensure proper medical care. The legislation would prevent government inspectors from overturning the orders of patient's own physicians. Inspectors are charged with evaluating the medical condition of nursing home patients and for making sure nursing facilities provide the best possible care. However some inspectors, even though they are not physicians,

overturn doctor's orders. The changes could endanger a resident's health. Patients do not lose the right to the care prescribed by a personal physician simply because they have entered a nursing facility. When government inspectors substitute their judgment for that of a physician, nursing home providers must choose between the doctor's orders and government sanctions. An efficient and fair system requires that without fear of punishment, nursing home providers be allowed to follow a doctor's orders in keeping with the best interest of their residents. Optimal quality care means that patients should enter nursing homes with the assurance that the care prescribed by their physician is the care they will receive.

I hope this legislation fosters a constructive debate over the best ways to improve care for residents and that involved stakeholders can come together to reach consensus on the need for changes in the current system. I am pleased that already the Michigan Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, Lutheran Services in America, the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Catholic Health Association support this legislation. I appreciate the input I have received from others as well and look forward to working with other key stakeholders in long term care and interested members of Congress. As Congress considers further improvements to the Medicare program, I urge my colleagues to support this important effort.

RECOGNIZING THE MANY INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE SIGNED A "PEACE PLEDGE" TO STOP THE SPREAD OF WAR TO IRAQ

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, more than 3,000 individuals from 40 countries and 48 states have signed the Campaign of Conscience Peace Pledge. "I support peace for Iraq. I grant permission to use my name and city publicly as an opponent of the ongoing economic and bombing war on Iraq, and of any escalation of that war." This Peace Pledge has been endorsed by the American Friends Service Committee, Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee, Episcopal Peace Fellowship, Education for Peace in Iraq Center, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Lutheran Peace Fellowship, Voices in the Wilderness, and Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility.

A state breakdown of signatories is below with a representative sample from Ohio.

Priscilla Smith, Akron; Helen Thompson, Akron; Gary Blaine, Akron; Sara Cutlip, Akron; Tom Gentry, Jr., Akron; John Howell, Athens; Lynda Nyce, Bluffton; Jean Temple, Brunswick; Amy Spangler, Chillicothe; William Joiner, Cincinnati; Cynthia Maxey, Cleveland; Patti Flanagan, Cleveland Heights; Brenda Joyner, Cleveland Heights; Francis Chiappa, Cleveland Hts.; Mark Chupp, Cleveland Hts.; Melissa Bragg, Columbus; Connie Hammond, Columbus; Morton Saunders, Jr., Copley;

Nathan Ruggles, Cuyahoga Falls; Robert Williams, Cuyahoga Falls; Christina Irene,

Dayton; Jana Schroeder, Dayton; Ramona Nash, Dublin; Marion Kim, East Canton; Sarah Ile, Eaton; Joan Slonczewski, Gambier; Margaret Banning, Gambier; Susan Klein, Girard; William Nichols, Granville; Mike Pesa, Kent; Russell Andrews, Jr., Kent; Brad Clinehens, Maplewood; Michall Zabib, Massillon; Susan Mcgarvey, Nashport; Jane McCullam, Newbury;

Diana Roose, Oberlin; Sadie Taylor, Oberlin; Richard Taylor, Oberlin; Geraldine S. McNabb, Oberlin; Ryan Van Lenning, Oxford; Patrick G. Coy, Peninsula; Erin Nash, Shade; Lydia Kuttub Brenneman, St. Marys; Donna Schall, Stow; Sharon Havelak, Sylva; Matthew Wallace, Toledo; Nandor Szentkiralyi, Toledo; Robert Gibson, Warren; Elizabeth Gibson, Warren; Heather Brutz, Warrensville Heights; Kyle Kunst, Wooster; Rev. Richard Judy, Youngstown.

STATE BREAKDOWN

Alaska—8,
Alabama—8,
Arkansas—3,
Arizona—49,
California—236,
Colorado—73,
Connecticut—34,
District of Columbia—20,
Delaware—5,
Florida—66,
Georgia—26,
Hawaii—4,
Idaho—8,
Illinois—115,
Indiana—32,
Iowa—39,
Kansas—11,
Kentucky—13,
Louisiana—7,
Maine—20,
Maryland—74,
Massachusetts—160,
Michigan—61,
Minnesota—38,
Mississippi—2,
Missouri—46,
Montana—7,
North Carolina—86,
North Carolina,
North Dakota,
Nebraska—12,
New Hampshire—30,
New Jersey—62,
New Mexico—18,
Nevada—9,
New York—214,
Ohio—91,
Oklahoma—7,
Oregon—32,
Pennsylvania—213,
Puerto Rico—1,
Rhode Island—18,
South Carolina—9,
South Dakota—4,
Tennessee—11,
Texas—74,
Utah—4,
Virginia—35,
Vermont—20,
Washington—402,
Wisconsin—56,
West Virginia—1,
Unspecified—92.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2002

Mr. LEWIS of California. Madam Speaker, March 25, 2002, marks 181 years since

Greece declared its independence from the occupying Ottoman Empire. On March 25, 1821, the Greeks rose against the tyranny with an overwhelming conviction to defeat an overpowering foe. After 400 years of lingering repression and oppression, the brave elected to take a stand and fight for valued liberty and independence. Ultimately, freedom prevailed.

Since September 11, Greece has joined our effort to fight terrorism and bring those responsible for that heinous act to justice. We share the common goal of deterring future terrorist acts. Although it is and will be a difficult fight, unity and alliance with Greece is one of the keys to our ultimate victory.

The war of independence that Greece fought, and ultimately won, reminds us today that independence and liberty do not come without cost. We look to these shared values to help us endure these trying times.

Madam Speaker, we as Americans are inspired by the Greek people and recognize the struggles they have overcome to attain independence. I congratulate them on 181 years of freedom.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING
WILLIAM CROWE

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, whereas, William Crowe has received the Excellence in Education award from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools; and

Whereas, William Crowe has been with Buckeye Local High School for 29 years; and Whereas, William Crowe has worked to bring the joy of learning into the lives of his students; and

Whereas, William Crowe must be commended for his service to the community, taking on numerous leadership roles for the betterment all;

Therefore, I join with the residents of the entire 18th Congressional District in recognizing William Crowe as a recipient of the 2002 Excellence in Education Award.

RECOGNIZING THE USS "RALPH TALBOT" FOR EXEMPLARY SERVICE

HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the time to recognize the meritorious service of the destroyer USS *Ralph Talbot* during World War II.

Mr. Frank Urbanowicz, who lives in Janesville, Wisconsin, has worked tirelessly to establish formal recognition of the destroyer's actions through the Presidential Unit Citation. While the Navy has not acted, I would like to share with you a brief history of the destroyer and the significance of its actions.

Early in her career, the USS *Ralph Talbot* entered World War II during the attack on Pearl Harbor. The destroyer reacted immediately, retaliating with gunfire and later patrolling the area in search of enemy submarines.