

outlined in the legislation, we would have had an opportunity to discuss and consider the merits of programs like education and cultural exchange and their usefulness for attaining U.S. national security and foreign policy goals. As it stands, it allows the current or a future Administration to establish exemption standards so narrow as to preclude the possibility of accruing the benefits of a broader—but still regulated with an eye to security considerations—exchange of citizens. In abdicating its role in setting standards, the Congress has forgone an opportunity to have a voice in this important aspect of policymaking.

COLONEL KENNETH J. SWEET  
HONORED AS LANCE P. SIJAN  
AWARD RECIPIENT

### HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 8, 2002*

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, May 16th 2002, the Greater Milwaukee Aerie 4214 Fraternal Order of Eagles will award Colonel Kenneth J. Sweet (Retired) the Lance P. Sijan Award.

Lance P. Sijan was born and raised in the Milwaukee community of Bay View. After graduating from the Air Force Academy in 1965, he went to serve in DeNang, Vietnam where he flew sixty-six combat missions. On his last mission his plane was shot down over enemy territory and, although he evaded the enemy for 6 weeks, rescue efforts failed and he died as a prisoner of war.

Lance was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor along with the Distinguished Flying Cross, two Purple Hearts, two Air Medals and a Certificate of Honorable Service. His courageous service is recognized throughout the country with scholarships and memorials.

Throughout a career that spans over 40 years, Colonel Kenneth J. Sweet (Retired) has served his country faithfully and in the same courageous manner as Lance P. Sijan.

Colonel Sweet's first assignment with the Army Air Corps was at Wheeler Field, Hawaii where he was on guard duty on December 7, 1941 when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. He was among the first to fire a rifle in defense of his country at the start of WWII. After the war ended he became one of the founders of the 128th Air Refueling Wing when the unit gained Federal recognition in 1947.

During the Korean War, Colonel Sweet was active for 21 months, and earned his commission on September 29th, 1961. Retiring in 1982 with 40 years and 8 months of service to his country, Colonel Sweet remains active in the community, advocating for military retiree's in Wisconsin and founding the Wisconsin National Retiree Council in 1983, and has served as its director for 16 years.

So it is with great pride that I thank Colonel Kenneth Sweet for his years of dedicated military service, and congratulate him on receiving the 2002 Lance P. Sijan Award.

### SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE IM- PORTANCE OF HEALTH CARE EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE COVERAGE MONTH

SPEECH OF

### HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 7, 2002*

Mr. MOORE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support for H. Con. Res. 271, a resolution calling on the President to designate a National Importance of Health Care Coverage Month.

It is time for the leaders of our country to acknowledge that we are facing, in the near future, a nationwide health care crisis. This crisis will cut across all sectors. Seniors insured by the Medicare program and low-income children insured by the Medicaid program are facing severe cuts in nearly every state. Workers with employer-based insurance will face radically increased premiums, and the uninsured, who are already the most vulnerable will still be without.

The Baby Boomers will soon retire and flood the Medicare program. In preparation for this long-anticipated event, Congress has set forth unrealistic budgets calling for severe cuts in Medicare reimbursement for home health care, hospital services and nursing home services. At the same time, some physicians are refusing to take new Medicare patients due to an illogical and unworkable reimbursement scheme.

Hospitals are closing their doors across the country due to low federal reimbursements and lack of nursing staff. Recently, in my district, all but one hospital emergency room was declared "on diversion"—meaning they were unable to take any more ambulances or emergency patients. Yet, the administration plans to cut the hospital update again this year. We must do all that we can to ensure that this does not happen. I want to enter into the record a letter signed by myself and 24 Blue Dog colleagues asking the Speaker to support adequate reimbursement to all Medicare providers.

Think for a moment if our already crumbling health care infrastructure was challenged by a crisis—a terrorist attack resulting in a large number of casualties or a bioterror attack. The time for us to act—to secure our health care system, in terms of infrastructure, workforce and health insurance coverage—is now.

Approximately 44 million working Americans are uninsured. We in Congress need to realize that continuing to ignore the problem of the uninsured in our country will cost us as a nation—in terms of overall health and financial security.

The uninsured are more likely to delay doctor visits, delay needed care or choose not to receive that care at all. Last year, more than 40% of uninsured adults delayed a necessary medical test or treatment. Twenty percent say that they needed, but did not get, recommended treatment last year. Many who received treatment did so at a hospital emergency room. A third of uninsured children did not see a doctor in the past year.

Delaying, or not receiving health care treatment, can lead to more serious health problems. The uninsured are more likely to be hos-

pitalized for avoidable conditions, such as pneumonia or uncontrolled diabetes. The uninsured who are finally diagnosed with cancer may often be in late stages or beyond treatment.

In addition to health consequences, the financial burden on families can be severe. Debt due to high, unexpected medical bills is one of the primary reasons that families file for bankruptcy. Nearly 30% of uninsured adults say that medical bills had a major adverse impact on their families' lives.

The burden falls on our local communities through our health care safety net—but that safety net is being stretched very thin. Community clinics and public hospitals in my congressional district, and all over the country, are straining under the burden of caring for uninsured Americans. Safety net providers, despite their good work, cannot take the place of quality health management and health insurance.

We know who the uninsured are. And we know where they work. The statistics show us that, overwhelmingly, low income workers in small businesses are the most likely people to be uninsured. According to the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, the working uninsured are most likely to be employed in firms with less than 25 employees.

But we in Congress are not doing a good job telling small businesses about the tax benefits available to small business owners who do the right thing and offer health insurance. A study of employers commissioned by the National Association of Health Underwriters found that small businesses are not always aware of the benefits, tax and otherwise, associated with offering health insurance.

Fifty-seven percent of small employers do not know that health insurance premiums are 100% tax deductible. Sixty-five percent of employers do not realize that health insurance premiums are treated like general business expenses with regard to taxes.

I have seen the Child Health Insurance Program make a difference to kids in my district. But despite the success of the CHIP program, 26% of poor children and 16% of near-poor children remain uninsured. Nine million American children remain uninsured.

Madam Speaker, it is time for our nation to address the health care crisis that is looming on the horizon. Congress needs to act immediately to ensure that our health care system is secure, by adequately funding and maintaining our infrastructure, addressing the workforce shortage, especially that of registered nurses, and ensuring that health care coverage is available and affordable for all Americans.

This resolution is a small part of that effort. Today, we need to take the first step to make the public aware of the importance of health care coverage—to ensure that small businesses are aware of the benefits of health insurance coverage, and that parents know when their children are eligible for Medicaid or CHIP.

Congresswoman WILSON and I are asking the President to designate a National Importance of Health Care Coverage Month to help bring this issue to the forefront of the national health care debate. During that month, I will challenge my colleagues to tell small businesses, parents of children and uninsured people in their congressional districts about the importance of health care coverage, the

existing tax benefits of offering coverage to employees and the public and private programs for which they are eligible.

Lack of information should not be an additional barrier to health insurance access. We must begin now.

WASHINGTON, DC, May 1, 2002.

HON. J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
*Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT,  
*Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR SPEAKER HASTERT AND MINORITY LEADER GEPHARDT: We are writing to express our dismay and disappointment in the latest recommendation by the Administration to pit provider against provider by using reductions to hospitals' market basket update to restore payments to physicians. We believe this proposal is short-sighted and ill-advised. While we certainly agree that physicians deserve fair and adequate reimbursement, the Administration's proposal jeopardizes the health of patients, the viability of our communities, and the financial stability of our hospitals.

The problems facing the Medicare program will not be solved without setting priorities and funding them through honest budgeting. The assumption by the Administration that Medicare will grow at a rate 10 percent less than projected by the Congressional Budget Office, and slower than medical inflation is irresponsible. Moreover, cutting Medicare payments for one provider to give to another fails to address the issue at hand: what are our priorities in the Medicare program, and are hospitals and doctors among them? We believe that they are both priorities and ought to be funded accordingly.

Therefore, we strongly disagree with the Administration's recommendation to use hospital reimbursement as a "cash cow" for other provider adjustments. Hospitals are not only the backbones of our healthcare system, but they are also the centers of our communities. We expect great things from them, such as enhancing bioterrorism preparedness, implementing the Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA), hiring and retaining essential nursing staff, and above all providing timely, quality care to the patients they treat. What they expect from their government in return is fair reimbursement for the vital services they provide.

Our Medicare providers are facing very real and very serious circumstances, and we must answer them with serious solutions. Should Congress consider Medicare legislation this year, we urge you to support adequate reimbursement for the healthcare providers in our communities. We look forward to working with you to achieve this goal.

Sincerely,

Marion Berry, John Tanner, Max Sandlin, Mike Ross, David Phelps, Adam Schiff, Ellen O. Tauscher, Jim Turner, Charles W. Stenholm, Tim Holder, F. Allen Boyd, Jr., Dennis Moore, Collin Peterson, Gene Taylor, Bud Cramer, Joe Baca, Jim Matheson, Sanford Bishop, Jr., Chris John, Mike Thompson, Ronnie Shows, Mike McIntyre, Ken R. Lucas, Steve J. Israel, Jane Harman.

HONORING THE REVEREND DR. S.  
HOWARD WOODSON, JR.

### HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 8, 2002

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call the attention of my colleagues to an effort taking place in central New Jersey today to honor one of our area's most noted spiritual and community leaders, the late Reverend Dr. S. Howard Woodson, Jr.

Today, in the City of Trenton, New Jersey, one of our community's busiest thoroughfares, Calhoun Street, is being renamed in honor of Dr. Woodson. It's an expression of thanks from a grateful community for over half a century of leadership and community involvement by this amazing man.

Reverend Woodson was a community leader in Trenton since 1946. As the respected pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church, Dr. Woodson was also a noted leader in our nation's civil rights movement. As the Chairman of the Board of the Carver YMCA, Rev. Woodson fought to be granted independent status from the National YMCA, in order to desegregate that community institution. Later, as President of the State Conference of the NAACP, he convinced officials to convene the first state conference on housing discrimination. This conference raised awareness and led to many advances in housing rights for all in our community. Reverend Woodson's long and distinguished career has been marked by many firsts. He was the first individual of color elected as councilman-at-large in Trenton. He was also the first person of color to serve as Chairman of the Ranking Legislative Committee, Assistant Democratic Leader, and Speaker of the New Jersey State House.

In addition to being a respected and influential leader in community events, Reverend Woodson nurtured and helped grow the congregation of the Shiloh Baptist Church into one of the strongest, most committed and most spiritually vibrant churches in New Jersey. Through Reverend Woodson's leadership, the church erected a new center of worship and reached out to our community to clean up neighborhoods and bring people together for positive social change.

Today's honor is well deserved, and one of many earned by the late Dr. Woodson over his long and distinguished career. I take pride in joining with my colleagues in the House in marking this honor for an individual who meant so much to so many in central New Jersey.

### FIBROMYALGIA AWARENESS DAY

### HON. MARK FOLEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 8, 2002

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my support for the National Fibromyalgia Association and to recognize May 12, 2002 as Fibromyalgia Awareness Day. This year alone, over 10 million Americans will be diagnosed with Fibromyalgia, a disease of which there is no known cure.

Fibromyalgia is a chronic illness which causes fatigue and debilitating pain in women,

men and children of all ages and races. Patients with this illness often have to learn to live with widespread pain throughout their bodies; extreme fatigue; sleep disorders; stiffness and weakness; migraine headaches; numbness and tingling; impairment of memory and concentration.

As with many diseases of this type, medical professionals frequently are inadequately educated on Fibromyalgia diagnosis and treatment. What is worse, children and young adults with the disease not only suffer from the illness, but also from the lack of understanding and social acceptance. Others with the disease may be discriminated against at work, by friends or family. Developing a greater understanding of this disease will help guarantee hope for a better future for people with Fibromyalgia.

I am proud to recognize the needs of the National Fibromyalgia Association and to acknowledge May 12, 2002 as Fibromyalgia Awareness Day in Palm Beach Gardens. I urge all of our citizens to support the search for a cure and help those individuals and families who deal with this devastating disease on a daily basis.

HONORING SGT. KERRY  
PORTERFIELD ON THE OCCASION  
OF HIS RETIREMENT

### HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 8, 2002

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Senior Sergeant Kerry Porterfield as he retires from a thirty-one year career of exemplary service as an officer of the St. Helena Police Department.

As a native of St. Helena, I know first hand the impact that Kerry has had on our community while both on and off duty. As a police officer, his dedication to the pursuit of justice is admirable. With over 2,000 hours of law enforcement classes and 60,000 hours of experience under his belt, Kerry has a wealth of experience and know-how that will be sorely missed. A self-taught computer guru and driving force behind the adoption of new law enforcement technologies, he has helped make the St. Helena Police Department the modern and effective institution it is today. This year, with crime at a five-year low, Kerry has been honored as "Officer of the Year."

A devoted family man, Kerry and his wife, Dianne, have two daughters, Jennifer and Kareese. Once named "Father of the Year" by his daughter Kareese's pre-school, Kerry loves to spend time with his daughters, and was very involved in their school age activities.

After attending Napa High School, Kerry went to Napa Valley Junior College where he discovered a fascination with law enforcement. Upon graduating with an associate's degree in Criminal Justice, Kerry became a patrolman with the St. Helena Police Department on December 1, 1970.

As the son of Virginia and Cliff Porterfield, both Navy veterans, Kerry is a devoted fan of the Blue Angels, and often travels to see them.

Mr. Speaker, Sergeant Kerry Porterfield has served the people of the St. Helena, California with both enthusiasm for his work and steadfast professionalism. He is an invaluable asset