

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

to our community and I speak on behalf of the people of St. Helena when I thank Kerry Porterfield for his outstanding service and wish him luck in his future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MACHINISTS AND AEROSPACE WORKERS DAY OF ACTION

**HON. DAVID E. BONIOR**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 8, 2002*

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I recognize the hard-working men and women of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, and all that they do for our safety and the safety of our nations' transportation services. Today, IAMAW workers from Detroit to Dallas, and from Phoenix to Philadelphia, will be rallying together in a display of strength and solidarity.

Far too often, their good work goes unnoticed and underappreciated, but these are the men and women who inspect our planes before they take off, ensure hazardous materials get transported by rail safely and build the ships for our national defense. They are truly stewards of the public health.

IAMAW members safely transport more than one million passengers each day. They keep the traveling public safe in our planes and trains and check in passengers and their luggage. They keep America moving. They deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. We need to stop the cycle of hardships, cutbacks and threats of privatization that IAMAW members have had to face in recent times. They work hard everyday to ensure that our transportation systems are safe, reliable and professionally maintained—and for that we owe them a great debt of gratitude.

So today, I thank the IAMAW's 150,000 airline and railroad workers for what they do. Together, they keep our nation moving safely, and I am proud to honor them on this day of action.

TRIBUTE TO KANSAS BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN

**HON. DENNIS MOORE**

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 8, 2002*

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to the Kansas Business and Professional Women for their upcoming 83rd annual state convention, which will take place from June 7th–9th in Topeka, Kansas. I also want to congratulate their new president, Julie Smith, a resident of the Third Congressional District of Kansas, for putting together an outstanding weekend of programs and events for her members.

Among the outstanding speakers scheduled are: Coach Marian Washington of the University of Kansas' women's basketball team, who will serve as keynote speaker; motivational speaker Susan Mayer; and author Suzy Allegra. A candidates' forum for Kansas Attorney General candidates is planned, as well as a sock hop, casino night, and many opportunities for networking and information exchanges.

The Kansas Business and Professional Women's organization is nationally associated with the American Business and Professional Women's Association, both of which offer outstanding networking, educational and support services for their membership.

DEATH TAX

**HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 8, 2002*

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, during my first term in Congress, I am proud that I have helped pass a number of bills to reduce taxes and regulations on the entrepreneurs and small businesspeople of Florida and the United States of America.

Even so, there is much work left to be done. On April 2, 2001 the House successfully passed H.R. 8, the Death Tax Elimination Act of 2001 with my support. On April 18, 2002 the House again acted and successfully passed H.R. 586, the Taxpayer Relief Guarantee Act of 2002 with my support. It is time that the other body of Congress recognizes the importance of these two bills and acts to take up these two pieces of legislation immediately. Even so, I will continue to push to make last year's death tax repeal and tax relief permanent, because the bills are still set to expire in 2011.

Repealing the death tax and making tax relief permanent are two critical issues facing America today. First, repealing the death tax is of utmost importance because of its wide reaching debilitating impact. More than 98 percent of the businesses in Florida are small businesses, and 84 percent of the jobs in Florida come from firms having 25 or fewer employees.

The real casualties of the death tax are those businesses and farms in the 98-percent range providing their owners' families a middle-class income and standard of living. Before the death tax phase-out, when small businesspeople and farmers died, their assets were subject to liquidation in order to raise money needed to pay for their tax liabilities. Now their money goes into their businesses, to pay their employees and take care of their families.

Despite their best estate planning efforts, 70 percent of small and family-owned businesses do not survive through the second generation and 87 percent do not make it through the third generation. And 9 out of 10 successors whose family business failed within three years of the owner's death said death taxes played a major role in the company's demise. Repealing the double-dipping taxation of the death tax is not only just it is long overdue.

Another major issue facing small businesses throughout America is the burden imposed by the Federal tax system. The Tax Relief Act of 2001 much needed relief for small businesses and the self-employed. About 85 percent of America's small businesses—17.4 million-pay taxes at individual rates and do benefit directly from the marginal tax rate reductions in the act.

Last year we repealed the costly ergonomics regulations put in place in the waning days of the previous Administration, passed major tax relief, and after years of

work we found the votes necessary in Congress to finally end the small-business's nightmare. We have begun the process to repeal the death tax and make tax relief enacted last year a permanent reality. We have succeeded in doing much, but still, more is needed to protect America's small business and secure its future for generations to come.

HONORING ROBERT WETZEL—RECIPIENT OF THE DISTINGUISHED EAGLE SCOUT AWARD

**HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 8, 2002*

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Robert Wetzel as a recipient of the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award.

The Distinguished Eagle Scout Award was established in 1969 to acknowledge Eagle Scouts who have distinguished themselves in business and in service to their community and country. Robert Wetzel is one of 1467 people who are in the same class as President Gerald Ford, astronaut Neil Armstrong and film Director Steven Spielberg. Eagle Scouts are eligible to receive the award 25 years after their first receipt of the Eagle Scout Award.

Forty-nine years ago, Bob earned his Eagle Scout award as a Boy Scout with Troop 27 in Edwardsville, Illinois. Bob attributes his upbringing to his active role in the community and to our nation. In fact, both of Bob's parents volunteered many hours with the Boy Scouts.

Among the many service organizations to which Bob belongs are: the Leadership Council of Southwestern Illinois, the Regional Commerce and Growth Association, the Eden United Church of Christ and the advisory Council for the Boy Scouts Trails West Council. Bob is the first recipient of this award from the Trails West Council. Trails West serves Madison, Jersey, Greene, Calhoun, Macoupin and Bond counties in Illinois.

The Distinguished Eagle Scout Award has been given to governors, senators, military Flag Officers, university presidents, chief executive officers of Fortune 500 companies and nationally known educators, physicians and attorneys. We can now count among its illustrious membership, Mr. Bob Wetzel.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the service of Robert Wetzel to the community and to the United States and congratulate him upon the receipt of the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award and to wish him and his family the very best for the future.

NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

**HON. LAMAR S. SMITH**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 8, 2002*

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this week is National Small Business Week.

It is a time to celebrate the contributions that America's small businesses make to our economy.