

most successful cemeteries in the area. They had a special ability to comfort and console others in their time of need.

Mrs. Fields was a true child of Texas. She was born in Pearsall, TX, and graduated from Aldine High School. The eldest child in her family, she helped raise her siblings after her father died when she was 9. Nothing in her life was more important to her than her family. An example of her loving spirit can be found in her custom of cooking dinner for her family and other relatives after church each Sunday.

Mrs. Fields touched numerous lives through Rosewood. But she touched even more as a respected citizen of the community, church attendee, and as a family beacon. Her love and steady direction served as an inspiration to her children, and with Jack, made her the mother of an esteemed U.S. Congressman. Jesse Faye Fields will be remembered as a devoted wife, loving mother, and cherished citizen of her community.

STRONG STUDENT VISA SYSTEM CRITICAL TO NATIONAL SECURITY

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 5, 2002

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member wishes to commend to his colleagues the February 4, 2002, editorial from the Omaha World-Herald entitled "Loosey Goosey Borders IV."

This editorial is one in a series of editorials published by the Omaha World-Herald which illuminate why it is entirely appropriate for the U.S. to enact strict immigration laws and, subsequently, to actively enforce those laws. Specifically, this editorial focuses upon the student visa system.

Indeed, the U.S. should be pleased that its higher education system attracts many foreign students, and, while it is important to continue the student visa system to bring vibrancy and diversity to universities and colleges, those interests must continuously and consistently be balanced against U.S. security interests. Failure to do so could place American lives at risk to terrorist attacks—among other threats—committed by those in the U.S. fraudulently under the guise of educational purposes.

Even with the strictest possible enforcement of visa controls, the system will always be susceptible to visa fraud. However, that does not mean that the U.S. should throw up its hands in surrender and throw open its borders.

[Omaha World-Herald, Feb. 4, 2002]

LOOSEY GOOSEY BORDERS IV

Slow progress is made in controlling foreign student visas.

Progress on tightening up the United States' free-and-easy borders has been slow but steady since Sept. 11—not spectacular, but at least things are moving.

Before the terrorist attack, student visas were issued to foreign nationals, some of whom came to this country and, in essence, disappeared into the general population. The Immigration and Naturalization Service didn't check whether they actually went to school or whether they left after their education was done.

Things changed on Sept. 11. Security became a greater concern. The INS is setting

up a computer system to track student visa holders. The agency has been struggling with a system for years, but it appears that it will be in place, INS officials said, by 2003.

The tracking system is not without its critics. A group dealing with foreign students withdrew its opposition after the September attack, but many individual schools have expressed the concern that a tracking system will discourage foreign students.

Security trumps that concern. So long as a student visa is the gateway to an easy and unmonitored existence in the United States for people whose motives might be other than scholarship, this is a security matter. If keeping tabs on foreign students discourages a few from coming to the United States or inconveniences a college's administration, too bad.

Besides the INS system, the Senate is expected to join the House soon in passing legislation that, among other things, would forbid the issuance of student visas to anyone from a country that sponsors terrorism unless the State Department investigates and approves the individual.

Some local INS offices are on the ball, too. Omaha-based INS officials, for instance, have been in contact with colleges and universities within their jurisdiction. But not all INS offices across the country have been as aggressive.

Better monitoring of guests to discourage those who would abuse the privilege is not onerous or unreasonable. Rather, these precautions are sensible and understandable in light of the credible threat terrorism poses to Americans. The faster security can be improved, the better for the nation.

MASSACHUSETTS SECRETARY OF STATE JAMES JAJUGA'S ELO- QUENT TRIBUTE TO HIS MOTHER

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 5, 2002

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I was saddened last week to learn of the death of Sophie Jajuga, the mother of my good friend James Jajuga, the Secretary of Public Safety for Massachusetts and a former State Senator.

At the funeral service for his mother on February 5 at St. Lucy's Church in Methuen, Massachusetts, Secretary Jajuga delivered an eloquent tribute to his mother that deeply touched me and all others who were present. He described in vivid terms the lifelong love and support that Mrs. Jajuga gave to her family.

Secretary Jajuga's beautiful eulogy to his mother should be of interest to all of us. I ask for unanimous consent to submit it to the record:

Good morning, on behalf of my entire family, I want to thank you for attending this beautiful service here at St. Lucy's this morning, as well as for the many kindnesses you have extended to me and to both the Bednez and Jajuga families over the past few days. I would also like to thank Fr. Loscocco for his support and guidance during this difficult time and for celebrating today's mass, and Camille Peters for her beautiful voice and organ playing.

I was asked by my family to share with you some thoughts about my mother, Sophie, and am both humbled and honored to do so with you now.

In life we tend to take some things for granted. One of these things is that our mother will always be there for us, in good

times and, especially, in bad times. No one shares a child's happiness, pain, or sorrow, more than his or her mother. No one understands more how a child is feeling—really feeling deep down inside—than his or her mother.

My mother, Sophie, was a wonderful mother to me and to my two sisters, Jane and Mary. We grew up in Haverhill and moved to Lawrence. Some of us took that move better than others, but that is a story for another day . . .

A story I would like to share with you today that exemplifies the kind of person my mother was is this: When we were young children things would disappear from our house, "things" like clothes, dolls and toys, and, of course, my favorite jacket that I had only worn for a short period of time. Finally, mother told us that she had been sending our personal belongings to our relatives back in Poland because, in her own words "they need them more than you do!" When we came home from school or play, we never knew what would be missing next, and if we really valued something we knew we better find a very good hiding place to keep it safe from mother's reach.

Mother called all of us "Honey" or "Dear" and when she did call us by name it was usually someone else's name. In fact, for a while there I really wasn't sure whether my name was "Jimmy", "Stanley," or "Eddie," because she called me all three names regularly! She continued to do this with the grandchildren and great-grandchildren as well.

My mother loved us all—her children, her grandchildren, her great-grandchildren, her brothers, Stanley and Eddie, her sister, Helen, and her many dear friends. Sophie's love knew no bounds. She loved to laugh, and she especially loved to spend time with her grandchildren and her great-grandchildren. She used to play cards with the grandchildren, a variation of the game of poker called "No Peek." A game where no one was supposed to look at the cards. But of course she would always peek. They'd call her on it all the time, but she would swear that she only saw one card, when they knew she had seen them all. But they always let her get away with it.

I asked everyone in the family, including the grandchildren, what they felt were mother's strongest attributes. By unanimous proclamation they all agreed her greatest strengths were her kindness, her generosity, and her thoughtfulness.

My mother never had a bad word to say about anybody. She was always there ready to help out whoever needed it. She did not—could not—say no to anyone, no matter what was asked of her and regardless of her own situation. She shared whatever she had with others unselfishly. She never asked for anything in return.

She was a gentle woman.

She went out of her way to show she cared, always putting family and friends first even before herself.

Today, we say goodbye—for now—and though we are all deeply saddened by her untimely passing, we are comforted in our firm belief that she is in a better place, reunited with our father and with those members of our family who have gone before us.

Ma, thank you for a lifetime of memories that we will cherish forever. Thank you for always being there for all of us. We love you, we miss you, and we all look forward to playing "No Peek" with you again someday.

God bless you, Ma, and God bless you all.

THE EDUCATION, ACHIEVEMENT,
AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 5, 2002

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation designed to ensure the federal government appropriately assists parents with the financial burdens associated with their child's education. The legislation gives parents more options, and helps them as they search out the best educational setting and tools for their children.

To this end, the Education, Achievement, and Opportunity Act will provide refundable tuition tax credits per year, per child, for educational expenses incurred by parents for elementary and secondary school. The legislation would allow parents sending their child to an elementary school up to \$2,500 in tax relief, and parents with children in a Catholic or parochial high school could claim up to \$3,500 in assistance.

Parents who send their child to a Catholic school already pay twice for their child's education: once through their taxes, and a second time for the tuition. These out-of-pocket expenses can really add up and pose an enormous obstacle to the child's lifetime learning opportunities. Without federal support, many parents struggle—and in some cases forgo—a Catholic school education, or any education in a spiritual setting, because the costs are so high.

In my own district in New Jersey, a parent who feels Catholic schools are best suited for their child will pay somewhere between \$1,840 and \$2,566 in tuition costs. If you want to send your child to a parochial high school in the central New Jersey area, a parent is looking at an average tuition bill of \$5,571 per student, per year. In other areas of the country, the costs are very similar.

Middle-class and lower-income families just cannot—and should not have to—absorb these kinds of costs without some help or recognition from the government. America's children have unique educational needs and goals, and parents are the ones who are best qualified to decide what's in their child's best interest. It just isn't fair to deny a child the ability to pursue the educational program best suited to his/her needs simply because the child's parents do not have the resources to afford the education program of their choice.

We have 59,000,000 youngsters in elementary and secondary school across the U.S.; about 10 percent of these students are enrolled in private, parochial and rabbinical schools. Those families who are already sending their children to such schools, and others planning to send their children to them, would benefit enormously from this proposal, because they are often struggling to make ends meet.

Importantly, my education proposal is a tax credit, rather than a voucher, so the total amount of education resources available for all school age children will increase. Under a voucher system, if a school loses enrolled students to a competing school, that school may lose funding and have fewer resources available for their educational program. Under my plan, that outcome is avoided, because it is a "win-win" scenario, whereas voucher pro-

grams can become a zero-sum situation with "winners and losers."

I was very pleased that President Bush's \$1.35 trillion tax cut reform legislation—The Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, now P.L. 107-16 included several child and family tax credits to help individuals with their educational priorities. The Bush Tax Cut was a solid down payment to help parents meet the educational needs of their children. Parents can now save up to \$2,000 per year in their Education Savings Accounts, and the interest that builds up in them is tax free. When the parent withdraws money for elementary or secondary school expenses, the withdrawal is excluded from their taxable income.

If we are to truly make good on our promise that "no child is left behind," we must ensure that Catholic schools are included in this national promise and goal. A child is a child, regardless of what school system they are enrolled. The children enrolled in Catholic, private, and rabbinical schools deserve nothing less than our full support and compassion.

The benefits of my legislation are available to any child, no matter what their race, creed, or national origin. And make no mistake: the public school system will continue to remain the backbone of our nation's education system. But we must never forget that the public school system was created to serve students—not the other way around. If a student is performing poorly at a particular school, a parent should have the opportunity to enroll the child in another appropriate setting which has a better chance to meet the child's needs.

I urge my colleagues to support the Education, Achievement, and Opportunity Act.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOE WAGNER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 5, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize an outstanding civic and economic leader from the State of Colorado. Joe Wagner of Denver, Colorado has been actively involved in improving citizens lives through his many activities in the region. He is the founder and operator of one of the state's most successful businesses, Wagner Equipment Co, and is a well known activist and leader in many community activities. As he celebrates his induction into the Colorado Business Hall of Fame, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the many achievements and incredible dedication that have led to this extraordinary honor.

Joe founded Wagner Equipment Co., a Caterpillar tractor dealer, in 1976 after gaining experience as a senior manger for a similar operation in North Texas. His desire to begin a business of his own led Joe to Colorado, where his business today thrives after 25 years of dedicated service to his community. As a result of this success, the company is now the Caterpillar dealer for the state, enjoying over 20 locations in Colorado and internationally in Mongolia and Siberia. Wagner equipment employs over 900 workers who serve customers in mining, agriculture, forestry, power generation, construction, manufacturing, and government, as well as sup-

plying quality Caterpillar products to consumers.

Joe's success in business is one, but not the only, reason for his selection as a recipient of this award. Part of the award is based on commitment to the community and giving back to those who have supported you and allowed for your success. In this endeavor, Joe has been a valuable participant. He has been active helping Colorado's youth in the Denver Area Council Boy Scouts, the Denver Boys & Girls Club, Children's Hospital and the Children's Hospital Foundation. As a local businessman, he plays an active role in the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce and as a board member for Wells Fargo Bank. He also remains an active member of his church as an elder with Presbyterian Church of the Covenant.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly a pleasure to bring forth before this body of Congress the names of individuals who have done so much for Colorado communities. Joe Wagner has been an active civic, business, and religious leader and patron for Colorado. I would like to further extend my congratulations on the award and thank him for all his efforts in improving his fellow Coloradoan's lives. Congratulations Joe, and good luck in your future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF JANET SARINGER

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 5, 2002

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a truly remarkable woman, one who genuinely exemplifies what it means to be a respected civil servant and community activist.

Janet Saringer has dedicated her life to public service and to the North Olmsted community. She has actively participated in public service since 1971 when she was elected to city Council Ward 2. She has served as ward Councilwoman, council member-at-large, and president of council pr-tem. For the past 8 years she has served as President of the Council chairing and serving on seven committees of Council. She will be truly missed as she begins her retirement after 25 years of devoted service as Department Head of the Cuyahoga County Records Office.

Janet has volunteered her time in the community and touched the lives of many people in the area. As a graduate of St. Augustine Academy, she has served as the alumnae association president. She also acted as president of the Greater Cleveland Suburban Council and the Stoneybrook Women's Club. She has been active on the North Olmsted Community Council as well as the North Olmsted Democratic Club and the Cuyahoga County Democratic Executive Committee. Her involvement has also benefited the Irish American community as a member of the West Side IA Club, IPAC and the IACREOT.

Janet continues to live a fulfilling and active life. Janet has been a committed wife who was recently widowed after 35 years of marriage to Robert N. Saringer, a Cleveland Police Officer. She has also been a wonderful mother of five children, Jack, Debbie, Janet, Bob and Bill. She is a grandmother to 12 children and a great grandmother to three children with one on the way. Janet is loved by