

that hump, they know it is nearly impossible to kill the program. That is why Congress needed to signal now that we have no intention of allowing the LRIP decision from being made until we are fully satisfied the Comanche will work as advertised and will be built within reasonable cost and time constraints.

I'd like to run down a few of the specific problems with the Comanche.

In August 1999, the GAO warned the Comanche faced significant risks of cost overruns, scheduling delays, and degraded performance primarily because the Army decided to (1) begin engineering and manufacturing development before key technologies had matured, (2) compress the flight-testing schedule, which increases concurrency between development and operational testing, and (3) begin initial production before completing operational testing.

In its most recent report, issued in June 2001, the GAO noted the problems identified in the August 1999 report have gotten worse. The GAO cites a range of concerns including understated acquisition program cost estimates; ambitious flight test schedules with substantial concurrency in test events; delays in another DOD program, the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF), which had been counted on to develop a critical component of the aircraft; inadequate facilities to fully test and integrate system hardware and software; and considerable growth in aircraft weight.

The program's total development and production cost estimate has increased by almost \$4.8 billion—from \$43.3 billion to \$48.1 billion. This includes a \$75 million increase in development costs and a nearly \$4.8 billion increase in production costs. As the GAO notes, these costs are likely to further escalate.

DOD's most recent cost estimate for the Comanche was done in April 2000. At that time, DOD's Cost Analysis Improvement Group estimated the Comanche would need an additional \$180 million for its engineering and manufacturing development phase. However, this money was not included in the April 2000 baseline.

Further, in January 2001, DOD added about \$504 million in funding to the Comanche program over the next few years. About \$84 million was earmarked for RDT&E, the remaining \$420 million was for production. These additional funds have not yet been reflected in the program's official cost estimates.

The Comanche program office also maintains a list of unfunded requirements that total \$68 million. According to the GAO, "The program office acknowledges that, unless additional funds are obtained, some yet-to-be-determined program performance requirements could be impacted."

The Comanche is also missing testing and production targets.

The GAO is particularly critical of the Comanche development and testing schedule, in which many crucial events come close together or concurrently in the late stages. The GAO specifically writes, "We have reported that when development work and low-rate initial production (LRIP) are done concurrently, significant schedule delays that cause cost increases and other problems are not uncommon in early production. Also, production processes are often not able to consistently yield output of high quality when full-rate production begins."

Before entering the LRIP stage, previous GAO work has shown successful commercial

firms already know that (1) technologies match customer requirements; that is, they can fit onto a product and function as expected, (2) the product's design meets performance requirements, and (3) the product can be produced within cost, schedule, and quality targets. According to GAO, "It is unlikely the Army will have this level of knowledge about Comanche" by the June 2005 LRIP decision date.

Specifically, the GAO notes "several critical subsystems—to be included in the mission equipment package—may not be available until development flight-testing is well underway. These subsystems are very complex state-of-the-art systems that have not been demonstrated on a helicopter platform like Comanche." The GAO goes on to warn "the Army's schedule for developing and testing software for the Comanche may not be completed prior to the full-rate production decision."

Failure to correct deficiencies prior to LRIP could lead to costly retrofits and repairs to aircraft already produced. As GAO wrote "To produce that many aircraft during low-rate initial production, the Army will have to ramp up its production capabilities rapidly and at a time when the aircraft design is still evolving as new subsystems are introduced and test results are evaluated."

The Comanche is also failing to meet performance requirements.

GAO says the Comanche is at risk of not achieving its rate of vertical climb requirement. The Comanche's ability to climb at a rate of 500 feet per minute is a key performance requirement as identified by the DOD itself. The Comanche's weight was a concern in the GAO's August 1999 report. The problem had only gotten worse by the time of the June 2001 report. The Comanche's empty weight had increased by 653 pounds—from 8,822 to 9,475—which threatens the vertical climb requirement.

GAO also says the Comanche is unlikely to complete the development and integration of its mission equipment package, which is needed to support a range of important functions including early warning, target acquisition, piloting, navigation, and communications.

GAO also warns the program is not successfully completing development of the system for detecting equipment problems. A critical component of the Comanche is its on-board fault detection system that can rapidly and accurately provide information about equipment problems. Without this system, the cost of maintaining the aircraft would increase. According to the Army, this system needs to be 75 to 95 percent accurate—75 percent for mechanical and electrical equipment and 95 percent for avionics and electronics equipment. However, the Comanche program office has concluded this requirement will be difficult to achieve within the current cost, weight, and packaging constraints and does not expect to achieve a mature fault detection and fault isolation capability until two years after initial fielding.

Finally, the GAO warns the Comanche is failing to achieve the "beyond-line-of-sight" communications capability needed to perform its mission. Satellite communications are essential to this reconnaissance capability. The Army was planning to rely on satellite communication technology that was being developed and miniaturized as part of the Joint Strike

Fighter program. However, the JSF has been delayed. The Comanche program office now believes it must develop its own satellite communication technology. GAO warns the development schedule "remains high-risk for the timely inclusion of this capability on the initially fielded Comanche helicopters."

Finally, the Pentagon's Director of Operational Test and Evaluation raised significant concerns about the Comanche in a 2000 report. Among the criticisms, the report said:

"It is highly unlikely that the Service can deliver the expected system performance within the current budget and schedule. Lacking an operational assessment of an integrated system, it is difficult to predict with any degree of confidence whether the individual subsystems can be successfully integrated, whether the subsystems will function properly in an operational environment, or whether, in concert, they will provide the anticipated benefits in operational performance."

"DOT&E's assessment of the Comanche's weight projections found several questionable areas, including overly optimistic expected weight reductions and questionable estimates of future weight growth."

"Overall, the Comanche has a risky test and evaluation strategy for integrating the MEP (mission equipment package) on the aircraft ... The resulting schedule compression allows little reserve in the timetable, thereby increasing the impact of unforeseen events/delays."

As the aforementioned warnings I've outlined from the GAO and the Pentagon's own Director of Operational Test and Evaluation make clear, Congress should not continue to pour money into the Comanche without regard to results.

Unfortunately, H.R. 4546 continues to sink billions of taxpayer dollars into weapons system of dubious utility and questionable performance.

RECOGNIZING OLDER AMERICANS MONTH IN MAY

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Older Americans Month, May 2002. The theme this year is America: A Community for All Ages, recognizing the national community in which we live, and paying tribute to the multi-generational family that is the strength of America.

Older members of our families and communities provide us with a historical perspective and contribute to our nation's greatness and prosperity. The experiences, stories, and knowledge of our senior citizens are integral to our understanding of our country and our world. To help preserve their stories I am proud to have authored legislation during the 106th Congress that created the Veterans History Project. The Veterans History Project is run by the Library of Congress, which coordinates a collection of video and audio recordings of the personal histories of American war veterans, as well as copies of their letters, diaries, and photographs. The library will also establish a publicly accessible archive for these recordings and documents.

Beyond this project, I have always strongly advocated for legislation that supports our Nation's seniors. Two of the most important

issues facing older Americans today are Social Security and prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

The solvency of Social Security is a serious concern for all Americans. I have consistently supported legislation that shores up and secures Social Security benefits for our older Americans. For example, I am an original cosponsor of H.R. 4671, the Social Security Widow's Benefit Guarantee Act. This bill would increase widows' and widowers' Social Security Benefits to 75 percent of the combined amount the couple had been receiving prior to the death of the spouse. In a typical case, a widow's benefit would increase by 12 percent, or more than \$100/month. The House just passed the Republican version of this bill, which is a good first step toward ensuring these benefits.

Similarly, the rising cost of prescription drugs is one of our most important health care challenges. Currently, senior citizens who pay for their own prescription medication pay more than twice as much for drugs than do the pharmaceutical companies' most favored customers. Exacerbating this problem is the fact that even though seniors use the most prescriptions, over 75 percent of seniors on Medicare lack reliable drug coverage.

Recently, both Republicans and Democrats have talked about introducing and passing legislation that provides prescription drug benefit under Medicare. I am working with my colleagues to craft legislation that would provide a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit, providing access for every senior no matter where they live or what their income.

Easy solutions to the high cost of prescription drugs and the solvency of Social Security do not exist. It is my hope that as the 107th Congress progresses, my colleagues will not forget about the needs of our older Americans, and will continue to work for legislation that preserves the benefits our Nation's seniors richly deserve.

HONORING DR. THOMAS MADDEN
ON HIS RETIREMENT AS SUPER-
INTENDENT OF LEMONT TOWNSHIP
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 210

HON. JUDY BIGGERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Dr. Thomas Madden on his retirement as Superintendent of Lemont Township High School District 210. Since 1970, Dr. Madden has given his extraordinary talents and leadership as an educator to the students, faculty, and parents served by Lemont District 210. He has served with great distinction, and I am proud to highlight his outstanding record of accomplishments.

Under Dr. Madden's leadership, Lemont District 210 has witnessed dramatic growth and maintained an outstanding, quality education for students. Through his legislative initiatives and work with the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools, Dr. Madden has helped to secure a ten-fold increase in federal impact aid—money that has gone to the direct benefit of his students and schools. He also has led the effort to secure \$26 million in construction bonds, allowing Lemont

District 210 to build new schools and facilities to accommodate significant increases in enrollment and staff.

Dr. Madden is an active participant in all aspects of the community. He serves on several local and national boards, including the Lemont Chamber of Commerce, the Lemont Area Development Council, and the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools. Dr. Madden has helped to promote a community and region that is supportive of families and local business, making our part of Illinois one of the fastest growing suburban areas in the nation. Most importantly, Dr. Madden has helped to build an education system that ensures that today's students will meet the challenges of tomorrow's global economy.

Dr. Madden embodies the values we as a nation applaud in our educators—commitment, quality, strength of character, and skill—and he serves as an excellent example to the students throughout the 13th Congressional District. I have valued his thoughts and advice on meeting the challenges of public education. I know that Lemont School District 210 is better for his leadership and I join with the students, faculty, and community in thanking him for his service and wishing him a happy and productive retirement.

HONORING GERALDINE (JERRY)
HENDERSON

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Geraldine (Jerry) Henderson, owner of Henderson Training and Consulting, in the Second Congressional District of West Virginia. She also owns and operates "A Governor's Inn," which is a bed and breakfast, in Buckhannon, West Virginia. Ms. Henderson has achieved the title of Women in Business Advocate of the Year. The West Virginia District of the United States Small Business Administration, a leader in the promotion and growth of our state, gives this award annually.

Ms. Henderson began Henderson Training and Consulting of West Virginia to give advice to business people. She leads classes throughout the state dealing with small business issues such as staff development, supervisory techniques and placing emphasis on hospitality and responsibility to the community. Ms. Henderson embodies the values that created the American success story: self-reliance, hard work, perseverance and optimism. I commend her for her contributions to the West Virginia economy.

Successful small businesses not only serve as the backbone of the economy, they anchor communities and promote civic pride. I urge my colleagues to join me in celebrating Ms. Henderson's tremendous achievement as the West Virginia Small Business Administration's Women in Business Advocate of the Year.

TRIBUTE TO STEN ERIC WILLIAM
CARLSON ON THE OCCASION OF
HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an extraordinary American and a distinguished Californian, Sten Eric William Carlson, who is celebrating his ninetieth birthday.

Born on June 27, 1912, in Fort William, Ontario, Canada, Sten Carlson is the son of Johanna and Pers, who migrated from Sweden to Canada in the late 1800s, settling on a farm in Saskatchewan. Sten left Canada for the United States in 1951 where he met Elizabeth, his wife of forty-five years. They are the proud parents of Eric, 44, and Frank, who died tragically at an early age.

An employee of United Airlines for more than twenty-five years, Sten Carlson retired in 1977. He also worked for MacDonald Aircraft, building the Mosquito aircraft, a premier low flying plane used in some of our nation's most critical missions.

Sten Carlson has always given generously of his time and his multitude of talents to the community, focusing much of his volunteer work on victim support groups. He is a lifetime member of Lodge 1781, IAM, and continues to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Retirees. A volunteer at Peninsula Medical Center for more than fifteen years, Sten has devoted many years of service to KQED.

Sten Carlson is a devoted husband and father with a strong moral sense of right and wrong. His lifetime of activities has centered on his family and his community. His is a life based on the most celebrated of American values . . . honesty, dependability, courage, loyalty, and love of family, friends and country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Sten Carlson a happy 90th birthday. We are a better community, a better country and a better people because of him and all he has done.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was unavoidably absent and missed rollcall votes 171, 172, 173. If present I would have voted "yea."

NATIONAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS' WEEK

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, during National Correctional Officers and Employees Week, to honor our correctional officers for the work they do to keep our families safe. We do not thank these men and women enough for their service to our communities.