

I hope all my colleagues join me in supporting our nation's teachers and other professional educators by cosponsoring the Teacher Tax Cut Act and the Professional Educators Tax Relief Act.

RECOGNIZING AMELIA M. ORTIZ

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, on January 13, 2003, a woman whom I was personally very close to, Amelia Martinez Ortiz passed away, leaving behind a legacy of service to the community. I rise today to honor the impressive contributions Amelia Martinez Ortiz made to her community and to this nation.

Amelia M. Ortiz was born in Mason City, Arizona, on February 9, 1929. She lived for over 48 years at the same house on Shadydale Avenue in the City of La Puente, in the San Gabriel Valley of California.

With the passing of her beloved husband, Jesus Ortiz, 27 years ago, Amelia became the sole provider for her family. Armed with only a second grade education, she was able to provide for her children—Martha, Andres, Diana, and Gloria—through her gift with the needle and thread. As a seamstress, Amelia created many wonderful designs, bringing joy to her clients, including myself. She helped them prepare for some of the most important days of their lives, like their weddings and quinceañeras. With her tenacity and talent, Amelia's success as an entrepreneur helped open doors for other Latinas throughout the community during a time when very few role models existed.

In addition, Amelia was a long-standing, dedicated parishioner of the St. Louis of France Catholic Church in La Puente. She was a member of the Legion of Mary, participating and organizing events that recognized the contributions of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Amelia also helped the parish raise funds for community events and assisted in organizing the traveling Virgin Mary for all in the community to enjoy.

Although Amelia has passed, her spirit remains in my heart and in many others. Through her dedication, hard work, and commitment to overcoming overwhelming obstacles in the hopes of providing for her family and community, Amelia Ortiz exemplified all that is possible in our country. A wife, a mother to four, a grandmother to 13, a great-grandmother to one, a friend to many, and my madrina (godmother), Amelia M. Ortiz will be greatly missed.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO SHERIFF
JOHN EBERLY

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize John Eberly of La Junta, Colorado. Mr. Eberly has been the Sheriff of Otero County for the past 31 years, where he has served his fellow citizens with the honesty, courage, and integrity

that Coloradans have come to expect from their law enforcement officers. Sheriff Eberly has recently retired, so I would like to reflect upon his extraordinary career and accomplishments.

Growing up in La Junta offered Sheriff Eberly the opportunity to know and understand the community in which he served. Throughout his eight terms in office, Sheriff Eberly has received broad support from the residents of Otero County who have reelected him repeatedly since 1970. Over the years, Sheriff Eberly has gained a reputation as a working sheriff who holds himself to the same standards as his deputies, never asking anything of anyone that he wouldn't ask of himself. Eberly has always led by example and has worked hard to protect his fellow citizens.

As a former law enforcement officer, I am well aware of the dangers and hazards our police officers face today. These individuals work long hours, weekends, and holidays to guarantee the safety of their fellow citizens. They work tirelessly, with great sacrifice to their personal and family lives, to ensure our freedoms remain strong in our homes and communities. Their service and dedication deserve the recognition and thanks of this body of Congress, and that is why I bring the name of Sheriff John Eberly to light today.

Mr. Speaker, it is with earnest respect that I recognize Sheriff John Eberly before this body of Congress and this nation. Sheriff Eberly has served his constituents with honor and integrity, qualities that will be his legacy. I commend John for his service and dedication, and I wish him all the best in his retirement.

GUEST CHAPLAIN FROM 19TH
DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

HON. TODD RUSSELL PLATTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome as Guest Chaplain on the floor of the House of Representatives an outstanding constituent and religious leader in my 19th Congressional District of Pennsylvania. The Reverend Sara "Sally" Gausmann. "Pastor Sally," joined by her husband, Reverend Paul Gausmann, represent a thriving religious community, Saint Paul Lutheran Church in York, Pennsylvania. Together, pastor Sally and Pastor Paul successfully aid in the needs of their congregation and I am pleased to thank them for their exemplary status as role models in my district.

Pastor Sally received her bachelor's degree from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 1981, before attending the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg in 1991. She then served at several churches including Grade Lutheran Church in Rochester, Pennsylvania from 1991–1993 and Faith Lutheran Church in Shell Rock, Iowa from 1993–1999 before serving as co-pastor of Saint Paul Lutheran Church. During her time at the Saint Paul Lutheran Church, Pastor Sally was the chaplain at the Pennsylvania State Sheriff's Convention in 2001 and is currently a member of the Global Mission Task Force for the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. As a husband

and wife team, Sally and Paul Gausmann offer a united approach to their religious teachings that has flourished within this congregation. They have two children, a son, William, who is age 17 and a daughter, Laura, who is age 15.

I am pleased to welcome Pastor Sally to the House Floor and would like to thank her for the inspirational prayer she presented this afternoon that reinforces the importance that our great nation exists as one "under God."

INTRODUCING THE COMMERCIAL
AIRLINE MISSILE DEFENSE ACT

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill that will correct a glaring vulnerability in our homeland defense. The "Commercial Airline Missile Defense Act" will fully fund the addition of electronic surface-to-air missile defense systems on all commercially scheduled flights on United States aircrafts.

Protecting American lives is the most fundamental job of the Federal Government. We must therefore eliminate every weakness that we see in our country's homeland defense. The vulnerability of our commercial air fleet to terrorist missile attack is not a hysterical hypothetical. It is a real and present danger.

Last November there was attempted missile attack on an Israeli airliner taking off from an airport in Kenya. Two surface-to-air missiles, also known SAMs, which can bring down large airplanes—commercial as well as military—from up to 30 miles from an airport were launched against an Israeli chartered jet airliner. It was only profound good luck—likely a flawed missile batch—that saved the plane and its hundreds of innocent passengers. Thankfully, last November's attack on the Israeli jetliner failed. We need to keep in mind, however, that the missile used in the Israeli attack one of the least sophisticated of the several types of SAMs that exist in the world today. It was a Soviet-era SA7, which was been sold globally since the end of the cold war. The other types of SAMs are much more advanced and much more effective.

SAMs were designed to be highly portable and are easily disassembled. As such, they are relatively easy to transport and smuggle. Terrorist could launch this five-foot long missile from near an airport and flee before anyone can detect them. Airplanes taking off with full and highly combustible fuel tanks are the most likely and deadly targets. The U.S. government must equip all its aircrafts with a defense system to protect and defend against this threat.

The United States provided Stingers—a type of SAM—to the Mujahadeen in the 1980s in Afghanistan. They were used with devastating affect against the Soviets. The Mujahadeen, who subsequently splintered into the Taliban and Al Qaeda, possessed at least a thousand Stingers that were never accounted for after the war ended in 1989. Soviet shoulder armed missiles, like the ones used in Kenya against the Israeli jetliner, are even far more abundant.

Tens of thousands of these missiles are out there. Although most are in state arsenals, thousands—including U.S. Stingers and Russian SA7s—are unaccounted for and feared to be in the hands of terrorists.

Few doubt that Al Qaeda does not possess large quantities of Russian SA7s and even more effective U.S. Stingers. A successful attack against a Boeing 747-400 with full capacity could cost almost five hundred lives. Aside from large-scale casualties, such a successful attack would have a devastating impact on the U.S. Aircraft industry, on travel and tourism, and on the entire economy. It would be a multifaceted catastrophe.

Now that we understand that pleas are vulnerable, the United States Government must take every step to protect and defend American citizens. The advanced technology needed to protect American commercial airplanes exists and is operation on U.S. military transports. The new system are advanced and are much more successful than the previous system of diversionary flares. The most modern systems, such as those installed on U.S. C17s and C5As, identify when a plane is threatened, detect the source of the threat, jam the guidance system of the incoming missiles and steer it off its flight path. Similar systems are currently used on low-altitude military aircrafts.

The rapid deployment of this system is essential for the safety of U.S. commercial flyers and is the clear responsibility of the U.S. Government to implement. I propose fully funding the retrofitting of SAM defensive systems and beginning that process this year.

No one in this body would question that preserving and protecting the people of the United States is our most important and sacred constitutional responsibility. At this critical time in our Nation's history we have two simultaneous crises and concerns: national security and economic security. The bill I introduce today addresses both of these issues. This legislation would take the preventive step of reducing risk to millions of travelers and create thousands of jobs through the retrofitting of the defensive technologies.

Additionally, this bill will boost our airline industry. Recent surveys have shown that between one-fifth to one-third of Americans are restricting their flying because of fears of terrorism. Our government and the airline industry are working closely together to restore full consumer confidence in the safety of our commercial air system. Implementing a robust and effective defense system for our commercial jet fleet would further accelerate the process of making Americans feel safer when they fly, and help the economic recovery of U.S. air carriers. The estimated cost of \$10.2 billion for a system of 6,800 commercial jets at a unit price of \$1.5 million will be offset by these economic benefits. The unit cost could drop even lower in mass production.

Mr. Speaker, I fully realize that a ten billion expenditure is significant. But it is not prohibitive. The only thing that would be prohibitive would be for this Congress to be negligent in our responsibility to protect the people of our great Nation. Let us not gather together in grief the morning after a catastrophe and wonder what we could have done to prevent it. We know what can be done. Let's do it.

HOPE PLUS SCHOLARSHIP ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Hope Plus Scholarship Act, which extends

the HOPE scholarship tax credit to K-12 education expenses. Under this bill, parents could use the HOPE Scholarship to pay for private or religious school tuition or to offset the cost of home schooling. In addition, under the bill, all Americans could use the Hope Scholarship to make cash or in-kind donations to public schools. Thus, the Hope Scholarship could help working parents finally afford to send their child to a private school, while other parents could take advantage of the Hope credit to help purchase new computers for their children's school. I urge my colleagues to join with me in returning education resources to the American people by cosponsoring my Hope Plus Scholarship Act.

INTRODUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the International Environmental Defense Act of 2003.

The purpose of this bill is to clarify the authority of the Secretary of Defense to respond to environmental emergencies. It is cosponsored by my colleagues from Colorado, Representative Joel Hafley. I greatly appreciate his support.

In times of natural disaster or other emergencies, the United States for decades has come to the aid of those in need—whether the crisis is the result of an earthquake in Turkey, an erupting volcano in South America, or deadly floods in some other part of the world.

When the need arises, the U.S. Government provides humanitarian assistance through the U.S. Agency for International Development, the State Department, the Defense Department, and other federal agencies. It also contracts with private voluntary agencies to provide such assistance and coordinates the U.S. response with that of other countries.

The American military has an outstanding record of participation in these activities. All Americans take pride in the humanitarian assistance provided by the men and women of our armed services.

I strongly support this policy. It is the right thing to do, and in the best interests of our country as well as of people everywhere. Humanitarian assistance is critical to help communities or regions or whole countries recover from devastating natural or man-made events.

But global emergencies come in other forms as well—including environmental emergencies such as oil or chemical spills or other similar occurrences. They may not have the immediate impact on people of homes destroyed in an earthquake or of crops lost to drought. But by polluting waterways, killing fish or other species, or contaminating the air, water, or land, environmental disasters can have devastating effects on the health and well-being of people, wildlife, and ecosystems.

So, wherever they occur, environmental emergencies have the potential to affect the national interest of the United States. And our government—including our military forces—should have the same ability to respond as in the case of other emergencies.

Current law authorizes the Department of Defense to use its funds for the transport of humanitarian relief, allowing U.S. military personnel to help provide foreign countries with emergency assistance such as helicopter transport, temporary water supplies, and road and bridge repair. For example, U.S. military personnel were part of the U.S. response to Hurricane Mitch in Central America and recent earthquakes in El Salvador and India.

But when it comes to environmental emergencies, under current law the military now has less ability to help. Those are the situations that are addressed by the bill I am introducing today.

The International Environmental Defense Act would fill a gap in current law so U.S. military transport could be used not only for humanitarian, but also for environmental emergencies. The bill does not require that this be done—but it would authorize the Defense Department to do so, just as current law authorizes but does not require the transport of humanitarian assistance to respond to other emergencies.

As an illustration of the limitations of the current law, consider a recent case about which I have first-hand knowledge.

In 2001, there was a very serious oil spill in the Pacific Ocean that threatened to contaminate the Galapagos Islands. The government of Ecuador and people everywhere were very concerned that this could imperil the world-famous wildlife of the islands and the rest of that unique ecosystem. They hastened to organize a response.

As part of that response, the Ecuadoran Government was in contact with a company in Colorado that makes a product to absorb oil from sea water. But complications arose, and the company contacted my office to see if we could help resolve them.

As we explored the situation, we learned that while the government of Ecuador was interested in acquiring the Colorado company's product, they also wanted to arrange for the United States to transport it to Ecuador by military aircraft, because that would be quicker and cheaper than other alternatives. But when we contacted the Defense Department to see if there was a possibility that could be arranged, we learned about the limitations of current law. In short, we learned that while military transport might be possible to provide humanitarian relief, that option was not available to respond to an environmental emergency.

The bill I am introducing today would change that—not by requiring the military to provide transport in such a case, but by providing that option in case the U.S. Government should decide it would be appropriate. Perhaps this would have been useful authority for the military to have when the Prestige broke up off the northwest coast of Spain in November 2002.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a far-reaching bill. But I think it would provide useful authority for our country to respond to environmental problems that, ultimately, can affect us and the rest of the world.