

for Brawley Steel, Wilson Steel, Bechtel Power Corp., and finally Saafco Inc. In addition, he taught the Local 229 Ironworkers Apprenticeship Classes for 18 years, and served as Local 229 Trustee, Executive Board Member, JATC Committee Chairman, Vice President, President and Business Representative. He was the Building and Construction Trades Delegate for 16 years and the San Diego and Imperial Labor Council Delegate for 12 years. For 18 years, he was one of three delegates from Local 229 to the District Council of Iron Workers of the State of California and Vicinity, and Contract Negotiator until he retired in May 2002.

Charley has been a member of Johns for 18 years, working to help the Leukemia Society and raising money for medical research. He makes his home in Fletcher Hills with his wife, Sue, and shares in the activities of their 10 grandchildren. Sue and Charley are active members of the San Diego County Orchid Society and the San Diego Horticultural Society, and he has written the monthly orchid column in the California Garden Magazine for 30 years.

Charles R. Fouquette exemplifies the high values, standards, and principles of the late John S. Lyons. I offer my congratulations to him on his recognition as the 2003 Johns "Fellowship Award winner."

INTRODUCING THE SOCIAL SECURITY EARNINGS TEST REPEAL ACT OF 2003

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will allow our nation's seniors to keep more of their hard-earned money.

Many seniors prefer to remain active in their retirement, even though they may have chosen to leave their career jobs. Some seniors find second careers later in life which enrich their lives and supplement their income.

Unfortunately, the Social Security Earnings Test prohibited these individuals from receiving full Social Security benefits if their incomes exceeded a certain amount. The earnings test was especially unfair for seniors who relied on that additional income to supplement their Social Security checks, because they would, in effect, lose half of their Social Security benefit.

Recognizing the unfairness of this situation, the Congress passed, and on April 7, 2000, President Clinton signed H.R. 5, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act. This law eliminated the Social Security earnings test for recipients between the "full retirement age" (currently age 65 and eight months) and age 70.

While this law was a great victory for seniors who chose to work once they reached retirement age, it does not eliminate the earnings test for seniors who choose to retire early at age 62. These individuals, who might also rely on employment income to supplement their Social Security checks, are simply out of luck.

This situation unfairly penalizes many seniors who need to continue to work after they reach retirement age. The Bureau of Labor Services compiled an experimental Consumer

Price Index for the elderly, which found that the prices of goods bought by the general public rose by 66.5 percent, while it rose by 72.6 percent for seniors. This difference of over six percent is significant for someone living on a fixed income, as most seniors do. By penalizing individuals who work in addition to receiving Social Security benefits, we are hurting those most in need of assistance. Seniors should not be forced to choose between their Social Security benefits and earned income.

Additionally, forcing seniors to leave the workforce early signifies a valuable loss to our country in terms of skilled and experienced workers. More than ever America is in need of skilled workers. We should be encouraging these individuals to continue contributing to our economy through their tax dollars, and the additional goods they can consume thanks to their added income.

That is why I am introducing the Social Security Earnings Test Repeal Act of 2003. This legislation would amend title II of the Social Security Act by removing the limitation on the amount of outside income which an individual may earn while receiving benefits under such title.

Social Security is a right earned by workers through their hard work. The Social Security Earnings Test Repeal Act of 2003 will allow retirees to rejoin the workforce without the fear of a loss of benefits. We have no right to forbid or difficult someone's desire to work. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF JAMES GEORGE LEATHERS FOR HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE AND DEDICATION TO HIS COMMUNITY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my sadness regarding the recent passing of a leader in our community, James George Leathers.

Born in San Francisco on September 4, 1918, Jim passed away on Monday, September 1, 2003, with his wife Dorothy Worth Leathers and his family by his side in Woodland, California. Jim graduated from the University of California at Davis in 1939. After successfully beginning both their farming operation and their family, Jim and Dorothy built their dream home in Woodland in 1950, planted their garden and joined the community. Jim and Dorothy had 5 sons and 1 daughter and were blessed with 20 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren.

Jim was loved in Woodland for his unstinting community dedication. His service encompassed youth activities, both sports and scouting and included the chairmanship of the Woodland Memorial Hospital Foundation board. He dedicated himself to the agricultural community as well and was instrumental in forming the Farmers Rice Cooperative and the California Rice Research Committee. In 1968 he was named the Agriculture Businessman of the Year for Yolo County and later served for 5 years on the California Air Resources Board during the Jerry Brown administration.

Mr. Speaker, Jim's generosity and example of service inspires us all and it is appropriate

that we celebrate and honor his life. He will be missed in our community but his dedication to others and his life example will never be forgotten.

HONORING JOAN McCAFFERTY KUPERSMITH

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Joan Anne McCaffery Kupersmith of Wilton, Connecticut, who will be feted at Patsy's Restaurant in New York City on Sept. 18, 2003, on the occasion of her fortieth birthday.

Mrs. Kupersmith was born in Teaneck, New Jersey on Sept. 18, 1963, and was raised with her five terrific siblings in Harrington Park, New Jersey. She is a graduate of Boston College and Harvard Law School. An accomplished attorney, Mrs. Kupersmith has chosen to represent children in the courts of her community, providing expert counsel as a court-appointed attorney for children who need and deserve sage support as they navigate our legal system.

Mrs. Kupersmith's work is made possible in part by the strong support of her husband, Ken, and her loving children, Ryan, Caroline and Nicholas. Public service is a tradition in the Kupersmith and McCaffery families, and I applaud Joan Anne's humanitarianism.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to acknowledge such a fine individual, and I am certain the entire House of Representatives joins me in extending our very best wishes to Joan Anne and her entire family at this festive time.

TRIBUTE TO HAROLD GEBHARD

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of this Nation's most distinguished and dedicated Postmasters, Mr. Harold L. Gebhard. After 50 years of faithful service to our Nation, the past 28 years of which he has served the Northwest Florida communities through the United States Postal Service, Mr. Sutton deserves to be recognized as an outstanding public servant.

Mr. Gebhard began his devotion to our beloved Nation in 1952, when he enlisted in the United States Air Force. He continued with valor in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969 and was awarded both a Bronze Star and a Vietnam Cross of Gallantry when he returned home. Mr. Gebhard served 22½ years in the armed services, achieving the rank of Chief Master Sgt., E-9.

In 1975, Mr. Gebhard came to our community and began as a mail handler in the Pensacola Mail Processing Plant. A short 5 years later, he was promoted Postmaster in McDavid, FL and in 1983; Mr. Gebhard was again promoted to Superintendent of Postal Operations in Cantonment, FL. For the past 8 years he has kept watch as Postmaster and continues his tenure there today. Over the

course of his remarkable career, Mr. Gebhard has remained focused on maintaining impeccable customer relations while serving area residents.

Upon his 50th anniversary of Federal service, his wife Leigh Gebhard, and both those he has helped serve and those he has worked with, appreciate and respect the work he has accomplished over the years. I feel confident in saying that Mr. Gebhard truly has an impact in the lives of those around him.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my sincere and heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Harold L. Gebhard on his 50th anniversary in serving the public. For the past 50 years, he has dedicated himself towards helping the residents of Northwest Florida and for that we will be forever grateful. Mr. Speaker, on this such occasion, we honor one of America's greatest public servants.

DR. JOSE LUIS GARCIA PANEQUE—
CUBAN SURGEON, HUMAN
RIGHTS ADVOCATE, AND POLITICAL PRISONER

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I come today to the floor of the House to speak about Cuban political prisoner Dr. Jose Luis Garcia Paneque, Surely few of my colleagues are aware of the case of Dr. Jose Luis Garcia Paneque, but that does not make his imprisonment by the Castro dictatorship any less brutal and inhumane, or any less deserving of our attention.

Mr. Speaker, more of my colleagues need to know the names of Cuba's many political prisoners.

Dr. Garcia Paneque is 38 years old, married, with four young children. He is a talented medical professional with an entire life and future ahead of him. However, he was born after the Castro dictatorship's take-over and into the totalitarian nightmare that some Castro sycophants say has improved the lives of the Cuban people. Dr. Garcia Paneque does not see it that way, because he is not free. He is a young doctor in jail because of his belief in freedom.

Dr. Garcia Paneque was arrested, along with more than 100 others, in the March 2003 crackdown, on the internal opposition. What was his crime? He provided free medical care independent of the government, opened a private library, defended human rights, and worked with the independent media.

Imagine, Mr. Speaker, there are Members of Congress who have dined with Castro and actually point to the dictatorship's health care system as a model, yet I am sure they do not even know the name of this man who was arrested because he was the leader of a regional branch of the unofficial Independent Medical Association. Dr. Garcia Paneque gave medical treatment to Cubans who were denied that treatment by the system run by the dictatorship.

You see, Mr. Speaker, the Castro dictatorship uses access to medical treatment, food, education, and other things we take for granted, as a tool of political control. Dr. Garcia Paneque's association of medical profes-

sionals is nothing more than a group independent of the government controlled medical association. On Capitol Hill, we meet with dozens of associations representing medical professionals, but under the Castro dictatorship, there can only be one medical association in Cuba and it is controlled by the dictatorship.

Dr. Garcia Paneque was detained March 18, sentenced on April 4 to 24 years in prison, and transferred on May 17 to Villa Clara Provincial Prison with his hands and feet tied behind his back. It was a 7-hour ride by truck. According to what his wife has been told by his jailers, he was transferred to a prison 300 miles from where she lives to deny her and their four children regular visitation.

Dr. Garcia Paneque's wife, Yamile Llanez, is a lawyer and also a member of the opposition movement. Because of her activities in support of human rights, she has been stripped of her job and her food ration card. She and her children are dependent on charity to survive.

Dr. Garcia Paneque has lost 30 pounds since he was detained on March 18. He is currently held in something worse than solitary confinement: a dark 2.5 by 5 foot punishment cell. In his cell, he cannot move or exercise, and there are absolutely no sanitary facilities. He suffers from currently untreated asthma, allergies, and skin fungus.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to know Mr. Garcia Paneque's name. And know the name of his wife, Yamile Llanez. I ask Members to learn the names of the other political prisoners I have spoken about from the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives: Ibarra, Rivero, Leyva, Antunez, Espinosa, Roque. I ask Members who visit with Castro to also raise the names of these brave political prisoners, to demand to visit them, and to demand their release.

Mr. Speaker, I ask for my colleagues to believe what Dr. Garcia Paneque believes: that Cuba should be free.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING UNITED NATIONS MEMBERSHIP FOR TAIWAN

HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution calling for Taiwan to become a member of the United Nations.

The resolution states that it is the sense of Congress that "(1) Taiwan and its 23 million people deserve full and equal membership in the United Nations and other international organizations; and (2) the United States should take a leading role in gaining international support for Taiwan's participation in these organizations."

Taiwan, a strong advocate of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and a bastion of economic strength, deserves the same privileges as all other thriving democracies. With the election of its President, Mr. Chen Shui-bian, in a free and fair election in March 2000, Taiwan continues to strengthen its democracy by improving safeguards for human rights and contributing to the international community.

Taiwan was driven out of the United Nations in 1971 and, since then, has continually tried

to regain admission. The People's Republic of China (PRC) has blocked those efforts. The PRC, one of the five permanent Security Council members, which determines new UN membership, continually pressures other nations not to support Taiwan's membership.

The 23 million people of Taiwan have much to contribute, both intellectually and financially, to many international organizations, including the UN. Clearly, the people of Taiwan should also benefit from any positive work these organizations engage in as well.

It is unreasonable for the people of Taiwan to be excluded from full participation in international institutions. Denying Taiwan membership in the United Nations and other international organizations, such as the World Health Organization, is unacceptable.

For the past several years, both Houses of the U.S. Congress have consistently introduced and passed legislation supporting Taiwan's meaningful participation and membership into the United Nations and the World Health Organization. This important legislation restates our support and our commitment to the progress of Taiwan's democracy.

I believe that Taiwan's full and equal membership in the United Nations and other international organizations is long overdue. Now is the time to right the wrong committed in 1971, by granting Taiwan the status it deserves.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STRENGTHENING SCIENCE AT THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ACT

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce legislation that will strengthen the role that science plays within the Environmental Protection Agency. This legislation is precisely the same bill that passed the House in April of last year (H.R. 64 in the 107th Congress).

I introduce this today on the heels of the Administration's renewed interest in passing legislation that would promote EPA to a cabinet-level department. I still support efforts to elevate EPA without significant structural changes, yet I strongly believe that the scientific and regulatory arms of the Agency should be more integrated. The Administration has recently shown a new willingness to accept some restructuring proposals as part of legislation to elevate EPA. In fact, during a recent congressional hearing the acting EPA Administrator testified that, "the time has come to establish EPA as a permanent member of the Cabinet, modernizing its structure in a straightforward way to ensure it can respond effectively to future environmental challenges."

If restructuring proposals are included in elevation legislation, then the most fundamental and straightforward reform needed at the EPA is to strengthen the role that science plays in the Agency's regulatory decision-making process. Science must infuse this process. Too often it is used as a cudgel to win a legal battle, or as an afterthought to the regulatory process, rather than as the foundation of a regulatory decision.