

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRANSFER TO PUBLIC PRINTER OF AUTHORITY OVER INDIVIDUALS RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARING CONGRESSIONAL RECORD INDEXES

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 7, 2003

Mr. NEY. Madam Speaker, the attached letter should have been submitted for the RECORD during consideration of H.R. 3229, a bill to amend Title 44, U.S. Code, to transfer authority over the individuals responsible for preparing indexes of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to the Public Printer, on October 7, 2003. Please submit this letter for the RECORD.

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC PRINTER,
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE,
Washington, DC, October 1, 2003.

Hon. ROBERT W. NEY,
Chairman, Joint Committee on Printing, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

Attn: Ms. Maria Robinson, JCP Staff Director.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am transmitting herewith legislative language to amend section 902 of Title 44, U.S. Code, to transfer control over the employees of the Congressional Record Index Office from the Joint Committee on Printing (JCP) to the Government Printing Office (GPO). The indexers create the semimonthly and session indexes to the Congressional Record.

Under current law, which with only minor revisions antedates GPO's organic legislation, the Printing Act of 1895, the JCP "shall designate to the Public Printer competent persons" to prepare the index and "shall fix the compensation to be paid by the Public Printer for that work . . ." In addition to appointing the indexers and establishing their pay, the JCP sets other employment rules, including rules for promotions and the accumulation and use of leave, and maintains sole authority to terminate the indexers as at-will employees and to fill any vacancies. The indexers are under the congressional retirement system. Their compensation, benefits, and related office expenses are charged directly to the Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation, included in Title I of the annual Legislative Branch Appropriations Acts.

The indexers have long been recognized as congressional employees. However, their work is not directly supervised by the JCP. Instead, supervision of the indexers has been provided by a director named by the JCP (the former director retired in 2001, and since then the indexers have been supervised by a deputy director with no clear line of supervision above her). GPO provides administrative support for the indexers. GPO pays the indexers from the GPO Revolving Fund (the Fund is reimbursed by the Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation) and maintains records on their employment as

indexers. The indexers are housed in buildings under GPO's control and subject to GPO rules and regulations regarding security and related matters. GPO provides equipment for the indexers, and they work on a day-to-day basis directly with GPO's production staff in compiling and publishing the Congressional Record Index.

The JCP was able to manage the indexers while the Committee itself was funded and maintained a professional staff. Since fiscal year 1999, however, when the JCP was defunded, it has been unable to manage them. The transfer we are requesting will relieve the JCP of the administrative burden of managing a daily production activity that more appropriately belongs with GPO. At the same time, it will preserve the JCP's control over the Congressional Record Index itself. Most importantly, it will correct an anomalous employment situation. We have taken care to craft legislative language to accomplish the transfer with a minimal impact on the Office employees. We have also taken care to ensure that the transfer will be transparent to the users of the Congressional Record Index in Congress, throughout the Government, and among the public. We have briefed the Index Office employees on this legislative proposal.

Under section 1(a) of the accompanying language, the Public Printer will continue to be responsible for the production of the Congressional Record Index in the form and manner directed by the Joint Committee on Printing, as provided in current law.

Section 1(b) will amend current law to transfer all of the employees of the Congressional Record Index office to the control of the GPO on the effective date of enactment. With the transfer, the employees will be placed in the civil service with the GPO and will be covered by the laws and regulations governing GPO employment. Their contributions and service time accumulated under retirement systems as congressional employees will be fully credited. They will retain their current rates of pay, and their future pay will be subject to pay systems governing other GPO employees. They will be allowed to carry accumulated annual and sick leave with them with subsequent use subject to GPO regulations. The Congressional Record Index Office will be assigned to the appropriate GPO organization and subject to GPO management direction, although any future changes to the form and production of the Congressional Record Index will be subject to the review and approval of the JCP. The indexers will continue to be funded by the Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation, so there will be no appropriations impact. There will be no interruption to their work on the index; as a result, the effects of the transfer will be invisible to Congressional Record Index users in Congress, the Government, and throughout the public.

I respectfully request the Committee's support for this measure, and would be pleased to provide any additional information you may need.

Sincerely,

BRUCE R. JAMES,
Public Printer.

RECOGNIZING RITA Z. SCHNIDT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 8, 2003

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise today to recognize Rita Z. Schnidt of Arvada, Colorado for her decades of tireless volunteerism and political activism.

This September, Ms. Schnidt, or Rita Z. as many call her, was given the Eleanor Roosevelt Award by the Jefferson County Democrats for her outstanding achievements in her community. This award is not presented to just anyone. The honoree must display tremendous leadership, strong dedication to community issues, and years of activity in the Jefferson County Democratic Party. Not only does Rita have these qualities, but she has a very unique attitude that has been described by many who work with her as "contagious enthusiasm."

Ms. Schnidt began her political career in 1974 volunteering on the campaign of former Congressman and Senator Tim Wirth. Initially she became involved because she enjoyed talking with people and discussing important issues in her community. What started as simple campaign work soon grew into much more activism. By the end of the 70s, Rita had been elected as Secretary and Treasurer of her State Senate and State House district committee and began managing local campaigns.

As wonderful a campaign manager and volunteer as she was, Ms. Schnidt found that no political life can be complete without running for office. From 1977 to 1979, Ms. Schnidt served on the Arvada City Council. She also ran for her State House seat in 1982 and Jefferson County Clerk and Recorder in 1998.

There is no doubt that Rita Schnidt is an outstanding political figure in Jefferson County and the City of Arvada, but Rita's greatness and generosity did not stop after the November elections. During her years in Arvada she also served on the Board of Foothills Mental Health Foundation and acted as community liaison for the Arvada Police D.A.R.E. Project for drug awareness. In 1983, recognizing her outreach to the community and leadership skills, she was named Arvada Woman of the Year.

Through the years Rita Z. has been dedicated to basic principles of equality, diversity, and democracy. She remains an active member of city, county, and state politics. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to rise today in support of this year's Jefferson County Democrats Eleanor Roosevelt Award winner, Ms. Rita Z. Schnidt, an extraordinary volunteer and community leader, a great mother and grandmother, and a tremendous Coloradan.

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