

be here tomorrow thanks to early breast cancer detection and treatment.

FALLEN PATRIOTS TAX RELIEF  
ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 29, 2003*

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a bill scheduled to be heard today regarding the military death benefit paid to survivors of military personnel killed in the line of duty. Under current law, the military death benefit provides a surviving spouse \$6,000, of which \$3,000 is subject to federal tax.

At the tragic time of a death of a service member, it is an unimaginable loss to the family and represents the greatest sacrifice to our nation. To avoid adding insult to injury, we must make the Military Death Benefit fully tax-exempt. Families of our patriots should not be penalized on a benefit meant to express the nation's gratitude. The death benefit has historically been exempt from this taxation, yet an oversight in the tax code—after the benefit was raised to \$6,000 in 1991—left half of the payment subject to taxation.

The death benefit was designed to assist surviving family with financial needs following the death of the service member. Unfortunately, the current benefit is not sufficient. We should increase this benefit to \$12,000 to cover additional expenses. This bill would make this benefit retroactive for military personnel who have died in battle since September 11, 2001.

As of this morning, 232 American servicemen and women have died in battle in Iraq after the end to major combat operations in Iraq was announced. This represents 232 cases where a grieving family has had to sustain itself financially with limited funds while suffering the loss of a loved one who will not return home. Let us not let partisan politics get in the way of doing what is right for our fallen soldiers.

WELCOMING PRESIDENT CHEN  
SHUI-BIAN OF TAIWAN TO  
UNITED STATES

SPEECH OF

**HON. DAVID WU**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 29, 2003*

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 302, and urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

For the past half-century, Taiwan and its people have been one of the United States' most reliable friends and allies in Asia, and around the world. Our two nations have cultivated many mutual interests, including trade, cultural, security in the Western Pacific Ocean, and democratic development.

On October 31st, President Chen Shui-bian will be visiting the United States. On behalf of the American people, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to the President, and

hope that our two nations will continue to deepen various aspects of our relationship.

As we host President Chen, I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution, and urge Congress and the Administration to support Taiwan's efforts to secure meaningful participation in international organizations and forums.

IN HONOR OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF PEARL BUCK CENTER, EUGENE, OREGON

**HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 30, 2003*

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct privilege and honor to congratulate the Pearl Buck Center in Eugene, Oregon on 50 years of supporting families with special needs in Lane County.

When the Pearl Buck Center opened in 1953, it was one of the only educational programs in Oregon providing educational services to children with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities. The Pearl Buck Center has continued this tradition of leadership in the community, the state, and the nation, providing vocational training, employment, education, and case management services to people with developmental disabilities.

Annually, the Pearl Buck Center provides services to over 400 individuals with developmental disabilities and their children. Since it was founded, the Pearl Buck Center has helped thousands of adults and children meet the challenges of their disabilities and find opportunities to succeed in school and on the job; to succeed as parents and as self-sufficient individuals; and to contribute to the community and society.

I would like to acknowledge the vision and dedication that characterizes this organization. I hope that all Americans will reflect on the commitment of the staff and volunteers of the Pearl Buck Center and on the struggles and successes of the individuals they serve.

October 2003 has been designated as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. In this special month, I extend my deepest appreciation and thanks to the Pearl Buck Center for their efforts, past and present, to help individuals with disabilities more fully realize their abilities, potential, and independence. We are all richer for your half-century of service.

RECOGNIZING THE 2D ANNUAL YOUTH CONFERENCE OF THE ASIAN LIVER CENTER AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 30, 2003*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the 2d annual Youth Conference on Asian and Pacific Islanders' Health being organized by the Asian Liver Center at Stanford University on November 7 through November 9, 2003.

During this 3-day conference, more than 100 high school students and their families from throughout California will discuss a variety of health issues of particular concern to the API community. These issues include youth identity, teen smoking and cultural competency in medicine. A major issue to be addressed is the high vulnerability that Asian and Pacific Islanders have to hepatitis B and its related effect of liver cancer.

The Asian and Pacific Islanders community comprise over 11% of my home state of California. Unfortunately, many Americans of Asian and Pacific Island background have no awareness of their heightened risk of acquiring hepatitis B. While the rate of hepatitis B infection for all Americans is less than .5%, for API Americans the rate is 7%—14 times higher.

The symptoms of this illness are often not apparent to the individual until the irreversible effects of liver cancer become evident. This silent killer is often spread from unsuspecting mothers to newborn infants at childbirth. It is also spread through child-to-child infection as result of contact with skin sores, small breaks in the skin or such activities as sharing a toothbrush. Luckily, the spread of this awful disease can be prevented through a simple series of vaccinations. But, people need to be educated about the need for such vaccinations.

A major goal of the Youth Conference is to create a cadre of emissaries to go out into the API community to increase awareness of this vulnerability to hepatitis B and liver cancer and to educate the populace on means of prevention and treatment. Many in the API community are not aware that there is a vaccine that offers full protection from hepatitis B. Many are not vaccinated because they simply are not aware of the problem. The unnecessary deaths from this disease must be stopped now.

The Asian Liver Center has it right—increased knowledge is the key to prevention. I commend the students and their families for taking time out of their busy lives to become more knowledgeable about these important health issues and to help spread their knowledge throughout their communities. I also commend the staff of the Asian Liver Center at Stanford University for organizing this conference and for their mission of addressing the high incidence of hepatitis B in the API population through outreach, education and research. This program is clearly one that should be emulated by many other organizations around the country.

REGARDING INDIAN RIVER  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 30, 2003*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay commendation to Indian River Community College, which serves the east coast of Central Florida and many of my constituents. The school has developed an innovative program to combat a local, state and national problem—the critical teacher shortage. Indian River Community College pioneered the "Bridge to Teaching" program to recruit and train college graduates to embark on careers in teaching.

In addition to the praise of local school officials benefiting from the recent graduates, the accelerated teacher certification program has been selected as a national model of "best practices" for colleges throughout the country by the National Council for Continuing Education and Training.

For their commitment to quality programs and responsiveness to the needs of the community, Indian River Community College and its President, Ed Massey, deserve the congratulations of Congress.

TRIBUTE TO THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF BAUSCH AND LOMB

**HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 30, 2003*

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 150th anniversary of Bausch & Lomb—a community institution, an outstanding corporation, and a global innovator.

In 1853, a German immigrant named John Jacob Bausch started a modest business selling optical goods. He got off to an uneven start, and borrowed \$60 in capital from a close friend, Henry Lomb. Bausch promised to make Lomb a full partner if the business prospered. Indeed, the business grew beyond its founders' wildest dreams. Today, Bausch & Lomb is the premiere name, recognized around the world, for excellence in eye health products.

Headquartered in my district of Rochester, New York, Bausch & Lomb employs over 11,000 people and generates annual revenues of almost \$2 billion. B&L, as it is affectionately known, is also deeply committed to our community and its future. More than 5,000 schools nationwide participate in the Bausch & Lomb Science Award, which is bestowed on selected high school sophomores for excellence in science. Along with a medal, winners are eligible for a Bausch & Lomb scholarship for study at the University of Rochester, and associated paid summer internships in B&L labs. The B&L science awards and scholarships promote science scholarship and foster the next generation of scientists and researchers.

At its facilities in Rochester, B&L has created some of the most innovative optical equipment and goods in the world. During World War I, B&L produced the special sunglasses for military men. B&L researchers invented the first optical-quality glass. And in 1971, Bausch & Lomb introduced the first soft contact lenses, a product that has improved the quality of life for millions of people around the globe. Today, tens of millions depend upon high quality B&L products to improve and maintain one of their most precious assets: their vision.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply proud of the fine work done by my constituents at Bausch & Lomb every day. One's sight is a precious thing, and it speaks volumes that more people entrust their vision to Bausch & Lomb than to any other company in the world. I salute Bausch & Lomb—company CEO Ronald Zarrella, his leadership team, and every one of his outstanding employees—on their 150th anniversary. We all look forward with great anticipation to seeing what the coming years bring to and from Bausch & Lomb.

EULOGY FOR CORINNE MICHEL

**HON. STENY H. HOYER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 30, 2003*

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, it's with great regret that I come to the floor today to note the untimely passing on October 22 of Corinne Michel, a friend of so many of us privileged to serve in this House, and the wife of former House Minority Leader Bob Michel of Illinois.

As Mike Johnson, a former Chief of Staff for Bob Michel, told Copley News Service: "[Corinne] was never affected by all the lime-light. Bob used to say people in politics have their feet planted in midair. Hers were always planted firmly on the ground."

And as Millie Arends, the city treasurer in the Michel's home city of Peoria, Illinois, noted: "She was well-read on everything. Her husband said she was one his best assets."

Corinne Michel was born in Onida, South Dakota, and was raised in St. Paul, Minnesota, Pittsburgh and Peoria, Illinois, where her father managed the Livestock Market News. In 1943, she graduated from Peoria High School, and then met Bob when the two sang in the a cappella choir at Bradley University.

Corinne was an accomplished classical pianist who graduated with two music degrees and then taught music in the Peoria public schools. In 1948, the Michels were married and eight years later Bob was elected to the House, where he served with distinction for 38 years—including 14 as the Republican leader—before retiring in 1995.

While Bob served his constituents and nation in Washington, Corinne raised the couple's four children back in Peoria. She was active in Peoria Players and Central Illinois Youth Symphony and helped bring opera and ballet to Peoria. She also represented Bob at events in his home District.

In Washington, she was active in Congressional spouse organizations and chaired the Republican Women's Federal Forum.

The Michels' son Scott told the Chicago Tribune: "Music played a huge role in her [his mother's] life and she passed it on [to her children]. I would come home from school and there would be classical music on the stereo and she would be playing the piano."

And said our colleague RAY LAHOOD, a former Chief of Staff for Leader Michel and the successor in his seat, said: "She was one of the loveliest persons I have ever met." A sentiment that all who knew her shared.

He continued: "She never sought the lime-light . . . but her husband sought her advice and she gave it to him in her own quiet way."

Mr. Speaker, I want to extend my sincerest condolences to my friend, the former Republican Leader, who not only is a great credit to this institution but also an American of unquestioned patriotism and courage.

Bob Michel, who was wounded as an infantryman in World War II and received two Bronze Stars, the Purple Heart and four battle stars, laid his life on the line so that succeeding generations could experience the freedoms that we enjoy—and too often take for granted—today.

Let's recognize today that while Bob Michel soared to great heights throughout his career, he always had a steady, able partner on that

journey—his beloved wife, Corinne, whose loss we mourn today.

I also want to express my condolences to the Michels' sons, Scott, Bruce and Robin; daughter, Laurie; and three grandsons. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

VETERANS HEALTH CARE FACILITIES CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 29, 2003*

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1720, the Veterans Health Care Facilities Capital Improvement Act. I would like to recognize the very necessary and hard work of my colleagues on the House Veterans Affairs Committee, from both sides of the aisle, and our Chairman Congressman ROB SIMMONS of Connecticut, on this critical issue.

H.R. 1720, as amended, authorizes a new approach to funding VA construction after the Department addresses a number of compelling needs identified throughout the system. Through this measure we have outlined Congressional priorities for the types of projects VA should fund, but would allow VA to identify the locations where there is the most need.

I am particularly interested in VA's plan to address the needs of veterans in far south Texas. Parts of my district have the worst access to hospital care in the country. I am especially pleased that the amended version of H.R. 1720 contains a section that authorizes the development of a strategy by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to address the great need for hospital care for veterans who reside in far south Texas. Under H.R. 1720, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs would be required to submit findings to the Senate and House of Representatives no later than January 31, 2004.

Mr. Speaker, it is shameful that veterans in McAllen, Texas, just east of my district, must travel up to 6 hours one-way to reach the San Antonio VA Medical Center. Data collected for VA's Capital Assets Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) process showed that veterans in one of the area's markets—the Valley Coastal Bend—have the worst access to acute inpatient hospital care of veterans in any other VA market in the United States.

The time has passed for us to address this crisis in access. This bill will put VA on a sure path for doing that, and I will eagerly await the opportunity to respond to VA's recommendations for increasing access for South Texas veterans. This bill is an important step to ensure that VA keeps its promise to veterans.

80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 30, 2003*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, this week the Turkish Republic, an original participating State of the Organization for Security