

A BILL TO EXPAND THE TAX BENEFITS FOR THE NEW YORK LIBERTY ZONE

**HON. AMO HOUGHTON**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 18, 2003*

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, today I am joined by my colleague from New York, Mr. RANGEL, in introducing a bill to extend the period that the New York Liberty Zone bonds can be issued by New York State and New York City, and to make other changes that would enhance the tax provisions that were included in the original New York Liberty Zone Benefits legislation. The provisions were part of the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002, enacted on March 9, 2002, in order to aid in the rebuilding of downtown New York City after the devastation caused by the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack.

A loud thank you to the Congress for passing the original legislation. The benefits contained in the package were important and needed. The Liberty bonds have been an invaluable tool for those developments already assisted. They have been utilized, but not to the full extent, primarily due to the economic downturn that was underway and accelerated after the tragedy. While the market for new commercial real estate has been weak, it is estimated the bond allocation for residential projects will be exhausted by the end of next year.

The changes requested include: (1) extend the Liberty bonds expiration date to December 31, 2009 from December 31, 2004 to reflect a more realistic time line for the recovery of the commercial real estate market in New York City, (2) increase the amount of the Liberty bonds that can be used for residential development projects from \$1.6 billion to \$3.0 billion to provide more flexibility to accommodate greater than expected demand for new housing in Lower Manhattan, (3) eliminate the 100,000 square foot minimum for non-public utility projects outside the Liberty Zone, which has greatly hindered the development of much needed smaller utility projects, and (4) a technical correction to Section 1400L(c), which would permit eligible entities to "opt out" of the mandatory provision stating that taxpayers must depreciate their Liberty Zone leasehold improvements over an accelerated five year term. The latter change would be retroactive and would be consistent with other similar accelerated depreciation laws, and allows taxpayers to depreciate property over the normal depreciation period.

These changes are in the spirit of the original legislation. They merely reflect the different conditions, which exist now that did not exist in March of 2002. So in essence, we believe they are important to the recovery of New York City. They will help to ensure the full utilization of the tax benefits provided in the original Liberty Zone legislation. We urge our colleagues to support this important legislation.

HONORING THE GRAND OPENING OF EXCHANGE CITY—NEW ORLEANS

**HON. DAVID VITTER**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 18, 2003*

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the grand opening of Exchange City—New Orleans, which took place on November 5th, 2003 at the City Park Campus of Delgado Community College. Through the partnership of Junior Achievement and the Learning Exchange, every fifth grade student in a 12-parish area of Southeast Louisiana will have the opportunity to experience first-hand how our American free enterprise system works and the effects of the economy on their everyday lives.

As the first Exchange City in Louisiana and the 18th Junior Achievement Exchange City in the United States, this 10,000 square foot indoor virtual city is equipped with sidewalks, a town square, a City Hall, and fourteen businesses. The Exchange City program includes a six-week curriculum covering English, Language Arts, Reading, Mathematics, Economics, Civics, and Data Analysis material. Fifth grade teachers will receive training on this curriculum and teach it to their students before their one-day visit to Exchange City.

During their one-day trip to Exchange City, students will elect a judge and a mayor to preside over their city. They will apply for jobs, receive pay checks, and take out loans to run their businesses. Students will operate a broadcast center with radio and television stations and learn about paying utility bills.

This innovative hands-on program is a wonderful opportunity for students in Southeast Louisiana to learn the importance of education. They will discover how the material they are learning in their classrooms directly applies to the real world. I commend Junior Achievement and all supporters of Exchange City—New Orleans for providing our children with such an outstanding and practical educational experience.

**ARMED FORCES RELIEF TRUST  
PSA PROGRAM**

**HON. FRANK PALLONE JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 18, 2003*

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a program that provides an important service to the men and women serving in our military.

With our armed forces deployed for extended tours of duty in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the pressures placed on family members left behind can be enormous. The longer our fighting men and women are stationed abroad, the more these needs continue to escalate.

Today, more than 140,000 troops are fighting the war on terrorism in Iraq, in Afghanistan, and around the world.

Many of our brave men and women have now been deployed much longer than expected. Some active units served in Afghanistan, returned home for six months, and were immediately re-deployed to Iraq. In many

cases, a sole breadwinner is deployed, making it difficult on their family left behind to cope with medical bills or other unexpected expenses.

Today, I would like to recognize an effort undertaken by local radio and television stations to help address these issues. The National Association of Broadcasters is leading its local television and radio stations in a partnership with the Armed Forces Relief Trust to raise funds for military families in need.

By producing, distributing and airing radio and television Public Service Announcements, the NAB and its radio and television broadcast members are helping raise funds for those military families in need.

Last year, the four emergency assistance programs representing the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps distributed more than \$109 million in interest-free loans and grants to military families. Now that the four programs have combined efforts in one Trust, and more importantly, now that the trust is receiving generous access to the airwaves to get out its message, they will undoubtedly be able to provide even more assistance.

Mr. Speaker, all of us count on our service people who are far from home protecting us. Their families are enduring enough hardship in waiting for them to return. It is incumbent upon all of us to ensure their families do not want financially during this most difficult time.

I would like to compliment the local radio and television stations that are involved in this effort. As small business people, they are dedicating a valuable resource—airtime—to a timely and important cause. I salute their efforts.

**H. CON. RES. 288, HONORING SEEDS OF PEACE FOR ITS PROMOTION OF UNDERSTANDING, RECONCILIATION, ACCEPTANCE, COEXISTENCE, AND PEACE AMONG YOUTH FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND OTHER REGIONS OF CONFLICT**

**HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 18, 2003*

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 288, Honoring Seeds of Peace for its promotion of understanding, reconciliation, acceptance, coexistence, and peace among youth from the Middle East and other regions of conflict.

I am a strong supporter of Seeds of Peace, which brings youngsters from conflict areas together to literally sow the seeds of peace and to develop the next generation of leaders. I have had the privilege of working with Seeds of Peace during my time in Congress and have seen the benefits of this program.

During July, Seeds of Peace had a breakfast in Congress and I was able to participate and eat with several campers. During the breakfast I had the opportunity to speak with several second year campers. Two of these campers were an Israeli and a Palestinian, these two boys had become close friends and they told me that regardless of the violence going on around them at home they still made efforts to see each other.

They told me about the difficulties they sometimes faced when security was tight entering Israel but they still made their efforts to

stay in contact. The boys told me that while they don't agree on everything they still work together to find a solution to whatever problem may arise, they are able to work it out.

Mr. Speaker, whether they are Arab or Jew, Greek or Turkish, Protestant or Catholic, Indian or Pakistani, bringing people together will achieve a lasting return in understanding and toleration.

I firmly believe that by working together, conflict can be overcome. The United States Congress, and our country should continue to support these people to people partnerships, which lay the groundwork for cooperation, co-existence and ultimately peace in the future.

TRIBUTE TO FRED AND ROXY  
LIGRANI

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 18, 2003*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize Fred and Roxy Ligrani of Grand Junction, Colorado. As farmers, Fred and Roxy have spent six decades working tirelessly to feed their fellow countrymen. They are making a difference in their community and touching the lives of their many neighbors in the Grand Valley. I would like to honor their accomplishments today before this body of Congress and this nation.

For the Ligrani brothers, farming runs in their blood; they grew up tending vegetables. Fred and Roxy's grandfather, Rocco, bought land in Grand Junction and developed it as a homestead in 1906. Respect and appreciation for the land, as well as knowledge of how best to cultivate it, are a rich heritage that the Ligrani family passes on from generation to generation.

Fred and Roxy's dedication to farming is evident from their customer's loyalty. The Ligranis have been recognized by American Vegetable Grower Magazine three times in the past. Even as the Grand Valley becomes urbanized, the Ligrani brothers remain focused on producing quality produce. They have maintained this dedication for 60 years.

Mr. Speaker, Fred and Roxy Ligrani have shown an extraordinary dedication to the citizens of Grand Junction. Their strenuous efforts offer hope to a world that is increasingly dependent on technology. These two talented and determined men are a shining example of the rewards of hard work and perseverance. It is my great honor to recognize the Ligranis before this body of Congress and this nation today. I wish them all the best in the future.

TRIBUTE TO MR. CHARLES P.  
IVERSEN

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 18, 2003*

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to an exceptional individual who I have long been proud to call my friend, Mr. Charles P. Iversen. On Friday, November 21, 2003, members of the Plumber's Union Local No. 14 will celebrate Charlie Iversen's

retirement from the union by coming together to pay tribute to Charlie and his lifelong commitment to and leadership in the labor movement.

Over the past 45 years, Charlie Iversen has worked tirelessly on behalf of the men, women, and families in Plumber's Local No. 14. Using his administrative experience and talent for creative leadership to greatly improve the work environment and expand the business interests for plumbers throughout Northern New Jersey, Charlie has left an indelible mark on the lives of many, demonstrating the positive difference that a single person can make. It is therefore only fitting that he be recognized in this, the permanent record of the greatest freely elected body on earth.

In 1955, Charlie Iversen embarked upon what would become a distinguished career in the field of plumbing engineering when he took a position with William Zabransky Jr., Inc. During his time in the employ of William Zabransky, Charlie joined Local No. 326 as an Apprentice, and pursued certification in a UA Training Program at Purdue University. Upon his graduation from Purdue, he became an instructor at Plumber's Local No. 14 Training School while continuing to augment his own personal education at Kean College, Rutgers University, William Paterson College, and Fairleigh Dickinson University.

In 1982, after 27 years as an esteemed employee of William Zabransky, Jr., Inc., Charlie was elected to the position of Business Agent of Plumber's Local No. 14. In this capacity, Charlie exhibited his diligence as an administrator and his boundless enthusiasm as a spokesman for the business interests of Local No. 14, leading him to be named the Union's Business Manager/ Administrator in 1996.

Perhaps most inspiring is the way in which Charlie Iversen has balanced his love for his work with his interest in furthering the cause of the labor movement. As an active member of the American Society of Plumbing Engineers, a former Vice President of the New Jersey State Association of Pipe Trades, a Trustee of Plumber's Local No. 14 Pension, Welfare, Education, and Annuity Funds, and a Treasurer of Local No. 14's Political Action Committee, Charlie has worked hard to ensure that members of Local No. 14 receive the representation and benefits that they deserve. Through word and deed, Charlie has spent the last 45 years demonstrating that the only real success in life comes from a whole-hearted commitment to serving the members of the community in which you live and work.

Mr. Speaker, the job of a United States Congressman involves so much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to recognizing the extraordinary efforts of individuals like Charlie Iversen. I ask that you join our colleagues, the members of the Plumber's Union Local No. 14, Charlie's family and friends, and me in recognizing Charles P. Iversen for his outstanding service to the families of Local 14.

TRIBUTE TO THE ALTOONA  
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 18, 2003*

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Altoona Symphony Orchestra

on its 75th Anniversary and to thank the organization for the high-quality music with which it has provided its community.

The Gearhart String Ensemble was founded in the early years of the twentieth century upon the tradition of the early railroad bands and orchestras that were abundant throughout central Pennsylvania at that time. In 1928, the then strictly volunteer orchestra compiled of 24 musicians made its debut under the direction of Russell Gearhart. Since then, it has grown to employ more than 75 musicians and was renamed the Altoona Symphony Orchestra.

Although 75 years have passed, the orchestra maintains its youthful fervor with its diverse repertoire and inspiring attitude. The constantly changing roster of nationally and internationally renowned guest artists renders a different sound for every concert, keeping the audience attentive and entertained. With this vast array of musical talent, the symphony orchestra provides an invaluable cultural experience to the communities of Central Pennsylvania through its mastery of classical music pieces.

The orchestra continues to produce music that rivals the masterful and highly acclaimed sound of the Boston Pops, and is recognized as one of the outstanding Pennsylvania symphony orchestras. As a result of the dedicated, hard work of its Board of Trustees, the orchestra has progressed immensely, and it will undoubtedly continue to do so under its guidance and leadership. I congratulate the Altoona Symphony Orchestra on a wonderful 75 years and look forward to its sounds of tomorrow.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 18, 2003*

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this Chamber on November 17, 2003. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 620, 621, 622 and 623.

HONORING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
FIRE FIGHTERS

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 18, 2003*

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the courage of fire fighters from Los Angeles County Fire Department. Firefighters in my community, from the cities of Azusa, Baldwin Park, Bradbury, Claremont, Covina, Duarte, El Monte, Glendora, Irwindale, Rosemead, San Dimas, South El Monte, Temple and Unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, fought the fires and saved the lives and homes of countless people. Had it not been for the rapid response and bravery of firefighters, the loss of life, the damage to residents, housing, and commercial property would have been much worse.

I am hopeful that if we learn one lesson from this horrible disaster, it will be that more