

hours, while eliminating the current accommodation for women with young children, the bill will vastly increase the need for child care, without providing resources to the states to pay for it. Beyond this, the fact that the legislation limits opportunities for education and vocational training will keep many individuals in dead-end, low-paying jobs, with limited possibility to create better opportunities for their families.

Creating bipartisan compromise on welfare reform is never easy. It took us three tries to find a bill that worked in 1996. However, in this time of economic hardship for our nation, and our states in particular, it is even more essential that the Congress works in a bipartisan fashion to forge compromise on a welfare reform reauthorization that works. Welfare reform succeeded in 1996 when we stopped making it a political issue, and devoted our selves to passing meaningful legislation.

I have no illusions about what is going to happen today. However, I am disappointed that this Congress has chosen to take an enormous step backwards, prioritizing politics over pragmatism on an issue on which we have allowed good principles to rule in the past. I know that there are good people on both sides of the aisle, with good values, who have seen reforms we created improve the lives of people back home. To those in this Congress with whom I worked in 1996, let us not walk away from that we have accomplished. We have a mutual obligation not to let bad politics undo our good work.

I am confident that there will be no shortage of politics and partisan fights this session—about their tax cut, the deficit, Medicare reform, prescription drugs. To give up on proven success on welfare reform to engage in another unnecessary partisan fight is wrong.

Welfare reform is about demanding responsibility, encouraging work, and making work pay. Over the past six years, we as a nation—and millions of individuals—have benefited from our willingness to move beyond the old politics. This legislation represents a return to the failed politics and policies of the past. It is not compassionate nor is it conservative. It does a disservice to millions of families who have moved from welfare to work, and to the millions still struggling to do so. And it does wrong by our value as Americans.

HONORING RENT-ALL CENTER,
THE MOUNT VERNON-LEE CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE SMALL BUSINESS
OF THE YEAR

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to honor Rent-All Center which was named the 2002 Small Business of the Year by the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce.

Located in the heart of the 11th District of Virginia, the Rent-All Center was opened by Freeman and Lois Jones in 1970. It was created to serve the Mt. Vernon community as a source for home improvement and light contracting equipment. Today, the company has grown from a local tool rental shop into a full service party rental company, servicing the entire metro Washington, DC, area.

The Rent-All Center can best be described as a family-operated business. While currently managed by Douglas Jones and Judith Beyer, the children of Freeman and Lois Jones, on any given day three generations of family members can be found working there.

In addition to its outstanding business ethic, the Rent-All Center has distinguished itself through its commitment to serving the local community through participation in numerous community organizations, such as the Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation. Rent-All Center also supports youth sports, and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Woodlawn Little League.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I call upon my colleagues to join me in congratulating Douglas Jones, Judith Beyer, and all those associated with the Rent-All Center for their many achievements, and wish them continued success in their future endeavors.

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES OF
THE HOUSE TO THE FAMILIES
OF THE CREW OF THE SPACE
SHUTTLE "COLUMBIA"

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN M. McHUGH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2003

Mr. McHUGH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with a heavy heart, joining with the rest of the Nation in sorrow for the loss of the *Columbia* Shuttle and its seven heroic crew members. This tragedy, felt so deeply by all Americans, holds particular poignancy throughout my district. Both Payload Commander Michael Anderson and Pilot William McCool leave friends and family behind in New York's North Country.

Michael Anderson was born along the Canadian border in Plattsburgh, NY, in 1959, as his father served at the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base. Less than 40 years later he would return as an Air Force officer himself, working to the rank of lieutenant colonel before joining the NASA astronaut program in 1995. Today, many men and women in Plattsburgh remember Michael fondly. Ricky Jenkins, a 71-year-old Vietnam War veteran who worked with Michael at the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base, said in the local newspaper soon after the shuttle's loss "I was so very proud of him for doing what he was doing. He was a role model . . . I will never forget Michael." Hours after President Bush helped the astronauts' families celebrate their loved ones at a national service in Houston several weeks ago, the Plattsburgh community celebrated Michael's life in particular with their own candlelight vigil. A youth choir, Boy Scouts honor guard and presentation by Gov. George Pataki marked the celebration. Plattsburgh Mayor Dan Stewart spoke for the community earlier in the day. I share their sentiments here: "This is our opportunity as the birthplace of a national hero to send our condolences. It's for them to know we are with heavy hearts in Plattsburgh."

Less than 200 miles west of Plattsburgh, at the Army's Fort Drum base in Watertown, Warrant Officer Shawn McCool grieves for his brother, *Columbia* Pilot William McCool. Shawn McCool said his brother was one of his

favorite people in the world, one of his greatest heroes. To the McCool family, and the families of all the astronauts we lost, I pledge that their loved ones' deaths are not in vain. Their enthusiasm and passion to explore the skies beyond us in the interest of mankind will always hold our deepest gratitude. And the space program their husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, sons and daughters died for will live on in their honor.

As we begin to understand the circumstances surrounding *Columbia's* loss that Saturday morning over Texas, we must remember what NASA embodies. It was founded in 1958 to explore a new frontier, discover new heights and wonders in science. It is responsible for cutting-edge aeronautics research in a aerodynamics, wind shear, wind tunnels, flight testing and computer simulations. It has performed invaluable research on ways to dampen the effect of shock waves on transonic aircraft. It has also launched a number of significant scientific probes that have explored the moon, the planets and other areas of our solar system. NASA has been responsible for the Hubble Space Telescope and other revolutionary space science spacecraft that enabled scientists to make a number of significant astronomical discoveries in our universe.

I truly believe the lives the men and women of *Columbia* led, like the lives of those astronauts who went before them, exemplify the commitment that lies behind our nation's space program. In an e-mail transmission hours before the *Columbia* crew attempted to return home, Michael Anderson illustrated their passion with these words: "It's kind of with mixed emotions that we get ready to come home. But we have enough fond memories to last us a lifetime."

As the House Science Committee, led by my colleague and New York neighbor, SHERWOOD BOEHLERT, initiates its investigation, Congress pledges to focus on which policies may have contributed to this tragedy. We owe nothing less to those we now mourn, Michael Anderson, William McCool, Rick Husband, Laurel Clark, Kalphana Chawla, David Brown, and Illan Ramon.

HONORING ROSA AND JACK
KELLEY

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2003

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rosa and Jack Kelley's contributions to the African American Historical and Cultural Museum of California's San Joaquin Valley. On Saturday, February 15, the retirement of Jack Kelley, the memory of his wife Rosa, and the beginning of the Kelley Endowment Fund for the African American Museum was celebrated in Fresno, California.

Jack Kelley has been an active member in the community throughout his life. Mr. Kelley served his country bravely in World War II. Jack continued his brave and honorable service to America as one of the first African American policemen for the Fresno Police Department, and later as the first African American to be promoted to Sergeant within the Department. Showing his range of diversity,

Jack was drafted as a professional football player after graduating from Fresno State University.

The late Rosa Kelley served the public as a Licensed Vocational Nurse and elementary school teacher. She was an active member in her church and many other civic activities in the community. She was known as a devoted wife, mother, aunt, grandmother, and great-grandmother whose love, kindness, and encouragement touched the lives of many people throughout her life and allowed the Museum to be at the status it is today.

Mr. Kelley began his 12-year dream of creating an African American Historical museum of the pioneers of the San Joaquin Valley out of the trunk of his car. His perseverance to display the photos and artifacts from early African American pioneers to the public has led to his vision becoming a reality.

The African American Historical & Cultural Museum has promoted an understanding, appreciation, and awareness of African Americans historically and culturally throughout the San Joaquin Valley who have been pioneers and role models in their community. The Museum serves as a permanent home to remember the work of African Americans of the Valley.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to honor Jack and Rosa Kelley for their outreach in the community and their dedication to the African American Historical and Cultural Museum. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing Jack Kelley and the Museum many more years of success.

TRIBUTE TO KATIE AND JIM
KEEGAN

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2003

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Katie and Jim Keegan, Catholic Charities 2003 recipients of the Monsignor Thomas J. Reese award.

The award is named for the late Monsignor Thomas J. Reese, the long-time Director of Catholic Social Services (now Catholic Charities), for his commitment to serving those in need throughout our community. As a tribute to Monsignor Reese, each year an honoree is selected who is a leader in his/her field and in the community and who possesses outstanding integrity worth emulating. This year Catholic Charities has selected the Keegans in recognition of their service to others in the community both as individuals and together.

I rise today to praise Katie and Jim Keegan for their contributions to the State of Delaware and its citizens through years of helping the community and serving as advocates for community service in the State.

In addition to graduating from Chestnut Hill College and raising five children, Katie Keegan has been a tireless advocate for the young people and those less fortunate. Katie had demonstrated her faith by serving in various positions, including: Youth Encounter Leader, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) teacher and Board member of the Bayard House, a facility that assists single young women as they prepare for motherhood. Over the years, Katie Keegan has also served as a

committee member for the TEE-Off for Kids Golf Tournament benefiting Catholic Charities. She is in her own right a dedicated leader in the community, as she has touched the lives of so many in Delaware.

Jim Keegan is a graduate of Notre Dame. Following graduation, Jim spent two years in the U.S. Navy prior to joining the DuPont Company. In addition to his dedication at DuPont, Jim has been active and held leadership positions in a wide variety of church and educational efforts ranging from Chairman of the Diocesan Annual Catholic Appeal and membership on the leadership team for Bringing the Vision to Life Diocesan Campaign to various volunteer commitments in surrounding schools and parish councils.

On Thursday, February 20, 2003, at 6 p.m., Catholic Charities Inc. of the Diocese of Wilmington honored Katie and Jim Keegan at its Annual Tribute Dinner in Wilmington, Delaware.

Mr. Speaker, I salute Katie and Jim Keegan for the time they spend giving back to the community in Delaware. They are fine examples of the generosity and compassion that is common in the Catholic faith and American spirit. Their selflessness, sacrifice of time and commitment to service, has already given them a permanent place in Delaware's history.

THE MONTGOMERY GI BILL
ENHANCEMENT ACT

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2003

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to correct an unfair restriction that is preventing some of our career military service members from using the Montgomery GI Bill.

Education assistance has been a cornerstone of military benefits for over 50 years. Congress recognized that military service often prevented young people from attending school and attaining higher levels of education. In 1944, Congress passed the original education bill for service members, the Serviceman's Readjustment Act. This World War II era legislation provided billions of dollars in education and training incentives for veterans and active duty personnel. The nation has reaped many times that amount in return investment from a well-trained work force and a more productive society.

Building on the success of the original GI Bill, Congress has passed several other pieces of legislation expanding veterans' educational benefits. The Veterans' Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) was enacted in 1976 as a recruitment and retention tool for the post-Vietnam era. This was the first program requiring payment contributions from military personnel while they were on active duty and was available to people who entered active duty between December 31, 1976 and July 1, 1985.

In 1984, Congress passed the All volunteer Force Educational Assistance program; more commonly call the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB). This expanded program provided better benefits that offered under VEAP and last year Congress passed legislation to boost MGIB by a record 46 percent over two years. With the

enactment of this legislation, an estimated 409,000 veterans and service members will receive assistance under MGIB for education and training in 2003.

In 1996, Congress passed Public Law 104-275, allowing VEAP participants to transfer their education accounts to MGIB and 41,041 veterans and servicepersons took advantage of the opportunity. The opportunity to convert to MGIB is very important because the benefits available are much greater. Unfortunately, those individuals who were on active duty before 1985 and did not participate in VEAP were not eligible to sign-up for MGIB, leaving a gap in available coverage for certain career military personnel. Congress has voted several times in the last decade to allow VEAP participants opportunities to transfer to MGIB, but there has not been an opportunity for those who did not have VEAP accounts to sign up for the new program, excluding them from taking advantage of great educational benefits.

This unjust situation can easily be remedied. My legislation provides a one-year open enrollment period for individuals falling into the gap to attain the benefits that they deserve. This is a matter of equity. We cannot neglect our career military personnel; they have served bravely and honorably for decades and their experiences are crucial to the security of our nation. Now is the opportunity to ensure that they are provided for and have the same benefits that are available to other members of the Armed Forces.

HONORING THE NATIONAL BASS
GUIDE SERVICE AS THE MOUNT
VERNON-LEE CHAMBER OF COM-
MERCE HOME-BASED BUSINESS
OF THE YEAR, 2002

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate National Bass Guide Service on their recognition by the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce as the Home-Based Business of 2002.

Founded by Steve Chaconas, National Bass Guide Service is a fishing charter operation on the Potomac River that specializes in largemouth bass. Since its foundation two years ago, National Bass Guide Service has tripled the number of fishing charters it provides. In addition, Mr. Chaconas has expanded into outdoor writing for four publications, giving more exposure to the sport of fishing.

In addition to the numerous services they provide along the Potomac River, National Bass Guide Service is dedicated to contributing to the community. Mr. Chaconas has served as chairman and Master of Ceremonies for the St. Jude Children's Hospital Annual Bass Fishing Tournament, raising nearly \$100,000 for the hospital. National Bass Guide Service has also donated fishing trips to the Hollin Hall Senior Center, the Recreation Boating and Fishing Foundation, as well as to churches and organizations for fundraising auctions.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, it is an honor to extend my warm congratulations to National