

President Bush is working to accomplish that goal with his reduction in tax rates, allowing for the increased use of charitable deductions and credits. My bill goes one step further. It gives those charitable organizations relief from the \$500 billion tax that the Federal Government instituted 34 years ago so they can give more of their money back to the people who need it.

I would like to also emphasize that the former President, Mr. Clinton, proposed a reduction in this same excise tax in his fiscal-year 2001 budget. The Treasury Department noted: "Lowering the excise tax rate for all foundations would make additional funds available for charitable purposes."

So, Madam Speaker, common sense dictates that the elimination of this tax would increase additional charitable giving. I would like to thank my colleague, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. CRANE), for his support on this bill, and for my other colleagues who have graciously recommitted their support. I ask my colleagues to take a look at this piece of legislation.

Next, I am pleased to again sponsor the Health Care Tax Deduction Act of 2003. What it does is allow deductions for amounts paid for health insurance premiums and unreimbursed prescription drugs. What I am proposing would also provide much-needed relief to individuals struggling with the high cost of health insurance and prescription drugs through a tax deduction.

As we all know, employers can write off the cost of health care coverage that is purchased for their employees. Why cannot individuals be afforded this same opportunity to write off their premiums and their unreimbursed prescription drug expenses? The current tax code sets a threshold at 7.5 percent of adjusted gross income before medical expenses can be taken as a write-off. I do not think this is fair.

Right now, under the current tax code, in order to claim health care expenses the individuals must file an itemized tax return. I believe that all taxpayers should be allowed to deduct these out-of-pocket expenses and costs and that we need to include a place where this deduction could be taken on the short form such as the 1040 EZ, and the 1040A. My bill also applies to the self-employed because although individuals who are self-employed are now eligible for a 100 percent write-off of health insurance premiums, not so with prescription drug expenses.

I believe we must address this issue because so many Americans are uninsured today, and many millions more are underinsured. And, we all end up paying for the uninsured through higher premiums, deductibles and copayments for covered services, higher taxes for uncompensated care, and reduced wages.

Did you know that Americans spends more than \$1 trillion on health care? That represents about 13.5 percent of the gross domestic product. By 2008, spending will increase to 16.5 percent of the gross domestic product. In fact, Mr. Speaker, Americans spend more per capita for health care than any other nation in the world.

But why are so many people uninsured? Most studies cite cost as a major reason for not having insurance. Many workers decline coverage through their place of employment because they cannot afford to pay their share of the premium. Others, such as temporary

workers, cannot afford to purchase their own insurance.

We all know that the cost of health care has risen dramatically over the last 20 years. According to the Health Insurance Association of America, the average major medical premium costs about \$ for an individual and about \$ for a family. Of that amount, employees pay anywhere from 10 to 30 percent of that premium, typically. Unfortunately, things may get worse in an economic downturn, because many employers cover the cost of the high premiums to keep workers in a tight labor market, and as costs increase employers might pass the cost along to the employees, or in fact discontinue providing health insurance altogether. Further, as unemployment has risen, begins to rise, many individuals have turned to the individual market, and must shoulder the entire cost on their own.

Seniors, in particular, have been impacted because so many HMOs have pulled out of Medicare due in large part to the high cost of prescription drugs. Allowing a simple write-off of certain costly health care expenses such as health insurance premiums and out-of-pocket expenses for prescription drugs would be a tremendous benefit that may not be available to them under the current system. Mr. Speaker, I hope all of my colleagues cosponsor my bill. It makes sense to have all taxpayers have this type of deduction available to them.

Turning to our nation's veterans, residing in my home state of Florida, I am sponsoring legislation to establish a national Veterans' Affairs cemetery in Jacksonville, Florida. Florida has our nation's 2nd largest veterans population, and the number one oldest. Nearly 325,000 veterans call home somewhere in the Jacksonville vicinity of three congressional districts. Yet, the closest VA cemetery is at least a three-hour drive from Jacksonville. The next closest in proximity lies in Marietta, Georgia, just north of Atlanta. A new national VA cemetery in Jacksonville would answer this unmet need for north Floridians and southern Georgians. I hope my colleagues will consider cosponsoring this bill, and help provide the dignified, hallowed grounds our veterans deserve.

Finally, I am pleased to reintroduce a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of establishing a Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) awareness month. In the 107th Congress, this bill had tremendous support from Members and from the U.S. COPD Coalition, including the patient and provider community. We are so pleased to report that on November 9th, President George W. Bush proclaimed November 2001 COPD Awareness Month. Next, the President sent a gracious letter on October 24, 2002 commending the organizations of the U.S. COPD Coalition for their efforts. COPD is an umbrella term used to describe the airflow obstruction associated mainly with emphysema and chronic bronchitis. This is a debilitating disease, that is currently the nation's fourth leading cause of death. Both conditions decrease the lungs' ability to take in oxygen and remove carbon dioxide. Long-term smoking—the most common cause of COPD—is responsible for 80–90 percent of all cases, while other risk factors include heredity, second-hand smoke, air pollution, and a history of frequent childhood respiratory infections. Common symptoms of COPD include shortness of breath, chronic coughing, chest tightness, and increased effort to breathe. COPD has no cure, but there are

treatment options available to those who have been properly diagnosed.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on all four of these important pieces of business for the nation.

IN MEMORY OF THE HONORABLE
JOHN HENRY KYL

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to call to the attention of our colleagues the passing of the Honorable John Henry Kyl, who served as a member of the House of Representatives for six terms in the 1960s and 1970s from the state of Iowa. He was 83 years old and the father of Arizona Senator JON KYL, and I know firsthand how proud he was of his son's own public service.

I count myself fortunate to have known and worked with John Kyl. He was a hardworking, decent, and honorable man who was widely respected on both sides of the aisle, especially for his work on the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. I met him in that capacity when I served as an assistant to then Interior Secretary Rogers C.B. Morton in the early 1970s.

The Interior Committee was a perfect fit for John Kyl, who deeply respected America's public lands and Native Americans. In Congress, he sponsored a bill that ultimately led to the creation of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. When his service in Congress ended in 1972, he was named assistant secretary for congressional and legislative affairs at the Department of the Interior, where I was proud to work by his side. He served there from 1973 to 1977. Before retiring to Phoenix, Arizona, in 1985, he was executive vice president of Occidental International Corporation. He also had been a public school teacher before beginning his political career.

Mr. Speaker, I will include following my remarks an obituary from the January 6, 2003, edition of Roll Call, headlined, "Kyl Viewed Life Through Lens of Camera." In addition to his dedication to public service, John Kyl was an accomplished amateur photographer who captured on film the everyday scenes of life that we often overlook in what has become our too hurried paces.

We offer our condolences to John's wife, Arlene, of Phoenix, daughters Jayne Kyl, of Phoenix, and Jan Martin, of Des Moines, and, of course, his son, Senator KYL. He is also survived by a brother and a sister, six grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

[From Roll Call, Jan. 6, 2003]

KYL VIEWED LIFE THROUGH LENS OF CAMERA

(By Bree Hocking)

When it came to appreciating life's simple beauties, no aspect was too small for the gimlet eye of former Republican Rep. John Kyl (Iowa).

The 83-year-old Kyl, the father of Sen. Jon Kyl (R-Ariz), died in his sleep just two days before Christmas from complications of heart disease and diabetes.

During his decades-long career in Washington—first as a Hawkeye State Congressman and later as an assistant secretary at the Interior Department—Kyl was seldom without his Canon camera, snapping everything from the monuments at night to the

ordinary scenes that make up the day-to-day Washington tableau.

While his photographs of the capital's loftier sites still warm the walls of the Capitol Hill Club's Grill Room—and a picture he took of the Capitol holiday tree once graced the cover of the National Republican Club's magazine—it was the quotidian that particularly intrigued him.

"He was always a photographer . . . and a lot of [his subjects] were the out-of-the-way places that most people probably never realized existed. We whiz by these things as we are driving or walking, but we don't stop to take a look," said Sen. Kyl.

"I just came across an album as we were looking through his things—a very large album of all Washington, D.C., photos and most of them, probably 80 or 90 percent, were street scenes: street people, storefronts with a lot of graffiti on them, or just a park bench right after a snowstorm," Kyl added.

While his father initially advised him against running for Congress, Sen. Kyl credited the lessons learned at the feet of the elder Kyl with his own political success. For example, the former public school teacher insisted his son be equipped to operate effectively in the public arena.

"He got some of my friends and me together when we were in high school . . . and he said, 'You all need to learn to do public speaking, so I'll teach you what I can here.'"

"My father was [also] a kind of frustrated farmer. We always lived in town but we always leased land and we always had livestock. He was really proud when I showed the grand champion steer at the county fair," the Senator recalled fondly.

The elder Kyl—who lost his first bid for Congress in 1958 but won a special election for a seat in 1959—went on to serve five additional terms, though not consecutively.

While in Congress, Kyl devoted himself to his work on the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, which included significant contributions to the genesis of the Lewis and Clark trail project, the younger Kyl said.

"He always stressed to me his ability to work on a bipartisan basis. . . . He was proud that Wayne Aspinall [then Democratic chairman of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee] would turn the gavel over to him or turn a bill over to him to manage on the floor as if it were not a partisan matter."

After losing his 1964 re-election bid, Kyl came back to triumph in 1966, then won seats in the two succeeding Congresses and served as a deputy to then-Minority Leader Gerald Ford (R-Mich.).

However, in 1972, redistricting forced him to run in a more Democratic district, and he was bested in a Member-versus-Member Contest by Rep. Neal Smith (D-Iowa).

"If he was defeated, he understood," noted Kyl. "It wasn't the end of his life."

Soon after, the Nixon administration tapped Kyl as assistant secretary for Congressional and legislative affairs at the Interior Department, where he served from 1973 to 1977.

In 1977, he joined the Occidental International Corporation as executive vice president, a post he held until retiring to Phoenix, Ariz., in 1985.

Shortly thereafter, he had the pleasure of seeing his son, now the junior Senator from Arizona, win a seat in the House of Representatives.

"There aren't many father-son combinations from different states. Most of the father-son combinations are from the same state," Kyl noted.

In addition to his Senator son, Kyl is survived by his wife Arlene, two daughters, one sister, one brother, six grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO: DURANGO-LA PLATA EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTRAL DISPATCH

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 8, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize the Durango-La Plata Emergency Communications Central Dispatch for their service and dedication during one of Colorado's most formidable fire seasons. Last summer, the Central Dispatch played an integral role in containing the Missionary Ridge forest fire that burned over 70,000 acres in Southwestern Colorado. Today, I would like to pay tribute to their heroic efforts before this body of Congress and this nation.

When the Missionary Ridge fire first erupted last June, the citizens of Durango, Bayfield and the surrounding communities, the Durango-La Plata Central Dispatch worked to protect the homes and lives of their loved ones and community members from what would become the worst fire in area history. The fire began in a ditch beside Missionary Ridge Road, just 15 miles northeast of Durango, and grew to consume more than 70,000 acres, 56 residences, and 27 out-buildings.

Although the Missionary Ridge fire was a devastating reminder of how destructive forest fires can be, it also served to remind us of the men and women who dedicate their lives to protecting their fellow citizens on a daily basis. The Durango-La Plata Central Dispatch has roots reaching back to 1976, when it consolidated the dispatch communications for area agencies. Others have looked to Durango-La Plata Central Dispatch as a model for combining dispatch functions. Today, its 17 employees and technicians routinely handle 11,000 calls and 6,000 fire, medical, and law enforcement incidents per month. During the Missionary Ridge Fire, several organizations stepped up and volunteered to help manage the 60% increase in calls. Throughout the 22 days of the fire, the Colorado Mountain Rangers, Search and Rescue, Civil Air Patrol, and concerned citizens voluntarily manned the Emergency Operations Command, as well as the Fire Information Line. The Durango-La Plata Central Dispatch's guidance and coordination helped manage over 5000 donated man-hours, handling an estimated 35,000 to 50,000 fire related calls. The expertise and leadership from the Durango-La Plata Central Dispatch illustrate the dedication and readiness with which these men and women serve the citizens of Durango.

Mr. Speaker, it is with sincere admiration that I recognize the Durango-La Plata Central Dispatch before this body of Congress and this nation. I want to commend all of the Durango-La Plata Central Dispatch's personnel for their determination, courage, and resolve during last summer's efforts on Missionary Ridge. Without the help of the Durango-La Plata Central Dispatch and others, the added devastation to our community, environment, and quality of life would have been unimaginable. Their tireless commitment throughout the summer's exhaustive fire season has served as an inspiration to us all and it is an

honor to represent such an outstanding group of Americans in this Congress.

IN RECOGNITION OF ALBERTO CARDENAS

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 8, 2003

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of my friend, Mr. Alberto Cardenas of Miami, for his 10 years of diligent service to the Republican Party of Florida and the people of our great state as party chairman and vice chairman. Al has served with distinction over the last four years in his role as state chairman. During his tenure, Chairman Cardenas shepherded the Republican Party of Florida to a historic level.

Following the 1998 election of Governor Jeb Bush, Al was elected unanimously by his peers, men and women, black and white; to lead our party. As Governor Bush began his agenda of reforming state government, Chairman Cardenas undertook the vision of changing the perception of Florida Republicans. Chairman Cardenas quickly made diversity a major focus of his first year. Establishing both Hispanic and African-American outreach programs, Al ushered the Party into uncharted territory. His message of inclusion spread throughout Florida as Republican ranks began to soar. Al's message of inclusion was carried out with the formation of the Florida Black Republican Council, the Florida National Hispanic Assembly, and the chartering of the Broward Log Cabin Club. For his efforts, Republican National Chairman, Governor Jim Gilmore selected Al to serve on the RNC Executive Committee. A post which gave Al the opportunity to promote Republican diversity throughout the nation. Recently, Governor Bush appointed Al to the Board of Trustees of Florida A&M in Tallahassee.

Along with an aggressive vision of inclusion, Al campaigned tirelessly throughout Florida urging elected officials, both state and local, to join the Republican Party. Since 1999, numerous elected officials have switched party affiliation to Republican.

Mr. Speaker, later this month Al leaves his post and returns to Miami. Another chapter in a storied personal journey that began at the young age of 13 with his leaving Communist Cuba in 1961, at the height of the U.S.-Cuba conflict, and ends leading the largest state Republican Party in the nation. State Republican history will look back favorably on his service which saw a number of firsts: the first Republican governor to be re-elected; the first elected Republican Attorney General; the first elected Republican Agriculture Commissioner; and the first elected Republican Chief Financial Officer, and increased seats in the Florida House of Representatives and Florida Senate, as well as, the largest number of Florida members of Congress ever.

Mr. Speaker, I join my fellow Republicans in thanking our friend, Chairman Al Cardenas for his friendship, service and support. I wish, Al, Diana and the entire Cardenas family best of health in the coming year.