

MCDONALD, BALLANCE, CHRISTIAN-CHRISTENSEN, GONZALEZ, ACEVEDO-VILA, CASE, MICHAUD, TUBBS JONES, CARSON, FALEOMAVEGA, BORDALLO, NAPOLITANO, and DAVIS for their support.

This legislation requires a State receiving a small business development center program grant to request the advice of the governing bodies of Indian tribes, corporations organized pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and other Alaska Native entities, and Native Hawaiian organizations, as appropriate, on how best to provide assistance to such members, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians and where to locate satellite centers to provide such assistance.

Today we have demonstrated how important small business enterprise is to the health of our economy. But there are still places in this country where economic prosperity has often failed to reach. These areas deserve our attention and assistance.

Consider this, nowhere in America has poverty persisted longer than on and near Native American reservations, which suffer an average unemployment rate of 45 percent. However, the number of businesses owned by Indian tribe members and Native Alaskans grew by 84 percent from 1992 to 1997, and their gross receipts grew by 179 percent in that period. This is compared to all businesses, which grew by 7 percent, and their total gross receipts grew by 40 percent, in that period.

I would like to continue this growth and expansion of small enterprise with the passage of this legislation. My bill ensures that Native Americans, Native Alaskans and Native Hawaiians seeking to create, develop and expand small businesses, have full access to the counseling and technical assistance available through the SBA's SBDC program. The business development tools offered by the SBDCs can assist Native Americans with the information and opportunity to build sustainable businesses in their communities.

In an effort to ensure the quality and success of the program, the proposal requires SBA to include in the application, at a minimum, information requests regarding the applicant's goals and objectives, including the experience of the applicant in conducting programs or ongoing efforts designed to assist the business skills of small business owners and the capability of such applicant to provide training and services to a representative number of Native Americans, Native Alaskans and Native Hawaiians.

It is clear we can do more to aid Native American entrepreneurs. Not enough has been done to assist Native American's in building their businesses, which in turn helps benefit, their communities. I hope to change that with my proposal.

THANKING MRS. DIANN CONDREY
FOR HER SERVICE TO THE HOUSE

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2003

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of her retirement on March 15th, we rise to thank Mrs. Diann Condrey for her 26 years of outstanding service to the federal government, including 10 years service to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Over the years, Diann has provided outstanding customer support to Members, Committees, Leadership and Support Offices of the House. She began her service to the House on December 1, 1992, and served this great institution in numerous capacities, most notably with House Information Resources (HIR) under the office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

In 1992, she was hired as a Committee consultant to provide technical support to Committee offices. Diann remained in that position until 1995. Since 1995, she has worked as a Technical Support Representative servicing Members, Committees, and Leadership offices. Diann is highly skilled and very proficient in providing office automation and technical advice to House offices. Her efforts and work ethic are a true demonstration of excellence and dedication to providing passionate customer service. Her previous federal experience as a Contracting Officer and her breadth of knowledge of House office operations enabled Diann to effectively manage the House Systems Administrator contract for TechCare. This contract filled a need in many House offices for professional Systems Administration.

I know all of you join me in extending our thanks and appreciation to this invaluable member of the House family. We wish the very best to Diann and her husband Jim as they pursue the next phase of their life.

HONORING THE COLORADO ARMY
NATIONAL GUARD, COMPANY C,
109TH MEDICAL BATTALION

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2003

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the men and women of Company C of the Army National Guard's 109th Medical Battalion for their willingness to serve our country. The unit, based in Montrose, Colorado, has been deployed to support America's troops in Operation Enduring Freedom. They are preparing to protect our national security in a time of international crisis.

Company C has provided medical support for U.S. operations in Honduras, Belize, and Nicaragua. It provided airport security following the September 11th terrorist attacks and assisted firefighters during one of the worst wildfire seasons in Colorado history. This time, its final mission and destination are unknown.

The men and women of Company C are doctors and dentists, nurses and teachers, parents and newlyweds. They each leave family, friends and jobs for at least one year to serve our nation. The sacrifice and dedication of these volunteers are a credit to this country.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to recognize Company C for its exemplary service to the United States of America before this body of Congress and this nation. The courage of these American men and women is an inspiration to all.

ANDREW PITAS HONORED BY AIR
TRAFFIC CONTROL ASSOCIATION

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2003

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to share with our colleagues a recent article from The Loudoun Times-Mirror which honors my constituent Mr. Andrew Pitas of Lucketts upon his receipt of the Glenn Gilbert Award from the Air Traffic Control Association for his lifetime commitment and leadership in the field of aviation.

I am proud to call attention to the achievements of Mr. Pitas as he is honored with this prestigious award. On behalf of the people of Virginia's 10th Congressional district, I congratulate Mr. Andrew Pitas for his outstanding efforts in the field of air traffic control.

[From The Loudoun Times-Mirror, Feb. 12, 2003]

LUCKETTS MAN HONORED FOR AVIATION
LEADERSHIP

(By Scott Cissel)

Lucketts resident Andrew Pitas first experienced air traffic control in 1941 when he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. One day a supervisor at the Anacostia Naval Air Station in Washington, D.C., asked the 17-year-old to work in the control tower.

"It looked warm up there," recalled Pitas, who had been working outside in the chilly air, inspecting airplane propellers for cracks.

Now more than 60 years later, the Air Traffic Control Association, an organization co-founded by Pitas in 1956 and based in Arlington, is honoring him with the Glenn Gilbert Award for his lifetime commitment and leadership in the field of aviation.

Only 15 people have received the award, including U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta and Najeeb Halaby, father of Queen Noor of Jordan. Pitas' name will be added to the Glenn Gilbert trophy, which is kept on permanent display in the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

"It's kind of humbling," Pitas said. "Air traffic controlling is a team effort. There are so many people you can get in trouble and who can get you in trouble. There are no cowboys in this business."

The 80-year-old, raised on a dairy farm in Rhode Island, learned air traffic control when it was a fledgling technology. He was stationed in England during World War II as a controller.

After the war he worked at the Washington Tower in D.C., now Reagan National Airport. Returning to the farm, where as a boy he had watched planes fly overhead en route to Boston, wasn't an option.

"There were better ways to make a living," he said. "I had to milk cows morning and night."

Before radar became a standard practice after the war, some pilots refused to take radar readings from controllers, according to Pitas. Others liked it so much they played the radar position he broadcast to their passengers in the cabin.

And some pilots and crews had enough time to sing a greeting song to him as their planes neared landing. Controllers knew many of the pilots by name then.

"In the early days we knew a lot of them," said Pitas.

As air traffic increased, so did the stress on controllers, which prompted Pitas to develop a system that is now universally used—the automated terminal information system. The service sends a recording with continuously updated information on flight conditions to pilots. Before, pilots had to radio the tower for updates.

Pitas later brought his talent and expertise to the Federal Aviation Administration, where he rewrote the handbook used by air traffic controllers.

In 1956 he and some colleagues founded the Air Traffic Control Association, perhaps his most lasting contribution to the industry. Air traffic controllers did not have retirement benefits or adequate insurance and pay in the 1950s, recalled Pitas, and they could suffer the blame of plane collisions even if they had performed their jobs well.

"It was almost like you were on your own," he said. "The ATCA was instrumental in getting the government to beef up protection. After all, we were agents of the government."

Through lobbying efforts and representation in Congress, the ATCA gained better benefits for its members and has become a

source of international recognition for controllers.

"It gives people all over the world an outlet for their views," he said.

Stanley L. Seltzer, chief controller at Washington Tower in the late 1940s, remembered Pitas not only for his technical innovations, but also for his leadership in the ATCA.

"He was the live wire and the real go-getter," said Seltzer, who now lives in Florida. "He was always saying that people didn't care enough about the controllers' point of view. . . . ATCA really made it possible for an exchange of thought on technical improvements, and put a voice there that was never heard before."

Aviation was viewed as a safer way to travel by the public, according to Seltzer, because of the early air traffic controllers'

work in preventing midair collisions and improving communications.

"Had it not been for them I don't think that air transport would have been as widely accepted," he said.

After retiring from the FAA in 1983, Pitas has pursued his interest in the history of air traffic control, including research on the first women controllers.

He raised cattle on his farm in Lucketts before swelling it in 1990, and once stored a three-ton radio navigational device in one of his barns for the National Air and Space Museum.

Since 1986, Pitas has been assistant vice president of ATCA and has been active in securing funds for U.S. 15 road improvements between Leesburg and Point of Rocks, Md.