

Dr. Atkins leaves behind a legacy that will endure. A memorial service is being held in New York City on May 9th and those of us in the House of Representatives who knew him and of his work join with all of those who mourn the loss of a great American.

HONORING JOSEPH THOMAS
MURPHY

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2003

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Joseph Murphy, a retired major in the United States Marine Corps (USMC). Tomorrow he will be interred at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. Major Murphy led an admirable life, and he was an American hero.

Mr. Speaker, Major Murphy was the husband of Madonna (Hogan) Murphy, to whom he had been married 59 years. Born in Taunton, Massachusetts on May 9, 1918, he was the son of the late Michael and Catherine (McGuire) Murphy. Major Murphy was raised and educated in Taunton, and had resided in Attleboro, Massachusetts since 1965. He graduated from Taunton High School and earned a bachelor's degree in management from Bentley College.

Mr. Speaker, Major Murphy served for 17 years in the USMC from 1946 to 1963. He received many awards and commendations including the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Presidential Unit Citation, the Army Distinguished Unit Emblem, the American Campaign Medal, and the China Service Medal. Major Murphy was also awarded the Air Medal, the World War Two Victory Medal, the Navy Occupation Medal, the Korean Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, and the Korean Presidential Unit Citation.

Mr. Speaker, Major Murphy and his wife Madonna raised a large family. He is survived by five children: one daughter and four sons. Additionally, Major Murphy was the grandfather to 12 grandchildren and a great-grandson.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident that the entire U.S. House of Representatives joins me in expressing gratitude to Major Murphy for his years of service to our nation. Moreover, I ask that my colleagues keep Mrs. Murphy and her family in their thoughts.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF H.R. 1298, UNITED STATES
LEADERSHIP AGAINST HIV/AIDS,
TUBERCULOSIS, AND MALARIA
ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 1, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1298) to provide assistance to foreign countries to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and for other purposes:

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 and in support of amendments that would strengthen this bill in helping address the AIDS pandemic in Africa. The bill before the House today seeks to prevent 7 million new HIV/AIDS infections, provide care and support for 10 million HIV-infected people and provide antiretroviral therapy for millions of victims over the next 5 years.

Africa is a continent far removed from the everyday lives of most Americans, both in its geographic location and in its distinction among the other populations of the world. But it is a continent whose future has profound implications for the future of the United States.

Sub-Saharan Africa has approximately 10 percent of the world's population, a remarkable history and numerous natural resources. Unfortunately, it also is plagued with the pandemic known as HIV/AIDS that has caught the attention of the international community. In recent years, more than 21 million Africans have died of AIDS, including more than 2 million in 2001. AIDS has surpassed malaria as the leading cause of death and threatens to cripple and destroy African life. An alarming 70 percent of the world's AIDS victims live in Africa. With far more dying from AIDS in Africa than from all its wars and conflicts, we cannot ignore the perilous state of affairs faced by our fellow men.

Of particular concern to me is the fact that 58 percent of those infected with the virus are women who are passing this deadly disease to their children. More than 600,000 infants are HIV infected each year in Africa because of mother-to-child transmission. As one generation passes the deadly virus on to the next, we are witnessing a self-sustaining genocide.

More than 11 million AIDS orphans living in Africa are crying out from malnutrition, and their chances of obtaining an education are severely reduced. These innocent little children are the product of a crisis that is bringing even more severe economic hardship to a land already stranded in poverty. Life expectancy in some African countries has dropped by decades, and agricultural production has declined as workers with AIDS die or become unable to perform their work.

With the leadership of President Bush, the United States is stepping up its efforts to deal with this problem. Not only are we reaching out because of moral principle and human compassion, but also because we recognize the national security implications of not engaging with the AIDS crisis in Africa.

With radical Islamic terrorist cells thriving in poverty-stricken countries, we must acknowledge and address the AIDS pandemic that can fuel desperation, and ultimately, hospitality toward violent groups that seek destruction of America. With an estimated 55 million Africans who will lose their lives to AIDS by 2020, the United States has both an opportunity and an obligation to help defeat AIDS in order to bring stability to these suffering countries. Already, African militaries are feeling the results of high infection rates among their soldiers. As countries lose their ability to maintain peace, anarchy will take over and deliver further havoc on society. If the problem is ignored, the ability of terrorists to recruit more sympathizers will only multiply. By helping prevent the further spread of this horrible disease, we can help ensure that terrorists are given no safe harbor in Africa.

As William J. Bennett and Charles Colson recently stated in the Washington Times, "Al Qaeda networks operating in Africa remind us that, like it or not, no part of the world can any longer be isolated from any other part. If an entire continent sinks into despair and anarchy, the whole world will be affected."

While I support H.R. 1298, I want to express my strong support for amended language that would designate funds for prevention and treatment programs that have an outstanding track record of drastically reducing the number of infected individuals. For example, the world has finally acknowledged how effective Uganda's ABC program has been in reducing the number of HIV/AIDS victims. H.R. 1298 is right to commend the ABC program along with the excellent leadership of President Yoweri Museveni.

Uganda's ABC program "Abstain, Be faithful, use Condoms", in order of priority, has dropped infection rates from 22 percent in 1992 to 7 percent in 2002. This remarkable, yet simple, program first promotes abstaining from sexual relationships until marriage. Rather than blindly pass out condoms, the ABC program promotes a lifestyle of abstinence that guarantees to protect individuals against sexually transmitting the HIV/AIDS virus.

Secondly, the Ugandan ABC program encourages partners to remain faithful to each other. In working to promote faithfulness between married couples, this low-cost program encourages fidelity as a means of reducing the spreading of the virus between multiple partners. With the percentage of sexually active youth falling significantly and the increasing number of Ugandans reporting none or one sexual partner in the past decade, the results speak for themselves.

Thirdly, use of condoms is encouraged as a means to help reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS for those who choose not to abstain.

Congressman JOE PITTS has offered an amendment to HR 1298 that will require 33 percent of AIDS prevention funds be directed to abstinence-until-marriage programs. I stand in full support of this amendment that is supported by both the White House and Chairman HYDE. By supporting pro-family, proven methods that prevent the spread of AIDS, we will most effectively bring an end to this crisis.

I also want to voice my support for the amendment offered today by Congressman CHRIS SMITH that would clarify the right of organizations having moral or religious objections to certain prevention methods to remain eligible for this funding. While there is language in H.R. 1298 to prevent such discrimination, the language is vague and might not offer sufficient protection from bias against these fine groups.

In Africa, there are organizations offering excellent programs to local communities to fight against the spread of AIDS but who have moral objections to condom promotion. It is important these groups are allowed to compete for funding and continue their successful programs. It is to the advantage of the African people that we have the largest pool from which to choose applicants.

As the House of Representatives moves forward with passage of this historic legislation to fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa, let us remember the millions who have already lost their lives and the remaining tens of millions who are currently afflicted with this dreadful virus of death.

I hope and pray we can unite with our African neighbors to bring an end to the AIDS crisis. It is no longer just their problem—it is particularly ours as well.

THE ASTHMA OBESITY LINKAGE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2003

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, in honor of National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Week, I am today introducing the "Medicaid Obesity Treatment Act of 2003" to elevate the visibility of a national health epidemic that is wreaking havoc upon our Nation. Scientific evidence demonstrates a strong correlation between obesity and asthma, particularly among children.

This bill, which is similar to legislation I introduced last year with Congressman JAMES GREENWOOD, will provide Medicaid coverage for medically necessary treatments for chronically obese beneficiaries. With this legislation, I hope to raise the level of attention to this devastating illness and to provide medically necessary treatments to millions of overweight children who suffer from obesity comorbidities such as asthma. If the Congress passes this legislation, The Medicaid Obesity Treatment Act will be the first legislation ever enacted to address the need to ensure access for all Americans to drug therapies designed to treat obesity and its related comorbidities, and I am proud to be its sponsor.

According to the Surgeon General, the prevalence of overweight and obesity has almost doubled among America's children and adolescents since 1980. It is estimated that one out of five children is obese. The epidemic growth in obesity acquired during childhood or adolescence is particularly threatening to the national health because it often persists into adulthood and increases the risk for some chronic diseases, such as asthma, later in life.

Obesity has truly become a national health care crisis. The National Center for Health Statistics reports that 60 percent of Americans over 20 years of age are overweight or clinically obese. Weight-related conditions represent the second leading cause of death in the United States, and result in approximately 300,000 preventable deaths each year.

Researchers from Cincinnati Children's Hospital recently discovered a new gene involved in asthma that may provide a link between the development of asthma and obesity. The study, released at the 60th anniversary meeting of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology, examined the gene which belongs to a family of similar proteins that have been found to cause insulin resistance and obesity in mice. Another recent study by the Harvard School of Medicine of 16,862 children, ages 9 to 14, found that those who were the most overweight were two to three times as likely to have asthma as the least overweight subjects.

Whether obesity is caused by genetics, environment, lifestyle, diet or a combination of these elements, its effect is devastating for all persons who suffer from it. However, science has made great strides in recent years to combat it. Several new drugs offer great promise in the fight to prevent and treat obesity and its related comorbidities.

My bill will revisit a thirteen year old provision that allows states to exclude Medicaid coverage for weight loss drugs, even in cases where these drugs have the potential to save obese patients' lives or to improve their related conditions like asthma. The notion that obesity is merely a lifestyle choice and not a disease is no longer valid scientifically, and must be stricken from the law. Medically necessary medicine for the treatment of chronic obesity and its related illnesses should be covered under Medicaid like any other medically necessary drug. This is the purpose and goal of my bill.

Although this expansion in Medicaid coverage might incur some marginal cost to the overall program, requiring states to cover proven obesity medication may actually reduce Medicaid expenditures as a result of decreases in the costs associated with treating asthma and other obesity-related comorbidities. Given the numerous benefits of reducing obesity, we should be providing access to life saving anti-obesity treatments, just as we provide medications for other life threatening diseases.

Obesity and asthma represent related growing health crises that must be addressed with more than just words. This bill offers an important first step towards eliminating obesity, and I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

HONORING DON HILL

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Don Hill of La Junta, Colorado for his contributions to historical preservation and our National Park Service. Don is retiring, having served with the National Park Service in Colorado for thirty-three years, and today I would like to thank him for his service before this body of Congress and this nation.

After beginning a career with the National Park Service at Curecanti National Recreation Area and Black Canyon of the Gunnison and Colorado National Monuments, Don came to Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site in 1986 as the site's superintendent. Don has worked hard to make Bent's Fort an integral part of the Southeastern Colorado Community. He served as president of the Southeast Colorado Tourism Council, and in 1993 he coordinated the Santa Fe Trail Association's National Symposium, bringing over 500 tourists to the area. Additionally Don is an active member of the local Rotary Club and the La Junta Chamber of Commerce. Among other accomplishments, in 1993 Don worked with the Cheyenne and Arapahoe tribes of Oklahoma to repatriate Native American remains discovered during archaeological work at the fort.

Mr. Speaker, Don Hill has served as a steward of this country's natural treasures for over thirty years and has played an integral role in the development of Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site. Today I stand before this body of Congress and this nation to recognize one of the National Park Service's best. Don's dedication is a credit to himself and to Colorado, and I thank him for his service.

HONORING ANN MILLER AND TED MALIARIS

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2003

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker. I would like to honor two great Americans, Ann Miller and Ted Maliaris, for their patriotic commitment to this nation.

Ann Miller has written "A Tribute to America—A 21st Century Anthem," which highlights the greatness of America and its ability to overcome recent tragedies. Her son, Ted Maliaris, delivers this anthem with an unparalleled sense of patriotism.

America was founded on principles of freedom and democracy that stand as the very foundation of our society today. While our troops are abroad, we must never forget the importance of the very principles that make this nation great. "A Tribute to America—A 21st Century Anthem" clearly illustrates the power of freedom that America represents. Its patriotic message highlights the very strength that has served as the foundation of the American spirit since the tragedies of September 11.

I would like to thank Ann Miller and Ted Maliaris for their dedication to America and their commitment to spreading their important message across the Nation.

I proudly insert the following lyrics of "A Tribute to America—A 21st Century Anthem" in the RECORD:

Our tears may fall and our hearts may be shattered, but deep down in our souls we are strong, we are proud, we are bold.

We have freedom in our land, we will fight for our rights, we will stand up for the brotherhood of man. America America America you're Grand.

We have strength, we have the power, no terrorist could ever withstand. We will not hide, we will not cower, we will stand up for the rights of our land.

We're America, America
Strong, Proud, Brave, Bold
We're America, America
Strong, Proud, Brave, Bold
America red, white, and blue
America, this song we sing for you.

In time of need, compassion fills our hearts,
in times of dismay we are strong.

We're a land of freedom, a land of peace, and no one can take this away.

We're America, America
America you're Grand
No one can destroy us through thick or thin,
we're a nation that was built to survive.

No terrorist's plight can destroy our sight or the strength of this motherland.

We're America, America, America
America you're Grand.

God extended his hand and has given us faith,
for we will stand tall and proud.
We're a land of freedom, a land of peace, a land like no other land.

We're America, America
Strong, Proud, Brave, Bold
We're America, America
Strong, Proud, Brave, Bold
America, America you're Grand
America, America you're Grand
America!