

that is what this legislation does. Make no mistake about it, this legislation, rather than being a prescription drug plan, rather than being a Medicare reimbursement plan for doctors, what this is is the first step in privatizing Medicare, and that would be a disaster for our seniors.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this motion. My motion addresses the concern of the doctors across the country and ensures that Medicare patients can have access to their doctors by providing these doctors with a 1.5 percent increase in physician payments over the next 2 years. I ask my colleagues to protect our citizens and not have them investing in risky and untested privatization schemes and to put the necessary funding in the prescription drug bill to fairly reimburse our doctors who administer the necessary care to Medicare patients. Instead of putting the Medicare system in jeopardy, we should protect our constituents' access to care. This motion fixes this problem for another 2 years, but I implore my colleagues that in the future we must work together to address a permanent fix for the formula.

I urge my colleagues to support our doctors and their patients and vote "yes" on this motion to instruct.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROGERS of Alabama). Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to instruct.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2660, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill, H.R. 2660, be instructed to insist on the highest funding levels possible for nutrition programs for our nation's seniors as authorized by the Older Americans Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KEN-

NEDY) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY).

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today I rise to offer a motion to instruct the House conferees on the 2004 Labor, HHS and Education appropriations bill to insist on the highest level of funding possible for nutrition programs for seniors, programs such as Meals on Wheels and congregated meal sites.

As I rise this evening, I want to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), who are both leaders on the Labor-HHS-Education subcommittee and who both know how important these programs are. I want to thank them for their hard work year in and year out to protect these programs so vital to our senior citizens.

This week we are debating controversial legislation, as Members have just no doubt heard, on the floor about the future of the Medicare system and the importance of providing a drug benefit without forcing seniors into HMOs. But the importance of that debate will be left to another time. Tonight we are in agreement when it comes to the importance of senior nutrition programs, and this truly is a bipartisan issue.

I know that most Members of this Chamber have often visited their senior centers and know, having spoken to them, how important it is that they receive these congregated meals. Tonight, this is an opportunity to put our money where our mouth is, and it is an actual opportunity to encourage our conferees to spend the money on senior nutrition. Even in spite of the fact that we have tight budgets, we cannot give senior citizens short shrift.

As I said, Members know about these programs, but I do not know how many of them truly appreciate their magnitude and reach. I would encourage those colleagues of mine who have not been out on a Meals on Wheels visit to go out with a volunteer and visit the people for whom these programs help make a difference. Nearly 2 million people receive meals through the congregated meal site program and 1 million through the Meals on Wheels program. This adds up to a total of 250 million actual meals served. That is a compelling statistic that reflects the nature of these programs.

My father, Senator EDWARD KENNEDY, was the author of the legislation that made the seniors' nutrition programs part of the Older Americans Act. I am proud that my father, Senator EDWARD KENNEDY, was responsible for the founding of Meals on Wheels. What he and others of his colleagues have recognized over 30 years is that Meals on Wheels is an important program not only for the nutrition that it brings but also because of the companionship and the neighbor-to-neighbor relation-

ship that it fosters. For many seniors, not only at the home is delivered a meal but a face with that meal, a person, someone who can offer companionship and friendship and know what is going on in the home when they arrive and deliver the meal. The value of these meals pays itself back in both the importance of good nutrition and also through the companionship and care that these meal volunteers provide.

We talk in Congress about how an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. That is nowhere more true than the Meals on Wheels and the congregated meal site programs. In the congregated meal site programs, seniors get together at the senior centers to join in lunch; but in the process of doing that, they are exposed to an array of social services that may also be of assistance to them. Unfortunately, as many of us know in our Nation, one in 10 seniors lives in poverty. At the same time, there is expected to be a 30 percent increase in the number of Americans eligible for the Older Americans Act now that the baby boom generation is becoming the senior boom generation. Already in my State of Rhode Island, 14.5 percent of our population is 65 or older. We need to be ready for this population as it retires. We need to be ready for them as we take care of the seniors of today.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, before I turn it over to my colleagues, let me say, I have met Edna Bateman in one of my tours on a senior meal site. Edna Bateman is from East Providence, Rhode Island, and she knows what a difference it has made to her in her life not only to get that hot meal but also to have that companionship, that visitor every day that she is looking forward to seeing, who she wakes up every morning looking forward to talking to, who she unlocks her door and leaves it open so that she looks forward to hearing that Meals on Wheels volunteer coming to her door.

That is why I rise tonight to make sure more people like Edna Bateman get the services like this Meals on Wheels program. I want to pay tribute to her and the many others who receive this program. Tonight I know we all rise in support of those folks.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. REGULA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Rhode Island has described many of the values of this program. He is a very valued member of our subcommittee. As he well knows, we have done all we could for this program within the constraints of the Budget Act. It is a great program. I think one of the benefits that probably was not mentioned is it gives a lot of people in communities a sense of participation because these meals are delivered by volunteers in most cases if

not all. That means that those in the community who are doing this service realize that they are helping the seniors. It gives them an understanding, but most importantly, of course, as the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY) described, it is very important to the beneficiaries of the program.

As has been mentioned, it is not only the nutrition and that is important. Seventy-nine percent of the individuals that are recipients have a high nutritional risk and the Meals on Wheels ensures that they will get, at least as much as possible, a balanced diet which obviously will contribute to their health.

We were earlier debating some aspects of the Medicare reform bill and the prescription drug change. I think that bill does more on preventive medicine than has been the case in the past. An item such as requiring that those who go on Medicare must first have a medical examination to see if they have any problems, that will now be covered by Medicare. I think that is a great provision. But part of preventive medicine is having a nutritious diet. The Older Americans Act nutrition programs serve that purpose. As was mentioned, over 270 million meals to almost 3 million people that benefit. They benefit in a congregate setting and also as individuals in their homes.

What it does is allow people to stay in their homes for a longer period of time. In my discussion with seniors, they want to stay at home as long as possible. They do not want to be institutionalized. Meals on Wheels affords them that privilege. I wish we could do more. I wish the budget numbers that were provided to our subcommittee were larger, but we have a lot of challenges in the Labor-H subcommittee. We have the challenges of funding the research at the National Institutes of Health. We have the challenges of funding the Centers for Disease Control; that has a new dimension because of 9/11. We have the challenge of providing good education to ensure that no child is left behind. We have the challenge in the Labor Department of providing services to those that are unemployed so that they can get back into employment. We have some tough policy decisions that we have to make.

We do put a lot of money into the Older Americans Act. I and all of us wish it could be more, but we have to balance out the needs of the seniors and the Meals on Wheels programs with education, health research and so on. But on balance this is good preventive medicine, to provide for nutritious meals. It also, as was mentioned, is very important for their social well-being. The fact that somebody is going to come to their home once a day for 5 days a week, it gives them a sense of being a part of the community. Because these people that are delivering these Meals on Wheels are volunteers, most of them have some time that they can stop and visit a little bit with the

clients. I think that adds to their well-being and adds to their ability to be comfortable in their home setting.

Another feature of this that we do not fully appreciate is that the Meals on Wheels leverages a lot of other sources. It leverages the State funds. In the case of the Native Americans, it leverages tribal funds. It leverages local funds and Federal moneys and other subcommittees of appropriations. These total contributions of matching funds more than exceed what we put into the program in our bill. That is a very positive thing that we do—leverage these funds.

I think for this reason I have no objection to this motion to instruct. I wish we could do more, but we are limited in the total resources that are available as we make the priority choices among many very fine programs. We have in constructing this bill held the numbers that can be available for the Meals on Wheels, the Older Americans Act at the highest level possible within the constraints of the resources that are provided to our subcommittee.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) who represents Cape Cod and the islands.

□ 2300

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from New England for his leadership in this very important issue. He certainly has inherited a legacy from his father, and those of us from Massachusetts are proud not only of our senior Senator but his son, his youngest son.

As cochair of the House Older Americans Caucus, along with, of course, the chairman of the committee who has established a reputation for compassion and for concern for the elderly in this country, I too rise in strong support of this motion because I share their belief that Congress must fund senior nutrition programs at the highest levels authorized by the Older Americans Act. The conferees should support the funding levels set forth in the House conference report.

First, the health of our seniors depends on full funding of nutrition programs. It has been clearly established in study after study that poor eating habits can lead to serious medical problems for aging adults, including the early onset of chronic diseases that inevitably escalate the cost of health care here in this country. Frail and homebound adults benefit enormously from the prepared meals supplied by organizations such as Meals on Wheels. Indeed, that one meal can provide half of their total nutritional requirements for the day. That fact is truly significant when one considers that nearly 3 million seniors benefitted from nutritional programs and services last year.

In my home State of Massachusetts, over 50,000 seniors rely on congregate

and home-delivered meals each year, as well as the nutritional screenings and counseling authorized by the legislation. Accordingly, the programs that we are talking about deliver, literally, on our goal to meet the nutritional needs of older Americans.

Secondly, our commitment to provide the highest level of funding for these activities makes sense economically and produces substantial savings to the American taxpayer. Through these investments we are saving costs in the long term, as I alluded to earlier, along with the references by those who spoke previously. With home meal delivery, seniors can live independently for longer periods. Furthermore, studies show that these services also prevent costly hospitalizations resulting from nutritional deficiencies and social isolation. That translates into a substantial savings to the American taxpayer.

Third, I believe, as others have suggested, that the intangible aspects of these programs provide an incredible benefit to our communities and enhance a sense of community, not only to those that receive directly these benefits, but to those who provide them. For some individuals, the volunteer knocking at their door may be the only visitor of the day. So in simple human terms, we cannot underestimate the value that this single interaction may have for an elderly person, many of whom are female, many of whom are widowed, many of whom live alone. And it should not go unstated that tragically in this country, many of our seniors, a disproportionate share of our seniors when compared to the rest of the population, suffer from chronic depression. So let me suggest that this is a point where government and compassionate conservatism should intercept.

Finally, I would like to commend all those who volunteer to keep these programs running. In my district, many of these individuals are themselves active seniors. For all these reasons, I strongly support these neighborhood organizations working to strengthen the connection between seniors and their communities. So in recognition of their hard work, as well as the needs of elderly Americans, I urge the conferees to adopt the House language that was crafted by the gentleman from Ohio and fund senior nutrition programs at the highest level. And, again, let me applaud the great work of the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY), Massachusetts and Rhode Island's native son.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY).

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, as a co-chairman of the Older Americans Caucus, I rise tonight in support of the gentleman from Rhode Island's (Mr.

KENNEDY) motion to instruct the conferees of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill to provide full funding for vital seniors' nutrition programs.

Over the next 5 years, the number of Americans eligible to take part in programs under the Older Americans Act will rise by 25 percent as the Baby Boom generation reaches retirement age. As the number of seniors in the United States grows, it is vitally important that nutrition programs are fully funded.

In my home State of Nevada, over 20,000 seniors are served millions of meals annually at the senior centers, schools, and in their own homes. In just the past 5 years, the Meals on Wheels program in southern Nevada, which has the Nation's fastest growing seniors population, has grown from serving 350 homebound clients to over 1,000 today.

As the senior population rapidly grows, the senior services in Las Vegas are striving to keep up with the expanding demand. The Meals on Wheels program in southern Nevada continues to develop innovative ways to handle the growth and widen their service base to more seniors. For instance, one driver delivers a week's worth of frozen meals once a week to a seniors' home in Las Vegas instead of one hot meal a day.

For a senior who is disabled or lives alone, a hot meal delivered to their home or served in a local senior center is invaluable to their well-being and may be the only way that the older Americans are assured that they receive the nutrition that they need to stay healthy. This is especially true for those seniors living under the poverty level. In 2002 the national average of seniors living in poverty was 10 percent. I am sorry to say that in my district 14.6 percent of the seniors are living below the poverty level. For these seniors, assistance in getting healthy meals is critical to their health and their well-being.

Not only are seniors grateful for the comfort of a hot meal, but a study of the Elderly Nutrition Program found that senior participants have a higher daily intake of key nutrients that seniors who do not participate in the nutrition programs have. Funding Meals on Wheels and other programs not only ensures adequate nutrition but also provides an important link to supportive in-home and community-based services and empowers seniors to remain self-sufficient in their own homes. The drivers for Meals on Wheels in southern Nevada, all of whom are retired seniors themselves, not only provide meals but are a critical link to the community for many of the seniors that they serve.

I want to thank the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY) for his leadership in offering this motion and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) for his support. I urge my colleagues to support full funding for the Nation's

senior nutrition programs as a way to ensure the good health and a better quality of life for seniors in Nevada and nationwide.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mrs. CAPPES).

□ 2310

Mrs. CAPPES. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY) for his leadership on this motion to instruct conferees for full funding for senior nutrition programs and to note that it is a second generation to take leadership in this area. I commend, also, the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA), for his leadership in senior issues and the Older Americans Act.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this motion because it is just at the bottom of our priorities that we pay attention to senior nutrition. Very few images are more upsetting and unsettling to any of us to think of our parents and our grandparents, our neighbors, and the elderly going without proper nutrition. Unfortunately, too many seniors live in poverty in our communities and must struggle daily to get the food they need. This is unacceptable and that is the reason for the passage of the Older Americans Act and its reauthorization.

And here we are struggling with the fact that our Federal budget and our appropriation process in this hallowed body is really a reflection of our values as Americans as people, with mothers and fathers, and children and neighbors, and a responsibility to care for those who have cared for us. That is the way this world runs when it is run according to the highest values which we espouse.

Yes, budgets are tight, but we do make priorities. And I am here to agree with my colleague, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY) that our older Americans ought to be a priority. It is such an honor to represent a community and communities in my district, as we all do, to visit among the people who make this program come to life. We fund the Older Americans Act. We fund programs that allow Meals on Wheels to exist. And when we see them at work in the communities, these programs that are run by volunteers, that leverage our precious few dollars and make those dollars stretch, I cannot believe the quality food that is prepared on the budgets that we give them, that they get volunteer donations, the drivers are so committed, their routes mean so much to them, that knock on the door is life-giving to the person who resides on the other side. For some it is their single connection to the outside world. It is food but it is so much more than food.

Now, I just implore all of us here in this body to take seriously our respon-

sibility to fund this legislation at the proper amount that will do justice to our reasons for being here.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a second and just acknowledge the wonderful comments of my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mrs. CAPPES) who so beautifully encapsulated the reason we are here tonight speaking on behalf of this knowledge.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I am perhaps the only Member of the House of Representatives who has trained in the field of gerontology, run a senior citizen program, perhaps someone else has, and actually gone with volunteers, delivered meals in homes, supervised volunteers who delivered meals in homes, and spent a lot of time at congregate meal sites.

Let me tell my colleagues this: If any motion to instruct should be non-political and should receive the unanimous support of this body, that should actually be respected by the group negotiating the compromise here, it is this one, to provide the highest possible levels.

Now, the President, unfortunately, proposed to actually cut funding for Meals on Wheels. Now, he has a lot of ideas about people replacing government programs and that. This is essentially a nongovernmental program. It depends tremendously upon volunteers and community assistance and a lot of locally generated contributions matched with a little bit of Federal funds to leaven the mix. And the President's cut would have eliminated this program for many.

A lot of seniors, this is the only person they are going to see in a day. They are shut in. The only person they are going to see is the person that brings them that hot meal. It helps them stay connected to the community. It gives them a little bit of socialization. It allows people to know that they are doing okay in their homes. There are not a lot of other systems or places to do that. Many of them who I visited with on Friday get very nervous and they cry on Mondays when they see the people coming again. Over the weekend, they have the frozen meals and they had something to eat, but they did not see anybody. They were shut in.

Mr. Speaker, to cut this program as the President has proposed would be a tremendous disservice to those who have given so much to our country over so many productive years and now just need a little bit of help to stay in their homes in their later years, the congregate meal sites, to visit those, and the vitality of our senior citizens in later years. It is inspiring to me many times when I go and I hear and I see as I visit the congregate meal sites. But, again, it is also a tremendous socialization experience.

So this House could do no better than to unanimously adopt this, but not

only unanimously adopt this. We vote on an awful lot of motions to instruct here that are immediately tossed in the trash can by the negotiators. I would hope that this would be one motion that is respected, where we deliver and where we give back a little bit to our seniors who gave so much to us, our grandparents, our great grandparents and others. The greatest generation deserves better than a cut in the programs that are helping the most fragile and vulnerable of them.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, just briefly, I think for those that have listened to this debate tonight, as a society we can take pride in this program of the Older Americans Act. And I might add one that has not been discussed yet is the Caregivers Program which is also in our subcommittee to help people gain the knowledge of how to provide care to their elderly relatives, family, and so on in the home setting. All of this adds up to a real effort to allow those who want to stay in their homes to do so. And in the House bill, we can increase the amount over last year. And we will be very mindful of the thrust of this instruction as we negotiate with the other body in a final number.

But, again, I would say that as Americans we can take pride in what we have done, I think in the Older Americans Act, to allow people to stay in their home, to allow people to have some social contact with the other members of their community, to allow the volunteers who want to help others to have this opportunity. So we certainly support the motion to instruct. And as a conferee, I will do all that I can to urge that we do get the highest possible number within the constraints of priorities that we have in the bill and the constraints of the allocation that we started with originally.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) who is chairman of the Labor Health and Human Services and Education Subcommittee of the Committee on appropriations on which I serve. I want to join him in saying that I think we need to do a lot more within the Older Americans Act, not only in the congregate meal site and the Meals on Wheels, but, as you pointed out, the support for family members, many of them I know that you understand are burning out because they do not have the support that they need to care for their loved ones.

As the chairman has said so well, often the greatest number of caregivers in this country are seniors themselves. And they are caring for their loved ones, and they need to have all the support they can get too. So I thank the chairman for acknowledging that. We

need to look out for the caregivers, as well, if we care about those that they are caring for. I appreciate the fact that he made that observation.

With that, Mr. Speaker, let me just, once again, say that I rise in support of this motion to instruct conferees, to see it to the highest possible level when it comes to nutrition programs, Meals on Wheels, and congregate meal site programs within the conference report.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Kennedy motion to instruct conferees to the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill to insist on the highest funding levels for senior nutrition programs.

All of us know that the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill contains many of the most worthwhile programs administered by the federal government, and nutrition programs for seniors are just one example.

As a new member of this subcommittee, I was impressed by the testimony from the Administration on Aging outlining the enormous good that these programs accomplish each year. Although Chairman REGULA has often reminded us of the need to comply with budget restrictions, I believe he and the Republican members of the subcommittee know the importance of increasing funding for these programs each year in order to keep pace with inflation and to make progress in providing meals to additional seniors.

In California, with an estimated population of over 35 million people, over 4 million people are 65 years or over. These seniors are served over 11 million home-based meals through Older Americans Act programs, and another 9 million congregate meals are served.

These statistics are testament to the enormous leveraging effect that federal nutrition programs accomplish. As testimony by the Administration on Aging reveals, 44 percent of the cost of a congregate meal and 29 percent of the cost of a home-delivered meal comes from Older Americans Act funds—the balance comes from state, community and private contributions.

Unfortunately, the demand still exceeds these combined federal and local community efforts. The need for these programs is undisputed. In fact, testimony from the Administration on Aging reveals that 41 percent of home-delivered nutrition programs and 9 percent of congregate nutrition programs have waiting lists for services. On average, local programs had 85 seniors on a home-delivered meals waiting list with a wait time of nearly 3 months. On average, local programs had 52 seniors on a congregate meals waiting list with a wait time of about 2 months.

As the evidence indicates, I believe it is important that we strive to make incremental progress every year to support the goal of adequate nutrition for seniors by eliminating the waiting lists and providing meals to all seniors who need them.

The differences between the House and Senate bills with regard to senior meals may appear small—about 4 million dollars out of a total of over \$700 million for senior nutrition services. But we know these dollars make an enormous difference in the lives of so many seniors.

I urge my colleagues to support the Kennedy motion so we can make progress again this year.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 2320

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to instruct.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY).

The motion to instruct was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

2003 NATIONAL MONEY LAUNDERING STRATEGY—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Financial Services:

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 2(a) of the Money Laundering and Financial Crimes Strategy Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-310; 31 U.S.C. 5341(a)(2)), enclosed is the 2003 National Money Laundering Strategy, prepared by my Administration.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, November 18, 2003.

ACKNOWLEDGING AN OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTING PEACE IN OUR WORLD NAMED REVEREND DR. MICHAEL BECKWITH

(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge an extraordinary human being. Reverend Dr. Michael Beckwith, an outstanding man, an emissary of peace and a humanitarian for all people, has made a profound and lasting impact on our world through his distinctive stand for peace and harmony in our community.

Having known Reverend Michael, as his community affectionately refers to him, since he was a child, I can unequivocally say that his life is a testament to building community. In the 1970s, he began a journey that to this day embraces the major religions, philosophies and cultures of East and West. One significant manifestation of his vision began in 1986 when Dr. Beckwith founded Agape, a transdenominational community with over 9,000 members currently devoted to the study and practice of the New Thought-Ancient Wisdom tradition of spirituality.

If it is so, as Emerson has stated, that every institution is but the