

world how Hellenic ideals such as equality and friendship have stood the test of time and continue to flourish at a global level. Hellenic culture, whether through its development of democratic government or its espousal of friendly competition, encourages people to come together amicably even during the most difficult of times.

Mr. Speaker, it would be hard to imagine a United States of America, or even the world, without the great contributions from Greece. I will continue to work in Congress to support Hellenic causes and our strong and important alliance. I would like to join my colleagues in congratulating Greece on the anniversary of its independence.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I urge my colleagues to join me in celebrating this anniversary.

THE TELEVISION CONSUMER FREEDOM ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Television Consumer Freedom Act, legislation repealing regulations that interfere with a consumer's ability to obtain desired television programming. The Television Consumer Freedom Act also repeals federal regulations that would increase the cost of a television.

My office has received numerous calls from rural satellite and cable TV customers who are upset because their satellite or cable service providers have informed them that they will lose access to certain network and cable programming. The reason my constituents cannot obtain their desired satellite and cable services is that the satellite and cable "marketplace" is fraught with government interventionism at every level. Local governments have historically granted cable companies franchises of monopoly privilege. Government has previously intervened to invalidate "exclusive dealings" contracts between private parties, namely cable service providers and program creators, and has most recently imposed price controls. The Library of Congress has even been delegated the power to determine prices at which program suppliers must make their programs available to cable and satellite programming service providers.

It is, of course, within the constitutionally enumerated powers of Congress to "promote the progress of Science and Useful Arts by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the Exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries." However, operating a clearing-house for the subsequent transfer of such property rights in the name of setting a just price or "instilling competition" via "central planning" seems to be neither economically prudent nor justifiable under this enumerated power. This process is one best reserved to the competitive marketplace.

It is impossible for the government to set the just price for satellite programming. Over regulation of the cable industry has resulted in competition among service providers for government privilege rather than free market competition among providers to offer a better product at a lower price. While federal regulation does leave satellite programming service pro-

viders free to bypass the governmental royalty distribution scheme and negotiate directly with owners of programming for program rights, there is a federal prohibition on satellite service providers making local network affiliates' programs available to nearby satellite subscribers. This bill repeals that federal prohibition so satellite service providers may freely negotiate with program owners for programming desired by satellite service subscribers. Technology is now available by which viewers could view network programs via satellite as presented by their nearest network affiliate. This market-generated technology will remove a major stumbling block to negotiations that should currently be taking place between network program owners and satellite service providers.

This bill also repeals federal laws that force cable companies to carry certain programs. These federal "must carry" mandates deny cable companies the ability to provide the programming their customers' desire. Decisions about what programming to carry on a cable system should be made by consumers, not federal bureaucrats.

The Television Consumer Freedom Act also repeals federal regulations that mandate that all TVs sold in the United States contain "digital technology." In complete disregard of all free market and constitutional principles, the FCC actually plans to forbid consumers from buying TVs, after 2006 that are not equipped to carry digital broadcasts. According to Stephen Moore of the CATO Institute, this could raise the price of a TV by as much as \$250 dollars. While some television manufacturers and broadcasters may believe they will benefit from this government-imposed price increase, they will actually lose business as consumers refrain from purchasing new TVs because of the government mandated price increase.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government should not interfere with a consumer's ability to purchase services such as satellite or cable television in the free market. I therefore urge my colleagues to take a step toward restoring freedom by cosponsoring my Television Consumer Freedom Act.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 4020, STATE VETERANS HOME NURSE RECRUITMENT ACT OF 2004

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing H.R. 4020, the State Veterans Home Nurse Recruitment Act of 2004, a bill to assist state veterans' homes in hiring and retaining nurses. Mr. Evans, the gentleman from Illinois and Ranking Member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, joins me as an original cosponsor of this important legislation.

H.R. 4020 would allow states which already receive per diem payments and have an established employee incentive programs to apply to receive up to 50 percent of the annual cost of such incentive programs, but no more than 2 percent of the annual amount of per diem payments per fiscal year. These funds would be paid from VA's health care budget, just as the per diem payments are now being paid.

State veterans' homes first began serving veterans in the wake of the Civil War. In 1888, Congress authorized the first Federal aid to states which maintained homes for disabled American soldiers and sailors in need of long term care. At the time, the payments amounted to about 30 cents per resident per day. In the years since, Congress has made several major revisions to the program to expand the base of payments to include specialized hospital, nursing home, domiciliary, and adult day health care.

Now the largest provider of long-term care to our nation's veterans, the state veterans' home system plays a vital role in caring for the growing number of aging veterans. The veteran population most in need of nursing home care, those veterans 85 years or older, grew from about 387,000 in FY 1998 to 870,000 in FY 2003, more than a 100 percent increase over the past five years. This veteran population is expected to continue to rise to about 1.3 million by mid-decade.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in 2002 surveyed the 50 states and Puerto Rico to learn how states are responding to needs for health care workers. Ninety percent reported a shortage of nursing staff as a major concern in their responses. In efforts to respond to these nursing and other health work force shortages, 44 of 50 states reported establishing task forces and commissions to study and seek solutions. The focus of the task forces or commissions in 25 states was to study shortages in the long-term care work force.

While the HHS study documented the extent of the problems nationally, I am aware of difficulties that the three New Jersey state veterans' homes in Vineland, Paramus and Menlo Park, have faced over the past several years in recruiting and retaining quality nursing staff. The nursing shortage in my state of New Jersey was reported by HHS to be among the three highest in the nation.

Mr. Speaker, we have an obligation to ensure that our veterans receive the benefits that they have earned through their service, including long-term care of high quality. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 4020.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO BETTY PROCTOR

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today to pay tribute to Betty Proctor for her selfless dedication to the community of Jefferson County, Colorado, and congratulate her on receiving the "Power of One" award at the 2004 Colorado Woman Conference. This award is bestowed upon women who have made a remarkable impact on their community, and Betty could not be a more worthy recipient.

Betty's life has always revolved around public service, having established more than thirty non-profit organizations over the years. After retiring from the Jefferson County Social Services six years ago, Betty has dedicated her time to an organization she founded, called Helping Hearts & Hands. The organization raises money for people who need emergency

funds and cannot get finances elsewhere, and uses these funds for emergencies such as paying for car repairs so a single mother can keep her job. Betsy's enthusiasm and commitment to her community have been the driving force behind Helping Hearts & Hands, and her efforts recently secured a grant of \$12,000 from a Colorado foundation.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Betty Proctor here today before this body of Congress and this nation and congratulate her on receiving the "Power of One" award. Cynthia Hessin of KRMA-TV selected Betty for this honor, and it is a well-deserved testament to her dedication to public service in Jefferson County and the State of Colorado. I wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING INDIANA STATE
REPRESENTATIVE RICHARD W.
MANGUS ON THE OCCASION OF
HIS RETIREMENT

HON. CHRIS CHOCOLA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Indiana State Representative Richard W. Mangus. He will be retiring from the Indiana House of Representatives this year after a long and distinguished career.

Representative Mangus was first elected to the Indiana House of Representatives in November, 1972. Since that time he has served the people of St. Joseph and Elkhart counties honorably; always seeking to improve the legislative process while representing the needs and sentiments of his constituents.

During his sixteen terms in office, Representative Mangus has served as the Ranking Member on the Environmental Affairs Committee; Ranking Member on the Constitutional Law Committee; Ranking Minority Member on the Natural Resources Committee; Chairman of the Elections and Reappointment Committee; Chairman of the House Environmental Affairs Committee; a Member of the House Human Affairs Committee; and a member of the House Public Policy Committee. He is currently serving as the Ranking Minority Member on the House Committee on Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Rural Development.

He has been honored and recognized by many organizations and fellow legislators throughout his sixteen term career. Some of these distinguished awards have been: Fraternal Order of Police Legislator of the Year; Professional Firefighters Legislator of the Year; District Soil and Water Conservation Special Recognition Award for Support of District Programming; 4-H Leadership 20 Year Service Award; Izaak Walton League Environmental Achievement Award; State of Indiana Sagamore of the Wabash Award; and the Jr. Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Citizen of the Year Award.

Representative Mangus was born in Lakeville, Indiana, in 1930. He and his wife Mary still remain in Lakeville where their five children were raised. Representative Mangus is a member of the Lakeville Lions Club, Lakeville Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, Scottish Rite, Order of the Eastern Star, Lakeville Commerce Association, County Line Brethren Church, and Toastmasters.

Mr. Speaker, I know the citizens of St. Joseph and Elkhart counties join me in congratulating Representative Mangus and wish him continued success in the future.

BOY SCOUTS PRESENT SEN. BOB
MELLOW WITH DISTINGUISHED
CITIZENS AWARD

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my very good friend, the Democratic Leader of the Pennsylvania Senate, Bob Mellow, as he receives the Distinguished Citizens Award from the Boy Scout Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

I ask that my colleagues pay tribute to him as he is honored at a dinner tonight at Genetti's in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Sen. Mellow is a lifelong resident of Peckville, in Lackawanna County and he has dedicated more than two decades of his life to public service. Thanks to his fine leadership in the redistricting process, I am now proud to be Sen. Mellow's Congressman.

Sen. Mellow was first elected as senator from the 22nd district in 1970, and is now serving a district-record ninth term. He was twice elected as Senate president pro tempore, the third highest constitutional office in the Commonwealth.

Sen. Mellow attended Lackawanna Junior College, the University of Scranton and Bethel College in Tennessee, where he received his bachelor of science degree in accounting. He also attended graduate school at Marywood University and served in the Pennsylvania National Guard from 1962 to 1968.

One of Sen. Mellow's hallmark moves as Senate president pro tempore was opening the Senate to television coverage. This has become a permanent part of Senate proceedings and is an important mechanism that encourages public interest in our government.

Sen. Mellow was an early advocate of measures to protect the environment, an issue that he and I both hold close to our hearts. Sen. Mellow was instrumental in passage of the Hazardous Waste Act of 1980. When Northeastern and Central Pennsylvania fell victim to giardiasis in the water supply in 1984, Sen. Mellow introduced legislation to respond to the outbreak of the waterborne disease. Even as he worked on statewide legislation to improve the lives of all Pennsylvanians, he also dedicated himself to improving the environment of Northeastern Pennsylvania, including a park in Peckville named in his honor.

Sen. Mellow sponsored a bill that provided early retirement for public school and state employees in 1991. He co-sponsored workers' compensation legislation in 1993 that lowered insurance costs while eliminating abuses in the system and maintaining legitimate injury claims. Sen. Mellow and I have worked closely on a number of economic development issues important to Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Sen. Mellow is president of the Chic Feldman Foundation and a member of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Association, the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, the state and national societies of public accountants, Knights of Columbus and the Italian-American Democratic League.

Sen. Mellow serves on the board of directors of the Old Forge Bank, the Lourdesmont School and the advisory board of the Worthington-Scranton Campus of Penn State. He is also a steering committee member of the Colleen Giblin Endowment Fund for Child Neurology Research and was honored in 1999 as co-chairperson of the Lupus Foundation of America.

There is no finer or harder-working public servant in Pennsylvania than Bob Mellow. Prior to the most recent redistricting, I admired from afar his tremendous skill and political acumen he displayed in leading the Democrats of the Pennsylvania Senate. Now that our districts overlap and I have become more familiar with his activities in his home district, I am even more impressed by the degree to which he is devoted to the people of Northeastern Pennsylvania and the effort he exerts to improve the quality of their lives. He understands above all that government must be responsive to the needs of the people and he never loses sight of the very real needs of individual constituents.

In the Mellow household, public service is a family affair. I am sure that Bob would be the first to admit that much of his success can be attributed to the unwavering support of his lovely wife, Diane. She and their daughters Melissa and Tressa are often by Bob's side during public events, sometimes even accompanied by Tressa's daughter Hali. The entire Mellow family is an asset to Northeastern Pennsylvania, and I am proud to have them as constituents and friends.

Mr. Speaker, as elected officials, our time in public service is extremely limited. We can only hope to have an impact as lasting as the legacy Sen. Bob Mellow has already attained in Northeastern Pennsylvania and throughout the entire state.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO TERRI
KLEMENTS

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today to pay tribute to Terri Klements, and congratulate her on receiving the "Power of One" award at the 2004 Colorado Woman Conference for her tremendous work with youth in Mesa County, Colorado. Every year, a local newswoman selects an honoree for making a positive impact in their community, and Terri could not be a worthier recipient.

For twenty-two years, Terri worked in hospital administration before she felt a calling to dedicate her efforts to the youth in her community. In 1999, she established the Tree House, a safe haven for youths who felt they had no place else to go. The center is open unconditionally to all youths, providing them a place to go when they need to talk to someone. Terri also serves as a member of the Mesa County Suicide Prevention Coalition, as Chair of the Homeless Youth Task Force, and is a registered director for RAINBOWS, an international peer support program for grieving teens.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Terri Klements today before this body of Congress and this nation, and congratulate her on