

for recognition and enforcement of the award to the Kirovohrad Oblast Court of Appeal during 2001-2002. The Supreme Court of Ukraine has refused the Fund's appeal, casting doubts as to the fulfillment by Ukraine of its obligations under international agreements.

WNISEF has now been forced to file an action against Ukraine to the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (Washington, D.C.), alleging that the actions of the Ukrainian judiciary have violated international law, including Ukraine's obligations under two important international agreements to which Ukraine is party.

We would like to ensure that the Fund is treated fairly under the terms of the U.S.-Ukraine Bilateral Investment Treaty. If WNISEF is not provided basic protection under Ukrainian law, how can other potential foreign investors have any confidence in Ukraine's foreign investment climate?

The Fund has repeatedly expressed its willingness to resolve the dispute by way of negotiations and reaching an amicable agreement. In order to prevent the potential negative effects for Ukraine due to a hearing of this case at the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes, we urge you to facilitate a prompt resolution of this dispute.

Reducing investor risk and increasing investor confidence are the keys to attracting additional foreign capital to Ukraine, which will in turn create jobs, modernize factories and bring numerous other benefits to the Ukrainian people.

It is our hope that American companies doing business in Ukraine maintain full confidence in the Ukrainian system and continue to contribute to its economic development. A prompt resolution of the WNISEF investment dispute will enhance U.S. confidence in Ukraine's commitment to foreign investment protection.

Sincerely,

MARCY KAPTUR,
Co-Chair.
CURT WELDON,
Co-Chair.

RECOGNIZING CLARE ADKIN, JR.

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 30, 2004

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Clare Adkin, Jr., for being recognized as one of five finalists in the National Council on Economic Education (NCEE)/NASDAQ National Teaching Awards.

These awards are presented to teachers in grades 6-12 for creative, original and effective efforts in applying economic content and reasoning skills to instruction on market economies, personal finance, financial markets, entrepreneurship, and the capital formation process. Since 1949, NCEE has developed and implemented programs that equip teachers to get economic and personal finance education into the classroom. The NASDAQ Stock Market Educational Foundation, whose goal is to expand understanding of capital formation and financial markets, sponsors the National Teaching Awards.

Mr. Adkin was chosen for this honor because of the innovative teaching technique he developed to illustrate and explain various complex economic concepts such as opportunity cost, diminishing marginal utility, and ra-

tional ignorance. Using five-by-eight index cards, Mr. Adkin created "Economic Concept Cards," which provide a definition or explanation of an economic concept as well as a narrative description or example and a sample question demonstrating the student's mastery of the concept. After developing the cards, students use them to prepare for tests, including the AP Economics exam, and many students keep the cards to use to study for college economics classes.

At the Cary Academy, Mr. Adkin taught Advanced Principles of Economics, Basic Economics, Great Court Cases, and The Sixties: the Tumultuous Decade. He also served as chair of the Cary Academy History Department. In 2003, Mr. Adkin retired from teaching after a 39-year career.

I am pleased to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Adkin for this national achievement. It is a fitting recognition for someone who devoted nearly four decades to teaching, and who developed effective and engaging techniques for teaching students about economics.

INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY RIGHTS: THE PROPOSED U.N. CONVENTION

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 30, 2004

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, please insert the attached statement into today's CONGRESSIONAL RECORD under Extensions of Remarks.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on March 30th, the Congressional Human Rights Caucus held a groundbreaking Members' Briefing entitled, "International Disability Rights: The Proposed UN Convention." This discussion of the global situation of people with disabilities was intended to help establish disability rights issues as an integral part of the general human rights discourse. The briefing brought together the human rights community and the disability rights community, and it raised awareness in Congress of the need to protect disability rights under international law to the same extent as other human rights through a binding UN convention on the rights of people with disabilities.

Our expert witnesses included Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Mark P. Lagon; the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Ecuador to the United Nations, Ambassador Luis Gallegos; the United Nations Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Johan Schölvinn; the distinguished former Attorney General of the United States, former Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and former Governor of Pennsylvania, the Honorable Dick Thornburgh; the President of the National Organization on Disability (NOD), Alan A. Reich; Kathy Martinez, a member of the National Council on Disabilities (NCD); and a representative of the United States International Council on Disabilities (USCID) and Executive Director of Mental Disability Rights International, Eric Rosenthal.

As I had announced earlier, I intend to place the important statements of our witnesses in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, so that all of my colleagues may profit from their expertise, and I ask that the statement of Mr. Alan Reich be placed at this point in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Mr. ALAN A. REICH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I come before you today in my capacity as Chairman of the World Committee on Disability. There are 600 million men, women, and children with disabilities in the world. Disability knows no political boundaries. Eighty per cent live in developing countries and are doubly disadvantaged by poverty and hunger. The numbers are increasing dramatically. Population growth, war injuries, landmines, HIV/AIDS, malnutrition, disease, substance abuse, accidents, and environmental damage all contribute to this increase. Prejudice abounds. Many are consigned to the shadows of beggary. Anyone can join the disability community in an instant. No one is immune.

While economic and social conditions vary among countries, all of us with disabilities are united by the pursuit of a common goal: full and equal participation in the life of our respective societies. And, we all yearn to end the hurtful discrimination that exists in all our countries. Is not access to employment, education, religious worship and basic services our human right? Surely it is. Mr. Chairman, I commend you and the Human Rights Caucus of our Congress for recognizing disability as a human rights issue and for calling on our nation, which consistently and forcefully provides leadership on human rights issues, to advance the United Nations Convention on Disability Rights.

Disability is a silent crisis; it has not received the attention that this body and the United Nations itself have historically accorded other human rights issues. Indeed, we ourselves shaped the United Nations as the global forum for human rights law and policy. The time has come to end the marginalization of disability in the quest for universal human rights. As president of the National Organization on Disability, I thank you for this significant contribution.

We also are most thankful to those nations who have pressed this cause as an issue of human rights within the U.N. Paradoxically and unfortunately, the United States cannot yet be counted among those countries that have come forward to lead this effort. This is evidenced not only by the U.S. position on the Convention, but also—in a most visible way—by the composition of the U.S. delegation to the U.N., which unlike the delegations of so many other countries, does not include a single individual with a disability!

It is very important that the United States take an active leadership role in securing an effective U.N. Convention. It is not sufficient for us to be a passive participant, any more than it would be for Ecuador, whose distinguished U.N. Permanent Representative Ambassador Luis Gallegos is with us today. Ambassador Gallegos' own involvement in disability matters came about through his nation's winning the World Committee's \$50,000 Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award two years ago. He then quickly assumed leadership of the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee for the U.N. Convention, and it has been a privilege to work with him as he has generated support throughout the world and has guided this endeavor within the U.N. Its successful adoption by the general assembly and the world most certainly will be attributable to Ambassador Gallegos and his dedicated hard work.

Mr. Chairman, for more than a quarter century the United Nations slowly but progressively has recognized the need to confront the disability crisis and has taken important actions. The General Assembly in 1976 proclaimed 1981 as the International Year of Disabled Persons. At the end of the year, I had the privilege of addressing the General Assembly, the first person in a wheelchair ever to do so, to urge adoption of

the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons. This was followed by the Decade of Disabled Persons and the development of the U.N. Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities of Disabled Persons. But these efforts, while important, have been non-binding.

A binding instrument, or, a U.N. Convention, that states can sign and ratify is the next natural step, and it would be a travesty if the United States, which has been at the forefront of the United Nations human rights and disability efforts were not at the forefront of this one. People with disabilities in our country have benefited from the United Nations leadership. Our own National Organization on Disability, of which I have served as President since its founding in 1982, is a direct outgrowth of the United Nations initiative. Literally thousands of national and local organizations throughout the world have come into being and continue to derive their stimulus from the United Nations' core concern. The U.N. stimulates and nurtures interactions among those with disabilities and has helped enormously in solidifying our cause as a global one. Certainly, progress must come about within nations, but the international communication and interaction has provided wonderful opportunities for the exchange of ideas and learning centered on shared values. This International Convention will, as other United Nations instrumentalities before it have done, encourage and stimulate these interactions and that will be very worthwhile for those with disabilities and their family members.

Intensified international communication in the important area of disability, as we witness every day, is good for Americans with disabilities and for our organizations—just as I know our participation benefits our counterparts abroad. This ongoing dialogue and sharing in this area of common interest helps create a climate conducive to active diplomacy in other more political areas of concern. It generates mutual understanding that is so much in need in our world today.

It is incomprehensible that the United States would not seize the opportunity in this non-controversial area of common interest, an area in which we are acknowledged world leader, to ensure the best possible Convention that reflects our principles and values we cherish.

Continued United Nations progress for our field of humanity is an economic, social, and humanitarian imperative. The eyes of the world are upon us. Like the United Nations World Programme of Action before it, the U.N. Convention on Disability Rights will be a beacon of hope for people with disabilities and for all mankind.

Mr. Chairman, I have written President Bush urging that he and his administration vigorously support this Convention at the United Nations. I have urged him to support in all possible ways H. Con. Res. 169. I request your permission to include in the record this letter in its entirety along with my remarks here today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Letter to President George W. Bush]

MARCH 31, 2004.

Hon. GEORGE W. BUSH, *President of the United States*,

WASHINGTON, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Shortly after taking office, on February 1, 2001, you announced the New Freedom Initiative and expressed your strong commitment to improving the lives of America's 54 million citizens with disabilities. I recall well how proud I was to be on the platform with you that day as you announced your plans to bring to reality the hopes and dreams of our constituency.

The entire world has benefited greatly from America's leadership as our nation has

set the pace for the world through our legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and our leadership in the United Nations of ongoing international disability initiatives. Thanks to this commitment, we are looked to by the world, and especially by its 600 million men, women, and children with disabilities, for spirited leadership in this area of concern.

I therefore write to respectfully request that you continue our nation's world leadership in the area of disability by instructing the U.S. Departments of State and Justice to advance aggressively the work in which our nation and many others are engaged presently at the United Nations to develop a U.N. Convention on Disability Rights. Many other U.N. member nations are wondering why the United States, as a long-time leader in this area of concern (as you and your father have asserted and demonstrated), is not pursuing development of this Convention.

There are humanitarian and economic reasons why America should be out in front on this issue. Because the world's disabled are highly marginalized as a distinct minority as well as within all other minorities, they need America's and the U.N.'s help. The U.N. Convention will encourage action among governments and non-governmental organizations everywhere that will have a profound impact over time. People with disabilities around the world will benefit from America's commitment and example. We Americans with disabilities will continue to benefit greatly from the interactions and sharing of experience stimulated by the Convention.

The United Nations and most members regard disability as a human rights issue. America cannot afford to forfeit its avowed leadership as the champion of human rights in the world, and backing this initiative would be a wonderful expression of our human rights concerns.

Please, Mr. President, direct your Administration team to take a positive, aggressive leadership role in bringing about the U.N. Convention on Disability Rights. I also request that you ensure that the U.S. delegation at the U.N. include people with disabilities themselves to maximize its effectiveness. I am sure you have heard our cry, "nothing about us without us." We need to be at the table.

Finally, the House of Representatives International Relations Committee has recognized the importance and value of such a Convention by voting H. Con. Res. 169 out of committee unanimously. It is currently awaiting scheduling for the floor. We support this resolution and the U.N. Convention itself. We respectfully urge you to seize this opportunity for the good of our nation and for people with disabilities everywhere.

With all best wishes,

Respectfully yours,

ALAN A. REICH,
Chairman.

MARRIAGE PENALTY TAX BILL

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 30, 2004

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, when a couple plans to marry, it is a time of anticipation, joy, and yes, stress. There is much to think about, to plan for, and to organize. But when a couple is finally standing at the altar, they should not be thinking about paying more in taxes. When the marriage penalty tax was in effect, there is evidence that couples were thinking just that: many couples stayed unmarried for

tax purposes, and others even tried to game the system by divorcing each December and remarrying each January. Unless they went to great lengths to avoid marriage altogether, many couples were walloped with the marriage penalty at tax time.

The marriage penalty did not always exist. When the Federal Government first levied an income tax in 1913, all taxpayers filed individual tax returns, and the rate schedules did not differentiate between singles and married couples. By basing a married couple's federal income tax entirely on the separate income of each spouse, the original code taxed married couples no differently than it taxed single taxpayers.

Created in 1969, the marriage penalty caused many married couples to pay more in taxes than the sum of what they would have paid as unmarried individuals filing separately. In recent years, it punished married couples where both spouses worked with an average tax penalty of \$1,100, while giving couples where only one spouse worked a marriage bonus. By making the repeal of the marriage penalty permanent, we will allow 70,000 working families in my district—and 810,000 in New Jersey—to use their savings for mortgage payments, car payments, college payments, childcare, or other needed expenses. It will be beneficial to the New Jersey economy.

This vote is the sixth in a series of votes over my time in Congress to remove the marriage penalty. I have always voted for its repeal. In fact, several years ago, I voted to override the former President's veto of it. Simply put, Americans have rejected the idea that our tax laws should make it more expensive to be married than to be single.

Unfortunately, the Republican leadership has made a botch of tax policy in this country. The Tax Code remains burdensome, unwieldy, and in places, unfair. Some Americans pay excessive and unfair taxes relative to other Americans. The unfairness is glaringly obvious. It should be fixed.

I believe, as many do, that tax cuts should first go to the middle-class. Not only do middle-class tax cuts ease the tax burden on the group that feels it most, but they also deliver more economic stimulus than tax cuts targeted to the wealthiest 1 percent. Through middle-class tax cuts, we can help families in New Jersey and around the country provide for their families' healthcare, education, housing, and other priorities.

The marriage penalty is one of the only parts of the Republican tax package that can fairly be described as a middle-class tax cut. That is why I support its repeal, even though I do not support the broader budgetary approach that has taken our country back down the road of deficits as far as the eye can see. Generally speaking, tax policy has a unique role in the American political system: it is perhaps where the government and the citizen interact most directly. Because the marriage penalty seems illogical and capricious, it makes the whole government seem illogical and capricious. The repeal was passed in 2001, and it should be sustained.

Of course, I am disappointed that this legislation is not offset with other revenue or savings. This repeal could have been done with a higher priority placed on balancing the other side of the ledger, but the Republican leadership is more interested in symbolism than fiscal responsibility. Still, although I do not support—and have voted against—the overall