

INTRODUCING THE IMPROVING ACCESS TO ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2004

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Improving Access to Assistive Technology for Individuals with Disabilities Act. This legislation improves the Assistive Technology Act to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to assistive technology services and equipment throughout their lives. I would like to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), the Chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for his assistance in bringing this bill to this point.

Since 1988, the federal government has played an important role in helping states develop systems to provide access to assistive technology devices and services for individuals with disabilities. The original intent of this program was to provide seed money for states to establish state-wide systems to help individuals with disabilities. Since then all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the outlying areas have established systems of some design and scope. In the original legislation, we wisely put in a sunset provision that caused us to reexamine the role and scope of the original program.

For the past 2 years, my subcommittee has been investigating this program; we have held a hearing on this important program, visited assistive technology centers, and discussed the benefits and drawbacks of the existing program. We have sought broad input from our friends across the aisle, from the disability community, and from the state programs to gain valuable insight into this program. As we go through the legislative process we will continue to seek input from our friends on the other side of the aisle as well as our friends in the disability community to make this a strong bill.

In the bill we are introducing today, we are shifting the focus of the program to individuals with disabilities. Our goal is to help states get more pieces of assistive technology into the hands of individuals with disabilities. This new focus will expand the reach of the state programs by moving away from support of administrative activities toward emphasizing the importance of getting the technology itself to the individuals with disabilities that need it.

Although we are refocusing the program, we certainly recognize the importance of state flexibility, and our bill maintains that important element of the program. We direct states to focus their efforts of putting technology into the hands of individuals with disabilities.

We ask that States develop alternative financing methods to enhance the ability of individuals with disabilities to access assistive technology devices and services through low interest loans, interest buy-down programs, revolving loan funds, loan guarantee, or other mechanisms of the State's choice.

Additionally, we allow States to choose to develop: Assistive technology device loan programs to support short-term loan programs of assistive technology devices to individuals with disabilities; assistive technology device reutilization programs (i.e., recycling) to use assist-

ive technology devices multiple times with multiple individuals; or assistive technology device demonstration programs to teach people with disabilities about the variety of available assistive technology devices and how to use them.

These are important and necessary activities and I am confident that states will continue to work with stakeholders in their communities to enhance or develop comprehensive programs that will provide tremendous benefit to individuals with disabilities. In fact, we require that states do just that, so we are ensuring that individuals with disabilities will continue to have important input in this program.

I deeply appreciate the importance of assistive technology devices and services for individuals with disabilities. These devices can make a major difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities. Assistive technology can help individuals meet the challenges they face every day, and through the use of assistive technology, an individual with a disability can overcome almost any obstacle he or she faces.

I look forward to working with the members of the Committee, other members of Congress, and other stakeholders as we craft legislation that will build upon and improve previous reforms. These steps to strengthen assistive technology programs will also complement our ongoing effort to ensure that children with disabilities receive a quality education. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of the Improving Access to Assistive Technology for Individuals with Disabilities Act.

TRIBUTE TO EVA GALLAGHER AND THE ONCOLOGY NURSING SOCIETY

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2004

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the important and essential role that oncology nurses play in providing quality cancer care. These nurses are principally involved in the administration and monitoring of chemotherapy and the associated side-effects patients experience. As anyone ever treated for cancer will tell you, oncology nurses are intelligent, well-trained, highly skilled, kind-hearted angels who provide quality clinical, psychosocial and supportive care to patients and their families. In short, they are integral to our nation's cancer care delivery system.

Cancer is a complex, multifaceted and chronic disease, and people with cancer are best served by a multidisciplinary health care team specialized in oncology care, including nurses who are certified in that specialty. This year alone, 1.3 million Americans will hear the words, "You have cancer." In addition, 556,000 will lose their battle with this terrible disease. Every day, oncology nurses see the pain and suffering caused by cancer and understand the physical, emotional, and financial challenges that people with cancer face throughout their diagnosis and treatment. Oncology nurses play a central role in the provision of quality cancer care as they are principally involved in the administration and moni-

toring of chemotherapy and the associated side-effects patients may experience.

Today, more than two-thirds of cancer cases strike people over the age of 65, and the number of cancer cases diagnosed among senior citizens is projected to double by 2030. At the same time, many of the community-based cancer centers are facing significant barriers in hiring the specialized oncology nurses they need to treat cancer patients. It is estimated that there will be a shortage of 1.1 million nurses in the year 2015.

The Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) is the largest organization of oncology health professionals in the world, with more than 30,000 registered nurses and other health care professionals. Since 1975, the Oncology Nursing Society has been dedicated to excellence in patient care, teaching, research, administration and education in the field of oncology. The Society's mission is to promote excellence in oncology nursing and quality cancer care. To that end, ONS honors and maintains nursing's historical and essential commitment to advocacy for the public good by providing nurses and healthcare professionals with access to the highest quality educational programs, cancer-care resources, research opportunities and networks for peer support.

On behalf of the people with cancer and their families in Minnesota's 3rd Congressional District, I would like to acknowledge Eva Gallagher for her leadership within the Oncology Nursing Society as a member of the ONS Board of Directors. Through Eva's and ONS' leadership, our nation is charting a course that will help us win the war on cancer.

The ONS has 4 chapters in my home state of Minnesota. Located in the Bloomington, Esko, Hayfield and Milan areas, these chapters serve the oncology nurses in the state and help them continue to provide high quality cancer care to patients and their families in our state.

I commend the Oncology Nursing Society for all of its efforts and leadership over the last 29 years and thank the Society and its members for their ongoing commitment to improving and assuring access to quality cancer care for all cancer patients and their families. I urge my colleagues to support them in their important endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO THE OREGON INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2004

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with you and my colleagues my distinct pride in a winning institution in my district, the Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT). Located in Klamath Falls, Oregon, OIT is nationally recognized for its high standards and results-oriented approach to education. The school motto, "First Hired, Highest Paid," is no idle boast. A few years ago I had the honor of serving as commencement speaker during an OIT graduation, and nearly all of the graduates I addressed had been offered high-paying jobs.

Able led by President Martha Anne Dow, OIT pursues excellence in every aspect of the college experience, from research and technology application to career-oriented instruction and competitive athletics.

Mr. Speaker, it is in the realm of athletics that OIT most recently demonstrated its championship mettle when the men's basketball team won the NAIA Division II National Title. Seeded 16th, the OIT Hustlin' Owls were not favored to win, but when the final buzzer sounded they had proven themselves to be the best team in the nation among NAIA Division II teams. Their series of upset victories may have surprised some sportscasters, but it was no surprise to the fans of OIT who have come to expect great things from the Hustlin' Owls under the phenomenal coaching of Danny Miles.

Coach Danny Miles, a NAIA Hall of Fame coach, took over a losing basketball program at OIT thirty-three years ago and never looked back. Racking up 734 career wins, Danny ranks 17th on the all-time career victory list. It is no surprise that this year he was named NAIA Coach of the Year, an honor that he shares with his able staff: Mike Pisan, Doug Kintzinger, Jarrod Davis, Milijia Mitrovic, and Aristide Agnimmel.

Although Coach Miles is proud to have won the national championship, he is even more proud of the fact that he, his staff, his team, and the OIT fans won the James Naismith Award for sportsmanship. This was not just a victory of superior athleticism and coaching; it was a victory of strong character.

I join the OIT family in my pride over senior Kevin Baker's winning the tournament's Most Valuable Player award. Baker was also joined by teammates Florian Houget and Todd Matthews on the All-Tournament team. It goes without saying that a championship performance involves every team member, so I also want to share with you my pride in Hustlin' Owls Michael Nunes, Jared Hall, Levell Hesla, Joe Billings, David Michaelis, Matt Johnson, Elijah Page, and Alex Carlson, each of whom contributed so much to their team's winning effort.

Mr. Speaker, for those who are familiar with the story of the Klamath Basin in my district, you know the story of a strong, proud people who live their lives with heart and determination. It is no surprise that the bond between OIT and the Klamath community is so strong. They share the character of winners who never, ever give up. We can all find inspiration from OIT's achievements, many more of which I expect to recognize in the future.

TRIBUTE TO PRIVATE FIRST
CLASS MARQUIS ANTOINE
WHITAKER

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2004

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to pay special tribute to one of our nation's many heroes, Army Pfc. Marquis Antoine Whitaker. Pfc. Whitaker lost his life April 27 while serving his country in Iraq. He was only twenty years old.

A beloved son and brother, a proud American and a devoted Christian, Marquis loved football, music, his GMC Jimmy and his girlfriend, Tarai, who misses him very much. He graduated from Kendrick High School in 2002 and joined the Army only months later, to give back to his country and put his career on a responsible path.

He began basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri and eventually became a motor transport operator assigned to the Regimental Headquarters Troop, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, at Fort Polk, Louisiana. Pfc. Whitaker was deployed to Iraq in July 2003. Although his family expected him home April 14, his tour was extended due to the increase in insurgent activity in Iraq. Two weeks later a truck crashed into the back of his Humvee, pushing it partially over the side of a bridge. Marquis Whitaker fell while attempting to climb to safety.

Pfc. Whitaker joins 756 American troops who have given their lives to bring freedom to the people of Iraq. We mourn their loss and the promise of their futures, like that of Marquis, were cut all too short.

Mr. Speaker and distinguished colleagues, I ask you to join me in honoring Pfc. Marquis Whitaker. I promise his mother Jacqueline, his father Anthony, his five sisters and two brothers that Marquis will forever remain a hero in the eyes of his country and that we will never forget the sacrifice he made in the name of freedom and democracy.

IN RECOGNITION OF SHIRLEY V.
EDWARDS

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2004

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to recognize the achievements of Shirley V. Edwards, a visionary and the principal of EBC High School/Bushwick, Brooklyn in the 12th Congressional District.

After 25 years of blight, Bushwick is experiencing a renaissance. Despite this, it continues to suffer from a high rate of unemployment and poverty. Shirley Edwards, armed with her education specialist background, knew she had a mission to fulfill. She understood that education was the key to breaking the cycle of poverty, and she dedicated herself to the creation of EBC High School for public service and academic excellence.

For the last 10 years, Principal Edwards has called EBC High School/Bushwick her home, serving as a mentor to both students and teachers alike. She is said to have led EBC/Bushwick down the "road not taken," showing many in the community that it was possible to leave an imprint when they had lost all hope. She was instrumental in creating an array of innovative programs, leaving behind an important legacy that forms the foundation of the high school.

Principal Edwards, among her many positive contributions, introduced students to the value of public service and giving back to their community, encouraging them to make a real difference. She witnessed first-hand how drugs, crime and poverty devastated lives, and she made it her mission to empower students and to give them a second chance at earning an education and forging a better path for themselves in the future. Principal Edwards motivated students to become enthusiastic lifelong learners and responsible adults. She truly changed lives—now over 90 percent of her graduating classes are pursuing college degrees.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Shirley V. Edwards, and join with my colleagues in the House of Representatives to recognize her extraordinary work in New York City's public education system.

TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR F. JAMES
ROHLF

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2004

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Professor F. James Rohlf, for his outstanding career as a scientist and professor at Stony Brook University, who was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of the Arts and Sciences in 2001.

Professor Rohlf's current research is concerned with the development, evaluation, and application of new statistical methods for use in geometric morphometrics. Over the last few years he has written papers demonstrating how standard statistical methods such as principal components analysis, canonical variates analysis, multiple regression, and other methods can be adapted for the analysis of shape.

His work also emphasizes the development of interactive computer software to perform the unique computations needed in geometric morphometrics. This software also provides the special interactive graphical displays to enable users to visualize shapes and has made it possible for these new methods to be applied routinely by many biologists.

Due to the unfamiliarity of most biologists with the types of mathematics needed to understand the methods used in geometric morphometrics, many one to two week workshops have been held in cities and universities around the world, which Professor Rohlf has organized or in which he has been the principal lecturer. These programs are to teach the necessary techniques and to give potential users a chance to collect data, learn how to use the software, and to interpret the results.

Professor F. James Rohlf is also author and co-author of many publications. Early in his career he received fellowships from U.S. Public Health Service to conduct predoctoral research in 1959–1962, and a National Science Foundation postdoctoral appointment in 1962. He has received many honors including: W.J. Eckert Visiting Environmental Scientist; IBM T.J. Watson Research Center; Professor Visiting, Universidad Nacional del Litoral, Santa Fe, Argentina; Visiting Professor University of Rome "La Sapienza," Dipartimento di Biologia Animale e dell'Uomo; and the election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Professor Rohlf held positions such as research assistant in 1958–59, teaching assistant in fall of 1959 and research associate in the summer of 1962 at the University of Kansas. He was visiting assistant professor of entomology in the spring of 1965 and associate professor of statistical biology, 1966–69. And, he was an assistant professor of biology at the University of California, Santa Barbara 1962–1966.

Professor F. James Rohlf is interested in and has been involved in the applications of mathematical methods and statistics (especially multivariate statistics) to problems in biology with emphasis on morphometrics and