

Mr. Higgins enriched the lives of everyone fortunate enough to have known him. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the House of Representatives, we extend our deepest appreciation to Mr. Higgins' family and friends. Please join me in honoring Mr. Andrew Jackson Higgins, an exceptional individual who dedicated his life to the service of our country.

COMMENDING THE ALAMEDA CORRIDOR TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2004

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority (ACTA). Earlier today, ACTA representatives formally presented the U.S. Department of Transportation with the final payments for a loan, including interest, which totals nearly \$573 million. This final payment was made 28 years ahead of schedule.

Opened on time and within budget, the Alameda Corridor is a 20-mile rail expressway connecting dock terminals in the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to transcontinental rail yards located in downtown Los Angeles. The project proceeds primarily along and adjacent to Alameda Street—with grade separations to safeguard local communities and pedestrian and vehicle traffic—through or bordering the cities of Vernon, Huntington Park, South Gate, Lynwood, Compton, Carson, Los Angeles, and the County of Los Angeles.

Much of the Corridor's success was made possible by an innovative federal loan, which deferred debt service repayments in the early years of the project and allowed for financing at reasonable interest rates through the bond market. In fact, this novel financing approach was the basis for the Transportation Infrastructure Financing and Innovation Act of 1998 (TIFIA), a national program to select projects for credit assistance.

The Alameda Corridor is a project of national significance as it facilitates the movement of commerce from around the world to the entire nation. The Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach together handle more than 40 percent of the nation's imports by value. More than 2 million jobs nationwide are associated with trade through these ports. These workers, and this country, benefit from the Federal government's role in assuming the early project risk that made the Alameda Corridor possible.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me again congratulate the ACTA team for their management of the project and the early loan repayment completed today. The Alameda Corridor is a model project and has set a new standard for excellence. I look forward to working on future "goods movement" projects such as this that will benefit our region and the Nation.

IN RECOGNITION THE MOTHERS' CLUB OF PINE CREST SCHOOL

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2004

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Mothers' Club of Pine Crest School in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. For 60 years, the Mothers' Club has been the lifeblood of Pine Crest School. The organization is comprised of over 450 mothers of current elementary-age students.

The Mothers' Club works diligently behind the scenes to ensure an optimal educational experience for Pine Crest's students. They promote community by organizing orientation programs which help acclimate new students and their parents to Pine Crest School. Every Pine Crest School event benefits from the support, involvement and assistance of the Mothers' Club. The Mothers' Club coordinates family barbecues, holiday gatherings and a festival of the arts.

The Mothers' Club always lovingly and willingly contributes to Pine Crest School, in any capacity necessary. This includes coordinating and chaperoning an annual field trip to Washington, D.C. These dedicated mothers volunteer in the classrooms and tutor students, assist in the library and implement a book share program, and serve lunch to students.

Mr. Speaker, the efforts of the Mothers' Club benefit not only Pine Crest School but also the greater South Florida community. These women coordinate various philanthropic endeavors to benefit local charities. Their hard work is noticed and appreciated throughout South Florida. In honor of their hard work for the last 60 years, I wish to recognize and commend the wonderful women of Pine Crest School's Mothers' Club for their dedicated service to children and elementary education.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF INCREASING AWARENESS OF AUTISM

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2004

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 605 to recognize the importance of generating awareness about autism, increasing research efforts into this terrible disorder, and improving support for those who suffer from autism and those who help care for the autistic. My 13 year old nephew Jack has autism, so I am part of an extended family working to raise a child with this disability. My family's ongoing experience has impressed upon me how critical it is for us, as a society, to give those with autism and their families the support they need to fight this devastating disease, and to commit the resources necessary to determine the cause of autism and to develop a cure for the millions of afflicted individuals.

Autism is not rare. Autism affects approximately 1 in every 166 children in the United States, making it one of the most common childhood medical disorders. In many cases,

those with autism will never marry, they will never live independently, and more than half of them will never learn to speak. Families affected by autism are forced to bear an extraordinary burden. Parents, siblings and friends have to learn to try to communicate with and care for a child who may be incapable of either verbal or nonverbal communication or who may exhibit erratic behavior. The fact that autism is so common is proof that autism research is deserving of our nation's wholehearted support.

Funding for autism research at the National Institutes of Health has been increased from approximately \$93 million in Fiscal Year 2003 to \$96 million in Fiscal Year 2004, but we know that is not enough. Scientists continue to disagree on the cause or causes for the dramatic increase in the number of autism cases diagnosed in the United States. Only with increased research will we be able to understand autism, find better treatments and effective prevention methods, and hopefully, someday soon, develop a cure for this terrible disease.

I am pleased to be here today as a cosponsor of H. Res. 605. I applaud Representative TIERNEY for authoring this Resolution and working to bring attention and resources to an all too common, but devastating disorder. At its peak, there were 20,000 cases of polio each year. Today, less than 10 Americans contract polio annually. By working together and by never giving up, I know we can make autism just as rare. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF INCREASING AWARENESS OF AUTISM

SPEECH OF

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2004

Mr. TERRY. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 605 to support National Autism Awareness Month; commend the parents and caregivers of autistic children; support aggressive research into autism; and recognize the importance of early intervention.

If you were to see nine-year-old Jacob Nolan Hirschfeld on the baseball diamond today you might be impressed with his skills in playing our national pastime. Since his middle name was inspired by the great pitcher Nolan Ryan, you might also think that his success on the field was destined. But Jacob's ability to play baseball, and to do everyday things such as attending school and playing with friends, were never guaranteed.

Jacob Hirschfeld has been diagnosed with autism.

Jake struggles with most of the issues common among the autistic. At four years of age he could only speak in one syllable words. He was scared of loud noises and bright lights. He had many of the compulsions that are common with these children, and was fearful of most people outside of his immediate family. Jacob's father, Mark Hirschfeld, has said "our family was literally a prisoner to autism."

Jake's diagnosis was devastating to his parents. But even more difficult was the fact that physicians, educators and other professionals had little understanding of this complex disorder and what could be done to help children like Jacob. Stereotypes abounded.

One physician told the Hirschfeld's that Jake had no better than a one in ten chance of living outside of institutional care. Jake's mother, Nancy, recalls that "one preschool initially turned away our son because of their fear of autism, but once they began to see Jake as a person who had unique gifts as well as challenges they accepted him."

Thankfully, the Hirschfeld family persevered and sought services to help their son. Their search led them to engage an intensive early intervention therapy called Applied Behavior Analysis, or ABA. This therapy has been available for over twenty years, and was recently featured on NBC Nightly News and ABC's Primetime Live. It is one of the treatments that can significantly reduce the symptoms of autism. Because the cause or causes of autism have yet to be identified, early intervention is the best course available for parents today.

Unfortunately, these services are not universally supported by public or private insurance, so families like the Hirschfeld's pay up to \$60,000 per year to help their children. In the State of Nebraska, there are now organizations who offer these services, including the Families for Effective Autism Treatment, or FEAT. Although FEAT now serves over 20 families in Eastern Nebraska, countless other families nationwide cannot access this treatment because of its prohibitive cost.

But the tremendous investment can pay great dividends. Jacob Hirschfeld could once barely speak, but he was recently one of the stars in an Easter musical at his school. He was once scared of most people, but is now regularly seen riding his bike around the neighborhood, greeting neighbors and playing with friends. And yes, he plays a pretty decent game of baseball. Jake has come a long way, but he will continue to need services to help him along his journey, just as many autistic children in America need support and care.

Early intervention has also made a difference in the lives of Patrick and Jean McDermott, and their son, Grant, who was diagnosed with autism when he was 22 months old.

Grant's mother Jean said "it was devastating to hear the words 'diagnosis of autism' as parents of this beautiful child. My husband and I wondered what his future would hold. After the initial shock, we started researching what we could do to give him a brighter future."

The McDermott's also chose the ADA early intervention therapy. Therapists worked with Grant about 35 hours a week, teaching him basic and then more advanced skills. Grant is now in regular school with no aides, and will be going to kindergarten this Fall. His future is looking bright and the McDermott's believe he will live a full life, but it will always be a challenge having an autistic son until a cure can be found.

Autism now affects 1 out of every 166 children in the United States. Boys are four times more likely to have autism than girls. This developmental disorder robs individuals of their ability to communicate and interact with others. Some autistic children seem barely able to distinguish their parents from strangers.

The costs of caring for autistic individuals is high financially as well as emotionally. Nationwide, an estimated \$90 billion is spent every year. Specialized treatment in developmental centers costs about \$80,000 per child, and special education programs cost about

\$30,000 per autistic child. Services are needed to help reduce these burdens on families and society.

Mr. Speaker, there is a great need for increased public awareness about autism, and more aggressive research into this disorder to help American families like the Hirschfeld's and the McDermott's. I am proud to be a co-sponsor of H. Res. 605, and urge my colleagues to join me in wholeheartedly voting for its passage today.

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE
SENSE OF THE HOUSE THAT
THERE IS A NEED FOR IN-
CREASED EDUCATION AND
AWARENESS ABOUT HEPATITIS C

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2004

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, May has been designated as Hepatitis Awareness month. In light of that, I rise today to highlight one type of Hepatitis that is an important health issue facing our country—the Hepatitis C virus. Hepatitis C is now the most common bloodborne infection in the United States infecting an estimated 2.7 million Americans and more than 32,000 in my home State of New Mexico alone. Further exacerbating the situation is the fact that it is estimated that less than 5 percent of individuals with Hepatitis C are receiving treatment. These statistics alone underscore the critical need to increase education and awareness about this virus. Today I am introducing a resolution that calls for exactly that.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the figures I mentioned above, it is also worth noting that approximately 80 percent of those infected with Hepatitis C develop chronic liver disease with an increased risk for development of cirrhosis and liver cancer. In fact, in the United States Hepatitis C is estimated to be the cause of 40 percent to 60 percent of cases of chronic liver disease and 8,000 to 10,000 deaths annually.

One population in our society for whom Hepatitis C is a particular concern is our veterans. A study released in July 2003 measured the prevalence of Hepatitis C in a sample of veterans treated in a homeless veterans program in Massachusetts over a five-year period. The study found an overall prevalence rate of HCV infection of 44 percent, a rate more than 10 times higher than the national rate for men age 20–59. According to the study, adjusting for age, significant risk factors in the sample included a history of substance abuse and service during the Vietnam era. However, this is by no means the only at-risk population.

Native Americans are another segment of our population who are experiencing the destructive effects of the Hepatitis C virus. Although Native Americans experience infection rates on average with other populations, because of other obstacles to accessing care and accessing quality care, they are experiencing much higher death rates and years of life lost as a result of chronic liver disease.

Mr. Speaker, these are but two examples of specific demographic groups dealing with the realities of the Hepatitis C virus. But as indi-

cated by the number of Americans infected with this virus it is clearly a much more widespread concern. As a nation we must begin confronting the rising human and economic costs of this virus. And we in Congress must begin confronting the policy choices we need to make to stem these costs. Passing this resolution will be an important step in this process.

EXPRESSING CONCERN OF CON-
GRESS OVER IRAN'S DEVELOP-
MENT OF MEANS TO PRODUCE
NUCLEAR WEAPONS

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2004

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I abhor nuclear weapons and would like nothing better than to see the world free of these weapons. I believe that Iran is a nation that we cannot trust. I also believe the House Concurrent Resolution rushed through Congress by the Republicans with little debate and even less clarity in intent is wrong, and I cannot support it.

The wording of the Iran Resolution reminds me of the blank check the President got for Iraq. Here's what I mean. The relevant portion of Section 2 of the Iran Resolution says: "... to use all appropriate means to deter, dissuade and prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. . . ." We must not make the same mistake twice. We need to deal with Iran. We need to deal with nuclear weapons programs, but this is not the way to do it.

REMARKS BY THE HONORABLE
DAVE OBEY

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2004

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to submit the humble, humorous and insightful remarks of my dear friend and Dean of the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation, the Honorable DAVE OBEY. The gentleman was the honored guest recently at the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Department of Political Science as it celebrated its Centennial. I was given a copy of his remarks and was captivated. Written with his characteristic no nonsense Wisconsin affect, this wonderful speech is a treasure to be shared. To that end, I submit it for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

I came to Madison in 1958—after two years at the UW-Marathon County Center in Wausau—to get a poly-sci degree.

Arthur Henderson, my high school history teacher, who had worked with the great William Hesse, told me that I should seek out Ralph Huitt as my faculty advisor and take as many courses from him as possible if I wanted to understand how government and politics really worked. That's exactly what I did.

I had many other fabulous professors: Leon Epstein, Bernie Cohen, Fred von der Mehden, David Fellman, John Armstrong, Henry Hart, to name a few.