

Renee Elizabeth Burdick for her selection as winner of the 2004 LeGrand Smith Scholarship. This honor not only recognizes her efforts, but represents a testament to the parents, teachers, and other individuals whose personal interest, strong support, and active participation contributed to her success. To this remarkable young woman, we extend our most heartfelt good wishes for all her future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO TRI-COUNTY HEAD
START DIRECTOR ORION FLOWERS

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Tri-County Head Start Director Orion Flowers, who is approaching the end of a long and distinguished career of public service. A dedicated and committed individual, Orion has served the communities and children of southwest Michigan for over 30 years. Through his leadership as Director, Orion helped the program grow from serving 100 to 1026 children.

Since becoming Head Start Director in 1970, Orion devotedly and selflessly committed himself to the betterment of countless families. Orion is widely known for his extensive charity and dedication to local individuals and the community as a whole. He spent a career devoted to improving the lives of the citizens of southwest Michigan, and the area is forever in his debt. There is no question that Orion's dedication and contributions to the Tri-County will be missed.

One example of Orion's diligent work occurred in the early 1970's, when he initiated a program whereby children would come to a Mobile Unit for classes. In conjunction with that, a Home Based program began where a Home Visitor would go into a family's home to assist parents in teaching their children an array of subjects and concerns. Remarkably the Mobile Unit and Home Based concepts are still in use today.

Many words come to mind as one reflects upon Orion Flower's public service to our community. He is selfless, generous, giving, caring, humble . . . the list goes on. Our community is in debt to Orion Flowers for his continued public service since 1970. I wish him and his family all the best in retirement. Orion's contributions to our community have been many, and we are all better off because of his service. He will be truly missed by the folks in southwest Michigan.

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISH-
MENTS OF MR. J.J. AMARO

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. J.J. Amaro, a great friend who has distinguished himself as a civil and community leader. As a member of the San Antonio Water System Board of Trustees since 1994, Mr. Amaro has provided our local

water supply company and the San Antonio community with outstanding service and dedication. He has been the voice of many who for too many years had no voice.

During Mr. Amaro's decade of tenure, the San Antonio Water System has enjoyed an unparalleled period of innovation and has become a model for water systems across the country while maintaining low water rates for consumers. Mr. Amaro and the board created a 50-year master plan that was approved in 1998 to provide for San Antonio's steeply growing population. Importantly, he has worked with the board to bring water resources to people and neighborhoods long overlooked in our city's history.

By implementing new technologies, the San Antonio Water System has developed premier water recycling programs as well as an aquifer storage and recovery system to protect this precious resource. In addition, he has helped SAWS protect the Edwards Aquifer—the principal source of our drinking water—by implementing regulations and purchasing 9,000 acres within the recharge zone. In recognition of these improvements, this utility has earned numerous awards for environmental excellence, quality engineering designs, and public education programs.

While the San Antonio Water System has benefited immensely from Mr. Amaro's expertise, other organizations have also been fortunate to have his generous assistance. Mr. Amaro serves as a board member for the St. Peter/St. Joseph Children's Home and the United Negro College Fund.

On May 12, 2004, colleagues, friends and family will gather together to recognize J.J. Amaro's leadership and numerous hours of community service on behalf of the people of San Antonio. It is a pleasure to recognize and thank Mr. Amaro for his many contributions and public service. I ask the Members of the House of Representatives to join me in honoring this gentleman on his retirement from the San Antonio Water System Board of Trustees and wish Mr. J.J. Amaro and his family all the best on this special day.

HONORING BRUNO BETTEGA FOR
HIS 50 YEARS OF VOLUNTEER
FIREFIGHTER SERVICE.

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a man who's selfless and tireless dedication has been a tremendous service to the community where he lives.

Bruno Bettega has dedicated fifty years of his life as a volunteer firefighter for the Northvale Volunteer Fire Department in Northvale, NJ. Even more amazingly, at age 92, Bruno still plays an active role in the department and is their oldest active member.

During Mr. Bettega's half-century of service he has participated in numerous supportive roles. Bruno is also a member of the Northvale Fire Department Exempt Fireman's Association.

Volunteer fire departments perform a sometimes thankless, but absolutely imperative service to the communities they protect. The

lives of our family and friends are in their hands and they do a truly commendable job keeping each and everyone of us safe.

Bruno Bettega should be regarded as nothing less than a hero to his community. I urge all my colleagues to join with me in celebrating his achievements and thanking him for all that he has done.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG
REIMPORTATION IS UNAVOIDABLE

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member wishes to submit, for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, an editorial from the Omaha World-Herald edition of May 6, 2004, which recognizes that prescription drug reimportation is inevitable. Clearly, American consumers should not be forced to pay the world's highest prices for the medicines they need. We must open the drug markets so Americans can obtain the prescription drugs they need when they need them most and at affordable prices. This Member commends this editorial to his colleagues.

“YES” TO DRUGS FROM CANADA

The Bush administration has adamantly resisted allowing Americans to legally import substantially cheaper prescription drugs from foreign countries. Therefore, a top official's apparent capitulation on Tuesday was a surprise.

Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson, long a chief player in barring entrance to lower-cost medicines from Canada and elsewhere, said Tuesday that legalizing imports was inevitable. Congress will almost certainly pass legislation this year, he said. What's more, he will advise President Bush to sign it.

“Inevitable” is a good word; a recent Associated Press poll showed that two-thirds of the people surveyed wanted the government to make it easier to get cheaper drugs from foreign countries. Many already do: An estimated 2 million American senior citizens have illegally purchased U.S.-made drugs from Canadian pharmacies.

In Canada, drugs can cost less than half what they do in this country. This is because drug manufacturers load all research and similar costs onto U.S. buyers. Other governments, by contrast, regulate drug prices.

Thompson, backed by President Bush, most congressional Republicans and the pharmaceutical industry, has staunchly resisted importation. He has maintained that the safety of drugs that have been out of American hands can't be assured.

In accepting reality, though, Thompson bristled with caution. Legalizing foreign imports will be expensive, Thompson said—his department will have to increase inspections of foreign pharmaceutical plants and of the drugs as they enter this country, negating some of the savings consumers might expect.

Then, too, the Congressional Budget Office predicted minimal savings for consumers. The limited availability of drugs for import, added insurance costs and similar economic factors would mean savings of only about \$40 billion over 10 years, or 1 percent, the federal agency suggested.

In addition, several drug companies have already acted to shut down supplies to Canadian pharmacies that resell to U.S. customers. That kind of marketing tactic could

become more widespread and hence further limit imports. Our companies might simply demand increased prices from other governments.

Thompson's recognition of reality was a relief for many people who have spent years battering the administration's stone wall on this issue. That wall has been damaged but not breached. Americans will need to press their elected representatives to devise, pass and ensure implementation of reasonable, responsible legislation.

The current situation, as Thompson recognized, is untenable. Some kind of reimportation will almost certainly become law. But, for the millions of Americans whom it could benefit, whether they realize any savings will be in the details.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO PROHIBIT THE OPERATION OF THE MEDICARE COMPARATIVE COST ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I am pleased to introduce a bill to prevent the District of Columbia from becoming a test case for the privatization of Medicare. A Medicare comparative cost demonstration project under part C of Title XVIII of the Social Security Act was a part of the new Medicare prescription drug law. My bill is one of several introduced by members of Congress designed to prevent the federal government from making a particular district one of the six testing grounds for the entire country.

The Medicare prescription drug legislation, signed into law on December 8, 2003, contained a little-noticed but crucial provision designed to lead to the privatization of Medicare. Section 214(a) of the Medicare bill established up to six "premium support" demonstration projects starting in 2010. These demonstration projects will provide health care vouchers for private insurance to eligible Medicare beneficiaries. As a result, Medicare will compete directly against private plans in offering services to older Americans.

I strongly oppose the voucher approach because seniors who choose to remain or must remain in the traditional fee-for-service plan will pay significantly higher premiums than they pay now. The private plans will be able to cherry pick the healthiest and youngest seniors to enroll in their plans while turning away older, sicker people. Traditional Medicare, therefore, will have very high costs and premiums because it will not be able to spread the burden over the larger and most diverse pool of seniors. This "competition" proposal is stacked to portray Medicare as inefficient and expensive in order to give the program's critics the manufactured evidence to get the privatization result they want from a premium pool of cherry picked seniors.

The Medicare law did not specify where the demonstration projects will take place, but said they will be in 6 metropolitan statistical areas to be determined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services. This experiment is the result of a compromise that was necessary to keep the privatized vouchers from going na-

tionwide immediately. The determination to privatize Medicare and Social Security remains a goal of the Republican Congress and of President Bush, however. Like others who have filed similar bills, my bill says count the District of Columbia out.

DIANNE DUNKELMAN HONORED BY THE GREATER CINCINNATI REGION OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR COMMUNITY AND JUSTICE AT ITS 60TH ANNIVERSARY AWARDS DINNER

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dianne Dunkelman, an accomplished and dedicated community volunteer, who will be honored for her distinguished service to our community at the Greater Cincinnati Region of the National Conference for Community and Justice's (NCCJ) 60th Anniversary Awards Dinner on May 27, 2004.

Dianne's extraordinary volunteer service for women's health, the arts, and social services has been recognized throughout the nation. She founded Speaking of Women's Health in 1995 as a way to raise funds for public television. Through her leadership as CEO, she inspired the expansion of Speaking of Women's Health to a national foundation with more than 40 events nationwide, two national minority health initiatives: Universal Sisters for African American women and Hablando de la salud de la mujer for Latino women, a national in-store health initiative at Wal-Mart stores, and a weekly television program on the Lifetime network, Lifetime's Speaking of Women's Health.

Dianne is a leading advocate of helping women understand and recognize their health care options, and she recruited celebrities such as Florence Henderson, Mary Wilson and Valerie Simpson to help spread the message to other women.

She has already received numerous awards, including the Athena Award from the Columbia University Partnership for Women's Health; 2003 Distinguished Women's Award from Northwood University; Cincinnati Enquirer's Woman of the Year Award; YWCA's Career Women of Achievement Award; and the Charles Vaughan Award for her work with Cincinnati's PBS affiliate WCET Channel 48.

All of us in Greater Cincinnati thank Dianne for her service to our community and congratulate her on receiving this prestigious honor.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF 2004 LEGRAND SMITH SCHOLARSHIP WINNER MICHAEL JAMES HOROSKO, OF CONCORD, MI

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect for the outstanding record

of excellence he has compiled in academics, leadership, and community service, that I salute Michael James Horosko, winner of the 2004 LeGrand Smith Scholarship. This award is given to young adults who have demonstrated their true commitment to playing an important role in our Nation's future.

As a winner of the LeGrand Smith Scholarship, Michael is being honored for demonstrating the same generosity of spirit, intelligence, responsible citizenship, and capacity for human service that distinguished the late LeGrand Smith of Somerset, Michigan.

Michael is an exceptional student at Concord High School. Aside from his perfect 4.0 grade point average, Michael possesses an outstanding record of achievement in high school. He has played football for four years and was named academic all-state. Notable among his many activities is his participation in Quiz Bowl, National Honor Society, and S.A.D.D. Michael is also Vice President of his graduating class.

On behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to join his many admirers in extending our highest praise and congratulations to Michael James Horosko for his selection as winner of the 2004 LeGrand Smith Scholarship. This honor not only recognizes his efforts, but represents a testament to the parents, teachers, and other individuals whose personal interest, strong support, and active participation contributed to his success. To this remarkable young man, we extend our most heartfelt good wishes for all his future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO MS. BRITTANY POTTS OF PORTAGE, MICHIGAN

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ms. Brittany Potts of Portage, Michigan, who won the 2004 National VFW Voice of Democracy broadcast scriptwriting contest. This great educational achievement also serves as a wonderful patriotic statement of Brittany's dedication and responsibility to our country. I am very proud to honor Brittany and her commitment to our nation's future.

Each year the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its Ladies Auxiliary conduct a Voice of Democracy audio/essay competition designed to give high school students the opportunity to voice their opinion on their responsibility to our country. Brittany, a sophomore at Portage Central High School, was one of 59 students, out of more than 80,000 participants, who received a national scholarship.

Brittany's insightful response of her commitment to the betterment of our great country serves as a reminder to all, of the immense power and responsibility we all have. I look forward to hearing of the great many achievements that Brittany has before her. It pleases me to honor the magnificent dedication of Brittany and to submit her script into the RECORD.