

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the President for clearly identifying America's priorities in his fiscal year 2005 budget. There is no doubt that we are in a time of war and I am pleased President Bush's budget sent a clear signal that our Nation's defense and homeland security must remain the top priority of the Federal Government. However, I believe we can and must do more.

That is why last week I introduced an updated version of legislation that I introduced last year, the Common Sense Spending Act. This legislation will continue to fund nondefense, non-homeland security and hold discretionary spending at fiscal year 2004 levels for the next year, then increase at the rate of inflation over the next 4 years. It is all common sense. The spending act will slow the growth of mandatory spending by 1 percent, holding Social Security harmless, and reauthorizes PAYGO requiring offsets for direct spending. It also tightens the definition of emergency spending. Again, it is all common sense.

Mr. Speaker, if Members are serious about getting control of Federal spending, then I ask them to join me in support of the Common Sense Spending Act. It is time to limit our spending to reflect the priorities we have set.

HONORING COLONEL JESSE THOMAS, COMMANDER, 167TH AIRLIFT WING, WEST VIRGINIA AIR NATIONAL GUARD, ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE MILITARY

(Mrs. CAPITO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Colonel Jesse A. Thomas, the Commander of the 167th Airlift Wing of the West Virginia Air National Guard based in Martinsburg, West Virginia.

□ 1015

Colonel Thomas is retiring after 33 years in our Armed Forces. Colonel Thomas began his military service as a T-37 instructor pilot in 1971. He then joined the West Virginia Air National Guard when he became a C-130 aircraft commander. Colonel Thomas has logged approximately 11,000 flight hours as a command pilot, including 5,000 hours as an instructor.

During Operation Desert Shield, Thomas deployed to Europe as an aircrew member and unit commander. He also flew airdrop and air defense missions in Yugoslavia and Central America and Southwest Asia.

Mr. Speaker, in our current war on terror, the National Guard has been called upon to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan, and thousands of brave men and women have answered that call. I thank all of the men and women of the National Guard who give so much in service to our Nation. Colonel Jesse

Thomas, who has dedicated 34 years to the defense of freedom, deserves the respect of all of us in the House, and I thank him for his devoted service to the people of West Virginia and his country.

THE PROSPECT OF PEACE IN CYPRUS

(Mr. KIRK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, after decades of intercommunal violence between Turkey and Greece, there is now hope for peace on Cyprus.

On February 3, President Bush met with U.N. Secretary-General Annan to restart the peace process. Following talks between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders on February 13, Annan announced the resumption of negotiations, saying, "I really believe that, after 40 years, a settlement is at last in reach."

Since February 19, the two sides have been discussing a U.N. peace plan in Cyprus. Despite predictably difficult negotiations, the Annan blueprint is secure. If there is no agreement by the two parties by March 22, Turkey and Greece will join the negotiations to broker a deal. If there is still no agreement by March 29, Annan will "fill in the blanks," and Greek and Turkish Cypriots will then vote on this plan in separate referenda in April. If all goes well, a reunited Cyprus will enter the European Union on May 1.

Having long supported peace efforts in Cyprus, the United States must now extend a helping hand to the Cypriots as they confront the difficulties of implementing an agreement. In 1984, Congress authorized President Reagan's \$250 million Cyprus Peace and Reconstruction Fund. The money was not provided because we did not reach a settlement. Europe is home to the last "Berlin-style" wall in Cyprus. Let us make this the year that it comes down forever.

THE "H.L. HUNLEY"

(Mr. BROWN of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 140th anniversary of the final voyage of the *H.L. Hunley*. On February 17, 1864, the *Hunley* embarked on a dangerous mission when Lieutenant George Dixon led his crew to do what no other submarine had ever done before, successfully sink another ship in combat. That night in Charleston Harbor, the *Hunley* rammed her spar torpedo into the hull of the USS *Housatonic*. The ship sunk shortly thereafter, forever securing the *Hunley's* place in history.

The crew, however, never returned and vanished into the harbor. The location of the crew and ship remained a

mystery for over 130 years until 1995 when the submarine was found. It was placed under the care of the Warren Lasch Conservation Center in North Charleston in my district. Through the efforts of the Hunley Commission and the Friends of the Hunley, the vessel will be preserved for generations to come. All eight crew members' bodies have been recovered and will receive a military burial on April 17, 2004, at Magnolia Cemetery in Charleston. I welcome all Americans to take the opportunity to marvel at this archeological wonder.

HAITI

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was Texas Independence Day, March 2. This Nation and our people value both independence and democracy. But it is sad to note that a small nation by the name of Haiti has not received the same amount of respect, collegiality, and assistance that this country could be called to do. It is shameful that we have in the dark of night the question of whether or not a duly elected democratic President, President Aristide, was taken away from his home without his free will.

People are dying in the streets of Haiti. The question becomes what happened to President Aristide and why he was removed against his will. The question becomes whether or not this Nation will engage with insurgents and thugs and drug dealers, as the opposition represents; whether or not we will tolerate the continued pillaging and the loss of life; whether or not we will grant temporary protective status for Haitians who are here in fear of their life; and whether or not we respect those who are fleeing from persecution by granting individual asylum hearings.

Mr. Speaker, this Nation can do better. We can do better with our allies and friends. Why are we not doing better for Haiti?

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAW). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

CHARLES "PETE" CONRAD ASTRONOMY AWARDS ACT

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 912) to authorize the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to establish an awards program in honor of Charles "Pete" Conrad, astronaut and space scientist, for recognizing the discoveries made by amateur astronomers of asteroids with near-Earth orbit trajectories, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 912

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Charles 'Pete' Conrad Astronomy Awards Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

For the purposes of this Act—

(1) the term "Administrator" means the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

(2) the term "amateur astronomer" means an individual whose employer does not provide any funding, payment, or compensation to the individual for the observation of asteroids and other celestial bodies, and does not include any individual employed as a professional astronomer;

(3) the term "Minor Planet Center" means the Minor Planet Center of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory;

(4) the term "near-Earth asteroid" means an asteroid with a perihelion distance of less than 1.3 Astronomical Units from the Sun; and

(5) the term "Program" means the Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards Program established under section 3.

SEC. 3. PETE CONRAD ASTRONOMY AWARD PROGRAM.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—The Administrator shall establish the Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards Program.

(b) *AWARDS.*—The Administrator shall make awards under the Program based on the recommendations of the Minor Planet Center.

(c) *AWARD CATEGORIES.*—The Administrator shall make one annual award, unless there are no eligible discoveries or contributions, for each of the following categories:

(1) The amateur astronomer or group of amateur astronomers who in the preceding calendar year discovered the intrinsically brightest near-Earth asteroid among the near-Earth asteroids that were discovered during that year by amateur astronomers or groups of amateur astronomers.

(2) The amateur astronomer or group of amateur astronomers who made the greatest contribution to the Minor Planet Center's mission of cataloguing near-Earth asteroids during the preceding year.

(d) *AWARD AMOUNT.*—An award under the Program shall be in the amount of \$3,000.

(e) *GUIDELINES.*—(1) No individual who is not a citizen or permanent resident of the United States at the time of his discovery or contribution may receive an award under this Act.

(2) The decisions of the Administrator in making awards under this Act are final.

(f) *AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.*—From sums otherwise authorized to be appropriated, there are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Mem-

bers may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 912, as amended, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics of the Committee on Science, I have made the threat posed by near-Earth objects one of my top priorities. The hearings of our subcommittee have revealed that monitoring and tracking near-Earth objects, that is, NEOs, such as comets and asteroids, not only advance astronomy, but are critical in identifying the near-Earth objects that may threaten the Earth.

Mr. Speaker, recent press accounts of asteroids passing close to Earth have raised public awareness of the possibility that one day one of these objects could hit the Earth with potential catastrophic consequences. Given the vast number of asteroids and comets that inhabit the Earth's neighborhood, greater efforts for tracking and monitoring these objects are critical.

This is why I rise in support of the amendment to H.R. 912, the Charles "Pete" Conrad Astronomy Awards Act. This amendment does not alter the intent of the original bill, but clarifies what the awards program is and the role and responsibility of NASA and the Smithsonian's Minor Planet Center. We have worked with NASA, the Smithsonian Institution, and our colleagues across the aisle to make these improvements; and I thank them for all their help and support. H.R. 912 authorizes the NASA administrator to give one award each year to the amateur astronomer or to the group of amateur astronomers who discovered the intrinsically brightest near-Earth asteroid among the near-Earth asteroids discovered during that preceding year by amateur astronomers and another award to the amateur astronomer or group of amateur astronomers who made the greatest contribution during the preceding year to the Minor Planet Center's catalogue of known asteroids. The recipients of the awards in the amount of \$3,000 are limited to U.S. citizens and, yes, also permanent residents.

This bill is a tribute to Pete Conrad for his tremendous contributions to our country, to the world, and to the aerospace community over the last 4 decades. Pete Conrad was a pilot, an explorer, and an entrepreneur of the highest caliber. He commanded Apollo XII, and during that mission he became the third man to walk on the Moon. He saw space as a place to get to, to explore, and to do business. Space exploration and commercialization is what he did. It was his job to explore the Moon. He then worked to develop new

spacecraft and space transportation systems. An interesting aside, analysis of an orbiting object identified by an amateur astronomer suggests that it is the remains of a Saturn V rocket, third stage, which most likely came from Pete Conrad's Apollo mission.

So I find no better way to honor Pete Conrad than to establish an annual astronomer award for future asteroid discoveries in his name. He always wanted people to be looking up. He was a positive "can-do" American. He exemplified the American spirit, and he was often remembered, of course, for not only his own walk on the Moon but his historic description of the landing on the Moon.

Of course, the threat of an asteroid hitting the world is a serious matter, and the idea of a catastrophic asteroid or comet impacting on the Earth has, of course, gained the attention of the media and the popular culture in films like "Armageddon" and "Deep Impact" of a few years ago, but it is vital for all of us to realize this is not just for the movies. This is not science fiction. We all know that the Earth's moon and many other planetary bodies in our solar system are covered with impact craters. Most people have heard of the dinosaur extinction theory or perhaps seen pictures of the meteor crater in Arizona. However remote the possibility of a near-Earth object striking the Earth and causing a worldwide calamity, no matter how obscure or how remote that is, there is a threat, a calculable threat.

And while the asteroid that killed the dinosaurs is estimated to occur only once every 100 million years, smaller, yet still hazardous, asteroids impact the Earth much more frequently. For example, the destructive force of the 1908 asteroid strike in Siberia was roughly equal to a 10-megaton blast of TNT. The asteroid that hit South America in the 1930s was of similar magnitude. The asteroid that struck Central Asia in the 1940s was a large impact. In 1996, satellites detected a high-altitude burst over Greenland involving an asteroid which would have had the destructive force measuring 100 kilotons of TNT.

Ironically, if we look at asteroids from the perspective of our national goals in space, they also offer us not just a threat but also unique opportunities. In terms of pure science, asteroids are geological time capsules from the era when our solar system was formed. Even better, they are orbiting mines of metals, of minerals, and other resources that can be possibly used to build large structures in space without having to carry up the material to build those structures from Earth. So far NASA has surveyed 600 asteroids, but this is a fraction of the projected total population of asteroids and near-Earth objects. What needs to be done now is to fully understand near-Earth objects and the potential threat and, yes, the potential use that they could pose to the world.

In closing, asteroids deserve a lot more attention from the scientific community and from the American people. The first step is through tracking all sizable near-Earth objects, and H.R. 912 is a modest step toward this goal.

I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 912, which will encourage young people in particular to start looking into the stars and get involved personally in America's space program.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1030

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to express my support for the bill presented by the gentleman from California (Chairman ROHRABACHER), H.R. 912.

I know that my good friend the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) has had a long interest in Near Earth Objects and the potential threat they could pose to our civilization at some point in the future. Moreover, the Committee on Science has been active on a bipartisan basis since at least the early 1990s in trying to draw attention to this issue. At that time, former Chairman George Brown, Jr., held a series of hearings and drafted legislation to establish a NEO detection and cataloging within NASA.

H.R. 912 recognizes that amateur astronomers also can play a significant role in the detection of Earth orbit crossing asteroids and comets and provides a constructive way to reward their efforts.

A previous version of the bill passed the House last Congress, so I do not believe this legislation should be at all controversial. I urge the adoption by the House, and look forward to its speedy enactment.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Pete Conrad Astronomy Act, and commend the Chairman of the Space Subcommittee for his creativity and leadership in promoting space exploration.

This Act will reward individuals who through their hard work and dedication have made fundamental contributions to our knowledge of the universe. This Act will stimulate interest in space exploration—a field that helps keep this nation on the cutting edge of technology and captivates young minds. Discoveries made by amateur astronomers have helped with the enormous task of cataloging the many asteroids and small bodies that share the solar system with us. Those amateur astronomers deserve to be rewarded. It is a valuable service to this nation and to the world, and should be encouraged. This Act will do both.

I would like to thank Chairman ROHRABACHER for working with me to address one small concern that I had when this bill went through markup in the Science Committee. People come from around the world to study at our great colleges and universities. They are often some of the best and brightest from their home countries. They pay high tuitions as international students. They often bring money into our communities. But the most important reason they are invited is because

they bring diverse viewpoints and perspectives. They enrich the experience of our own students.

As the bill is written, only U.S. citizens and permanent residents are eligible for an award. This is fair, since we are trying to encourage Americans to get interested in space and science. However, these awards also offer an opportunity to foster collaborations and international partnerships that will be valuable for all parties in the future. We have therefore agreed on report language for this bill that will foster collaborative efforts.

If a group of amateur astronomers makes a great discovery, deemed worthy of a Pete Conrad Award, and if that group has international students in it—the Administrator of NASA will be able to give those foreign students a certificate or other token of appreciation. Although the monetary reward will be reserved for the Americans in the group, at least the foreign students will be recognized for their contributions. This seems only fair.

Again, I thank the Chairman for working with me on this issue. I support the bill and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 912, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PERMITTING MALCOLM BALDRIGE NATIONAL QUALITY AWARDS TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3389) to amend the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 to permit the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards to be made to nonprofit organizations.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3389

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.

Section 17(c)(1) of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3711a(c)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(F) Nonprofit organizations.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MILLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART).

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3389.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award was established by Congress and signed into law in August of 1987. The first awards were presented in 1988.

This award was established because many industry and government leaders saw that a renewed emphasis was a necessity for doing business in an expanding, competitive world market. But many American businesses either did not believe quality mattered for them or did not know where to begin. The Baldrige Award was envisioned as a standard of excellence that would help United States organizations achieve world class quality.

Mr. Speaker, the award is named after Malcolm Baldrige, who was Secretary of Commerce to President Ronald Reagan from 1981 until his tragic death in July of 1987. Malcolm Baldrige thought the keys to this country's prosperity and long-term strength was quality management. He was involved with the creation of the act and his name was added after his death.

The Baldrige Award is given by the President of the United States to businesses, manufacturing and service businesses, both small and large, and to education and health care organizations. Applicants prepare detailed assessments of their management systems. The criteria are built upon a set of 11 interrelated core values and concepts. The seven criteria categories provide a system essential to achieving performance excellence, leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, information and analysis, human resource focus, process management and business results.

Baldrige applicants receive detailed written feedback about their strengths and opportunities for improvement from a team of independent Baldrige examiners. A panel of judges determines which organizations will be finalists for the award and those organizations receive site visits to verify and clarify their applications.

Two such businesses in my district have been recipients of the Malcolm Baldrige Award. This year's awardee, the 2003 manufacturing recipient, was Medrad, Inc., of Indianola, Pennsylvania. They are a leading provider of medical devices that enhance medical imaging procedures of the human body and also of injector systems.

The first manufacturing recipient in 1988 was also in my district, Westinghouse Electric Corporation's Commercial Nuclear Fuel Division.