

Currently, 362 hardworking Mainers are employed in the Limestone facility. Aroostook County and Northern Maine have already been devastated by the closure of the Loring Air Force Base. Additional job loss, along with the losses due to the proposed realignment at Brunswick Naval Air Station and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, would have a serious impact in Maine. It is important for me to meet personally with General Newton, along with Governor Baldacci, so that we can stress the critical service that this facility provides for the military and its vital importance to the Maine economy.

INTRODUCING THE FREEDOM FROM UNNECESSARY LITIGATION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 27, 2005

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Freedom from Unnecessary Litigation Act. As its title suggests, this bill provides an effective means of ensuring that those harmed during medical treatment receive fair compensation while reducing the burden of costly malpractice litigation on the health care system. This bill achieves its goal by providing a tax credit for negative outcomes insurance purchased before medical treatment. The insurance will provide compensation for any negative outcomes of the medical treatment. Patients can receive this insurance without having to go through lengthy litigation and without having to give away a large portion of their award to a trial lawyer.

Relying on negative outcomes insurance instead of litigation will also reduce the costs imposed on physicians, other health care providers, and hospitals by malpractice litigation. The Freedom from Unnecessary Litigation Act also promotes effective solutions to the malpractice crisis by making malpractice awards obtained through binding, voluntary arbitration tax-free.

The malpractice crisis has contributed to the closing of a maternity ward in Philadelphia and a trauma center in Nevada. Meanwhile, earlier this year, surgeons in West Virginia walked off the job to protest increasing liability rates. These are a few of the examples of how access to quality health care is jeopardized by the epidemic of large (and medically questionable) malpractice awards, and the resulting increase in insurance rates.

As is typical of Washington, most of the proposed solutions to the malpractice problem involve unconstitutional usurpations of areas best left to the states. These solutions also ignore the root cause of the litigation crisis: the shift away from treating the doctor-patient relationship as a contractual one to viewing it as one governed by regulations imposed by insurance company functionaries, politicians, government bureaucrats, and trial lawyers. There is no reason why questions of the assessment of liability and compensation cannot be determined by a private contractual agreement between physicians and patients. The Freedom from Unnecessary Litigation Act is designed to take a step toward resolving these problems through private contracts.

Using insurance, private contracts, and binding arbitration to resolve medical disputes

benefits patients, who receive full compensation in a timelier manner than under the current system. It also benefits physicians and hospitals, which are relieved of the costs associated with litigation. Since it will not cost as much to provide full compensation to an injured patient, these bills should result in a reduction of malpractice premiums. The Freedom from Unnecessary Litigation Act benefits everybody except those trial lawyers who profit from the current system. I hope all my colleagues will help end the malpractice crises while ensuring those harmed by medical injuries receive just compensation by cosponsoring my Freedom from Unnecessary Litigation Act.

HONORING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. MATTHIAS PARISH

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 27, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of the leaders and members of St. Matthias Parish, of Parma, Ohio, as they celebrate twenty-five years of faith, guidance and hope for parishioners, and for the greater good of the community.

Twenty-five years ago, St. Matthias was established by the late Bishop James A. Hickey. Bishop Hickey was later appointed to serve as Cardinal James A. Hickey. He announced that St. Matthias, a former mission parish, would now evolve into a full-fledged parish. Father Vincent Moraghan became the first Pastor of the church. On June 28, 1980, the first Mass was held at Green Valley School in Parma. The friendly and warm atmosphere of St. Matthias Parish has remained constant through the years. This spirit of cooperation and unity brought forth the planning and construction of a new church and rectory, completed by 1987. Following Pastor Moraghan's retirement, Father Raymond Sutter was appointed as Pastor, and continues his service to St. Matthias to this day.

The leadership and members of St. Matthias are a unified force of strength and assistance for many within the parish, and also for those in need, outside the parish. Volunteers continue to plan and implement programs such as the Volunteer Visitors Program, St. Vincent DePaul Society, Red Cross Drives, and the "Manna" Fundraiser, all of which serve to provide assistance and lift the spirit of individuals and families throughout our community.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of every leader and member of St. Matthias Parish, as they celebrate twenty-five years of offering spiritual guidance for countless families and individuals. Since 1980, the parish has evolved in structure and location, yet it remains a steady beacon of light, faith and hope, that embraces the spiritual needs and everyday struggles of all parishioners.

HONORING ZACHARY AGETT UPON RECEIVING THE J.C. MATTESON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 27, 2005

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Zachary Agett, a resident of Chautauqua County, City of Jamestown, upon the occasion of receiving the J.C. Matteson Memorial Scholarship.

Zachary was awarded the scholarship for his honorable character and athletic achievement. Both on and off the football field, Agett displays dedication, selflessness, integrity and leadership, many of the same admirable attributes that J.C. Matteson demonstrated.

This scholarship fund was established by the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation in honor of J.C. Matteson who died a very honorable death in Iraq last October. J.C. Matteson was a student and football player at Southwestern High School.

His father, James, plans to head up the fund-raising efforts for the scholarship for years to come. James Matteson's goal is to raise \$29,000 and award two \$1,000 scholarships in the coming years.

In the fall Agett plans to attend Washington and Jefferson University, where he will play football and major in biology. It is a wonderful honor to share the characteristics possessed by a fallen hero.

Zachary Agett is an upstanding young man and I am proud, Mr. Speaker, to have an opportunity to honor him today.

TECHNOLOGY, TRADE AND CHINA

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 27, 2005

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, Harris Miller, president of the Information Technology Association of America, recently wrote an opinion piece for the San Jose Mercury News. In this piece, Mr. Miller addresses some serious concerns about the Chinese government's trade policies and their efforts to control and limit information on the internet. Mr. Miller makes some excellent points and I encourage all of my colleagues to review his article.

[From the San Jose Mercury News, May 23, 2005]

IN WALLING OFF SOFTWARE MARKET, CHINA FORGETS TRADE GOES TWO WAYS

(By Harris N. Miller)

Chinese trade practices have long been the subject of complaint from U.S. manufacturers, particularly in the textile industry. American high-tech firms now see the storm clouds forming for their own business sectors. Two trends are particularly disturbing: China's leaders are quietly closing the doors to domestic market software competition while simultaneously attempting to expand government control over the Internet.

Despite U.S. protests, the Chinese government has published draft regulations that effectively would close China's government market to American and other foreign software companies. Software is likely to be the

first of many government markets to close to foreign competition.

When it comes to information technology, China is a waking giant. With a total information and communications technology marketplace of almost \$100 billion, the Chinese appetite for computers, software and networks has more than doubled since 2000. All things being equal, China's high-tech growth is a good thing. With more than 1 billion people and a rapidly growing economy, China should be a tremendously positive trading partner, and the U.S. information technology industry has championed China's accession to the World Trade Organization.

But to be widely embraced, the door to global trade must swing both ways. Not even considering a piracy rate exceeding 90 percent, China is now considering taking the additional step of rolling back the access that foreign software companies currently enjoy in the Chinese government procurement market.

China is in the process of implementing a “buy Chinese” software procurement policy for government systems, which, if implemented restrictively, will dramatically inhibit foreign involvement in software sales to the Chinese government.

New draft procurement rules would require foreign software firms seeking Chinese government business to either perform 50 percent of the development work in China and assign copyright to a Chinese entity or make substantial R&D and capital investments in China. Even those foreign companies that might meet China's R&D, manufacturing or outsourcing requirements could not compete fairly for government contracts. Any Chinese government entity that wants to procure foreign software eligible for purchase on these grounds would have to apply and obtain a specific waiver.

Equally troubling, China is asserting a larger government role over the operations of the Internet itself.

In a society like China's, one that represses dissent and rewards conformity, Internet access to news and information from countless points of view is nothing less than a threat. This is no doubt why Chinese officials have jailed dozens of citizens for “subversive” Internet-related activity, including issuing warnings about the spread of SARS or advocating greater democracy.

This also explains China's interest in blocking politically incorrect Web sites, collecting data on the Internet use and site visits of individuals, monitoring Internet service providers—even keeping tabs on Internet cafes.

Not exactly an advertisement for a government-run Internet. But at the Working Group on Internet Governance, a group affiliated with the United Nations, China said “the basic principles of the Internet, namely, openness, fairness, and democracy and freedom” are being diminished by the failure of governments to play a more prominent role in Internet governance.

Even though the Internet has flourished in a governance environment that brings together government, the private sector and civil society, China rejects this “trilateralism” because it denies “the due responsibility and role of governments in Internet policy-making.”

China wants full access to the U.S. market while attempting to shut down the access that U.S. companies currently have to its market. At the same time, China's government-first stance on Internet governance threatens to throw sand in the gears of Internet proliferation (and the democratizing influence it represents). The U.S. information technology industry wants to continue to support China's role as a major trading partner. But that is possible only when free trade is truly free.

THE BRAVERY OF THE LITTLE
ROCK NINE

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 27, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the bravery and courage of the Little Rock Nine as we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. At the time, these nine young African-Americans took heroic and dynamic steps toward achieving an integrated educational experience that would enhance their opportunities for a quality education.

Fifty years ago, the idea that white and black students would sit in the same classroom, amongst other places, was unbearable to many. Individuals on both sides of the race line could not fathom the possibility of an integrated educational system. The racism and segregation that dominated the country at the time was also vile and vicious. Fear and intimidation had long been the mark of this country's racial past, evidenced by the lynchings that the Senate recently apologized for not taking action against. For those young men and women to take the brave steps toward equality by presenting themselves as instruments of change must have taken a lot out of them.

Their bravery and courage nonetheless were the steps that have led this country to greater tolerance and understanding. It took heroes, like the Little Rock Nine, to lay the path for the important advances of today. Imagine where this country would be if these individuals had failed to step forward, to demand a desk at an integrated school, and to walk into American history demanding the fulfillment of the American Constitution.

With machine guns at the ready, screaming mobs, and death threats hurdled at them, these nine young men and women bravely walked through the mob and into their classrooms. Their actions laid the foundations for a revolution in the American educational system. It called for an equalization of the way schools and communities would operate to ensure that all Americans received an equal opportunity to education and knowledge and that the doors of progress would no longer be closed to future generations of Americans, based on their race.

Today we have cause to applaud these valiant efforts. The Nation has moved significantly towards provided educational opportunities for all of our citizens and given them access to true opportunities of access and influence. There is still much to be done though. States still spend disproportionately more, per student, on white schools than black schools. The facilities of some minority schools lag way behind those of predominately-white schools. Whites often take advantage of private educational systems, draining the resources of public schools. The effect is a continued deficiency in the educational opportunities of our students.

Nonetheless, we have made considerable progress in our movement towards equality. That progress is largely thanks to individuals such as the Little Rock Nine. Without their bravery and courage in the 1950s, this country would still have much work to do in terms of equal opportunity.

I also want to thank my House colleagues for introducing and passing this resolution to recognize and honor those brave nine students. It is a sign that we have accomplished so much in this country.

VENICE, CALIFORNIA TURNS 100

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 27, 2005

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, there are few communities in the world that are instantly recognizable, that immediately conjure up an image, an identity, a lifestyle. Venice, California is one such place—a place that people dream about in the depths of winter; that promises eternal sunshine, warm beaches, buff and shapely lifeguards; and the soothing, ceaseless wash of the waves.

On July the 4th, as our Nation celebrates its 229th birthday, Venice, California celebrates its 100th. As a resident of Venice, I am proud to join my neighbors and local leaders in acknowledging this remarkable milestone.

Founded in 1905 by real estate entrepreneur Abbot Kinney, Venice was modeled after the canals and boardwalks of its namesake in Italy. Kinney's vision established Venice as an entertainment mecca, attracting visitors from around the world to its amusement park, boardwalk businesses, ocean swimming and street performances.

Since its inception, Venice has been a perennial attraction for artists and free spirits, beatnik writers, and innovative musicians—from Jack Kerouac to the Doors. Venice today remains a hub of artistic expression and cultural diversity with its graffiti art murals, sidewalk musicians, street basketball games, roller skate dancers, bodybuilding competitions, and lively restaurants, shops and cafes.

Venice is not only one of the nation's most unique artistic communities, it is booming with well-informed, politically engaged, civic-minded activists. A visit to the wonderful Farmer's Market on any weekend morning provides ample evidence of the community's wide and varying interests. In addition to a great cup of coffee, fresh baked goods and delicious local produce to feed the body, one can feed the mind at the many booths promoting diverse and important political, environmental and local causes.

The award-winning Venice Family Clinic is the largest free clinic in the country and provides inspiration to the community through life-saving health care for low-income, uninsured and homeless individuals.

Whether through the skills they learn at the Venice Boys & Girls Club or by cultivating their imagination at Venice Arts in Neighborhoods, our children grow up to be productive citizens. Many go on to dedicate themselves to enriching the community through the Venice-Marina Rotary or the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent the diverse Venice community in the United States Congress. Each 4th of July, we celebrate two historic events together: American independence and the founding of our hometown.