

the device approval time has been virtually cut in half. The program proved very popular among companies making these devices and the patients who have benefited from them.

However, Congress built a trigger into the law. The trigger sun-sets the program on September 30, 2005 when Congress fails to appropriate the amount authorized under the 2002 law. Congress provided the \$216.7 million required in fiscal year 2005. But in 2003 and 2004, Congress shortchanged MDUFMA by \$40 million. That shortfall will cause MDUFMA to expire on September 30th. We can't allow that to happen. Too much is at stake.

H.R. 3243 renews MDUFMA for two years and brings some much needed stability to the program. In 2007 we will revisit a full reauthorization of MDUFMA and finetune the program. I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I'd like to thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from California, Ms. ESHOO, for her hard work on this legislation.

POSTAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENHANCEMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. DEBORAH PRYCE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 22) to reform the postal laws of the United States:

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this rule. As the Chairman knows, I filed an amendment with the Rules Committee to address important mailings to consumers containing notification of a data breach affecting personal information. While I withdrew my amendment, I was pleased to work with the Chairman of the Government Reform Committee to include report language regarding this significant issue. I thank both Chairmen for their hard work on this bill.

Mr. Speaker I rise today to bring attention to the important issue of data security.

Identity theft is the fastest-growing white collar crime in the United States. The Federal Trade Commission estimates that 10 million Americans fall victim to identity theft each year, costing consumers and businesses more than 55 billion dollars.

Identity theft is the most frequent complaint to the FTC from all 50 states, with the number of complaints having grown for the fourth consecutive year.

What takes only seconds for a hacker to destroy can take years for companies and individuals to rebuild. A thief can jeopardize a person's financial security by opening new lines of credit or procuring unsecured loans under a person's name.

Victims of identity theft spend an average of 90 hours of their own time and 1,700 dollars in out-of-pocket expenses clearing their credit and name.

The first line of defense in combating these reckless acts is to make the victims aware of what is taking place. If there is unauthorized access to sensitive financial information, the breached company needs to notify the potentially affected consumers, and make them aware that their data security may have been compromised.

After an investigation determines whether or not the breached information will lead to misuse, the customer must be made aware. But with all the mail that Americans are besieged with on a daily basis, we must take steps to insure that consumers can differentiate between what is critical and what is not. For that reason, I feel that all notices should contain a heading that this is an "IMPORTANT DATA BREACH NOTIFICATION."

By ensuring that consumers are aware of what is going on with their data security, we can help prevent millions of dollars a year in consumer costs and countless hours spent by innocent Americans who have been victimized by identity thieves.

Labeling the envelopes will go far towards this goal, and I urge my colleagues to think about this common sense solution to a serious problem that can touch any American at any time.

A BILL TO MAKE THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MINORITY VETERANS PERMANENT

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 27, 2005

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that is vital to the interests of minority veterans in our Nation. Current law mandates the termination of the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans, ACMV, on December 31, 2009. My bill would simply repeal the provision of law that discontinues this important committee's mandate so that its critical work on behalf of minority veterans can continue.

The Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans operates in conjunction with the VA Center for Minority Veterans. This committee consists of members appointed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and includes minority veterans, representatives of minority veterans groups and individuals who are recognized authorities in fields pertinent to the needs of minority veterans.

The Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans helps the VA Center for Minority Veterans by advising the Secretary on the adoption and implementation of policies and programs affecting minority veterans, and by making recommendations to the VA for the establishment or improvement of programs in the department for which minority veterans are eligible.

The committee has consistently provided the VA and Congress with balanced, forwardlooking recommendations, many of which go far beyond the unique needs of minority veterans. In 2002, the committee met in my hometown of Chicago and warned that in the Chicago regional office "it was mentioned that it was much easier to deny benefits than to grant benefits because of stringent requirements of VBA and Court of Appeal for Veterans Claims."

Two years later, the Chicago Sun-Times exposed that Illinois veterans ranked 50th in disability benefit compensation. That information sparked a campaign by the Illinois congressional delegation to rectify the situation. Since then, the VA Inspector General has issued his report and recommendations and the Sec-

retary has pledged additional staff and resources to the Chicago regional office.

The committee will also be needed in the future since the unique concerns of minority veterans will become increasingly important for our Nation during the next decade.

Currently, 18 percent of the troops serving in Iraq are African-American, while 10 percent are Hispanic. The concerns of these veterans and others will not go away on December 31, 2009, and neither should the committee created to ensure that they are represented. The Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans has helped our minority veterans from past wars with programs to address their concerns. We should not shortchange our newly returning soldiers by allowing this committee's tenure to expire.

Many specific issues of concern to minority veterans need to be addressed further. Minority veterans confront the debilitating effects of post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, and substance abuse in greater numbers. Minority veterans suffer from a higher incidence of homelessness. Access to health care for Native American veterans is also a common problem. In addition, access to adequate job training is a difficulty for many minority veterans, a high percentage of whom qualify as low-income, category A veterans.

Unfortunately, discrimination and cultural insensitivity remain problematic for minority veterans at many VA facilities. The Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans still has a lot of work to do, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to make this important committee permanent.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HENRY E. BROWN, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 27, 2005

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am writing to notify you that I was absent July 22, 2005. The reason for my absence was that I had to have an emergency appendectomy at the Bethesda Naval Hospital.

Regarding the votes that I missed please see below for the way that I would have voted had I been present: Vote No. 415—Velázquez No. 3 amendment—"nay" and vote No. 416—final passage of H.R. 3070—NASA Authorization Act of 2005—"aye."

CELEBRATING ANNE SPEAKE'S SERVICE TO THE CENTRAL VALLEY OF CALIFORNIA

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 27, 2005

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Anne Speake for the service she has given to the Central Valley of California and to recognize her 75th birthday on August 8, 2005. Mrs. Speake has dedicated much of her life to helping the citizens of Fresno and to promoting small business.

Anne Speake, the founder and President of International English Institute, is widely recognized as an authority on overseas marketing.

For 22 years, she traveled extensively in Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and South America to promote IEI. During this time, the school enrolled over 40,000 students, some of whom are heads of state and leaders in worldwide businesses. In 2001, she joined her husband, Mike Hamzy, as President of Harbison International, Inc.

Currently, she serves on the Board, Executive Committee, and Air Quality Task Force of the Fresno Business Council. She is also Chair of the Fresno Revitalization Corporation and serves on the boards of FRESPEC and the CSUF Business Advisory Council. She is a member of the Fresno Rotary Club, the Forum, and the Owls Club.

She previously served as President on the boards of the Greater Area Chamber of Commerce; the Fresno Convention and Visitor's Bureau; and the CSUF Business Associates. She has served on the boards of the EDC, Fresno Art Museum, Compact, CSUF Alumni and Friends, and the New United Way. She was Vice President of the National Associate of Arab American and Co-Chair of the Commission on the Future of Education for Fresno County. I appointed Anne as a delegate to the California Republican Party, where she has served since 1995. In the same year, she was appointed as a delegate by Gov. Pete Wilson to the White House Conference on Small Business. He also appointed her to the California Council to promote Business Ownership by Women.

In 1990, IEI received the U.S. Small Business Administration's "Business of the Year in California" award. In 1991, IEI won the "Business Enterprise of the Year" award for outstanding contributions to Fresno's economy and for business excellence. In 1993, Mrs. Speake was presented the Baker, Peterson, & Franklin "Top 5 Award for Excellence." Mrs. Speake was awarded the CSUF Sid Craig School of Business "Alumni of the Year Award" for 1994. In 1998, the U.S. Small Business Administration recognized Mrs. Speake as the Central California Women in Business Advocate of the Year, and the National Honor Society made her an Honorary Beta Gamma Sigma. In February 2000, Mrs. Speake was the Leon S. Peters Award recipient for a career of outstanding business leadership in community service.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the achievements of Anne Speake. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring this remarkable woman and the contributions she has made to small business and the city of Fresno.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES R. PARKER

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 27, 2005

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today to thank James R. Parker for more than three decades of service to the Nation.

A dedicated employee of the Federal Government, James will be retiring from the Social Security Administration at the end of July. For years now, we've been able to count on James to help make government work better for all of us.

While I'm thankful for James and his service, we'll miss the knowledge, compassion and

tremendous work ethic he brought to every task.

Tennessee is proud of James, and we all wish him and his wife, Patricia, a wonderful retirement.

THE DEATH OF RYAN KOVACICEK

HON. TIM MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 27, 2005

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to pay tribute to Lance Corporal Ryan J. Kovacicek of Washington, Pennsylvania, part of the 18th Congressional District. Lance Corporal Kovacicek was killed July 10th from a mortar attack in the town of Hit, located in western Iraq. He died alongside Sergeant Joseph P. Goodrich, another member of his unit from Pittsburgh.

Just 22 years old, Lance Corporal Kovacicek was a member of Kilo Company, a Marine Forces Reserve unit based in Moundsville, West Virginia. Like so many other young men and women in our reserves, Kovacicek was a student. A junior at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, he was studying criminology and played on the hockey team. He also lettered in hockey all four years he attended Bishop Canevin Catholic High School.

Following in a long tradition of military service in his family, Lance Corporal Kovacicek enlisted in the reserves to help defend his country. His father, Joseph, served in Vietnam as a Marine, and his grandfather, Paul Karpan, fought with the Army in Europe during World War II. Understanding the true meaning of patriotism, Lance Corporal Kovacicek paid the ultimate sacrifice. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family. God bless them, and all the members of the armed forces fighting the war on terror, and their families.

SMALL BUSINESS HEALTH FAIRNESS ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. Miller for his leadership on this bill. Mr. Speaker I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 525. Association Health Plans cherry-pick. They lower standards of care. They fail to reduce the growing ranks of the uninsured. But I would like to focus on a critical shortfall we don't often hear much about: Efficiency.

AHPs fail to address the white elephant in the living room. One of the biggest reasons that America's health care costs are so high is that we pay far more for administrative costs in privately administered health plans than other industrialized nations. The average private health plan puts 12-15 percent—sometimes as high as 30 percent—of your health care dollar to administrative costs. AHPs would not only fail to address this problem, but could make it worse.

In fact, a study by human resources consultants, William Mercer, Inc. found that "... the potential administrative cost increases typically

would exceed the potential administrative cost savings. We estimate that the additional costs for small firms who buy AHP coverage typically would range from 1.5 percent to 5 percent of premiums." That is above and beyond the average administrative costs of 12-15 percent.

Now contrast that with the overhead costs of Medicare, whose 40th birthday we celebrate this week. On average, Medicare's administrative costs are 2-3 percent. That means that Medicare is about 5 times more efficient than private health plans and could be 7 to 10 times more efficient than AHPs.

Health care costs are dragging small businesses down in their efforts to compete with their counterparts in other nations where health care is universal. It is time to stop dancing around the margins of reform by proposing more of the same inefficiencies. We already know what works. Lets expand Medicare to all.

HONORING DR. JOSE CELSO BARBOSA

HON. LUIS FORTUÑO

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 27, 2005

Mr. FORTUÑO. Mr. Speaker, today it is my special privilege to render tribute to a great American and a great Puerto Rican on the 148th commemoration of his birth. Dr. Jose Celso Barbosa was born in Bayamon, Puerto Rico on July 27, 1857, when Puerto Rico was still a colony of Spain. In 1876 he traveled to the United States to continue his studies, and in 1880 he graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in medicine, first in his class and valedictorian of a very distinguished medical graduating class that included the Mayo brothers of Mayo Clinic fame. Dr. Barbosa was the first Puerto Rican to graduate from the prestigious University of Michigan.

Upon returning to Puerto Rico, Dr. Barbosa dedicated himself to his private medical practice, became a professor of medicine at one of the institutions of higher learning in Puerto Rico, and made his first incursion in political issues, becoming a firm defender of negotiating increased autonomy for Puerto Rico from Spain.

With the change in sovereignty in 1898, in which Puerto Rico was ceded to the United States after the Spanish-American War, Dr. Barbosa envisioned the Federalist system of the United States as the ideal solution to the colonial problem of Puerto Rico, declaring himself an advocate of admitting the Island as a state of the Union. With that lofty purpose in mind, he formed the Republican Party of Puerto Rico on July 4, 1899.

Dr. Barbosa was the founder of the newspaper "El Tiempo", for which he wrote numerous articles in defense of his goal to have Puerto Rico become a state of the Union. When the United States allowed for the formation of a Senate at the local level in 1917, Dr. Barbosa was elected as a member of that legislative body. He was reelected in 1920. During his stint in the Senate, Dr. Barbosa introduced legislation allowing for trial by jury and introducing the writ of "Habeas Corpus" within the Judicial Penal System of Puerto Rico.