

being a regional voice for the people of New England.

For 80 years The New England Council has been instrumental in uniting the region's business and political leaders to discuss and shape public policies and programs that advance the economic well-being of the region. As a nonprofit alliance of schools, hospitals, corporations, public agencies and other organizations throughout New England, the Council has worked diligently to promote economic growth and a high quality of life in the six-state region.

We commend your leadership in identifying challenges and opportunities and looking for regional solutions on issues including energy, workforce development, healthcare, transportation and education.

Under the leadership of Jim Brett and the Council's esteemed Board of Directors, the Council has played a significant role in both providing a forum and in advocating an agenda that addresses the issues which impact New Englanders and the regional economy.

We applaud the Council's efforts to promote the economic growth of New England and to improve the quality of life for those who live throughout the region.

We ask our colleagues to join us in honoring the 80th anniversary of The New England Council and in wishing the Council continued success as it faces the challenges and possibilities of the 21st century.

TRIBUTE TO BRUCE M. RAMER

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my very good friend, Bruce M. Ramer, who is receiving the Learned Hand Award at the American Jewish Committee's 25th Anniversary Dinner, March 10, 2005. Bruce is a prominent member of the legal profession, a dedicated leader in the community and a distinguished spokesman in support of human rights.

Bruce began his legal career at the prestigious entertainment law firm of Gang, Tyre, Ramer & Brown, and is currently a partner in the firm. Prior to moving to Los Angeles from New Jersey, he earned a graduate degree at Princeton University, attended Harvard University Law School and was active in the military. The National Law Journal ranks him among the 100 most influential lawyers in America, California Business Lawyer cites him as one of the 100 most powerful lawyers in California, and the Daily Journal places him in the top 100 lawyers in California. Over the many years of our friendship, I have developed enormous admiration for his work and valued his advice.

For more than 30 years, Bruce has supported the American Jewish Committee, AJC. He is the Chair of the AJC's Latino and Latin American Institute. He served as National President from 1998 to 2002, chaired the National Board of Governors, the National Executive Council, the National Board of Trustees, and AJC's Asia and Pacific Rim Institute. He also was the AJC's Western Region Chair and past President of the Los Angeles Chapter. His tireless efforts have helped make the AJC the incredible institution it has become.

Bruce has also provided leadership to many other worthwhile organizations. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Pacific Council on International Policy, Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation, the Righteous Persons Foundation, the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, the Southern California Committee for the Olympic Games and the Alfred Herrhausen Society for International Dialogue of the Deutsche Bank. He is the Founding Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Geffen Playhouse (UCLA) in Los Angeles, and a member of the Board of Directors of Rebuild LA, LA 2000 Partnership, LA Urban League, United Way, Los Angeles Children's Museum, UCLA School of Medicine and the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles. He also served on the Economic Strategy Panel of the State of California and on the American Bar Association Special Committee on Judicial Independence. Many people, organizations, and causes have benefited from his dedication and hard work.

In addition to his professional and civic accomplishments, Bruce and his wife Madeline Smith Ramer have raised four children and are the proud grandparents of two grandsons. It is my distinct pleasure to ask my colleagues to join in saluting my friend, Bruce Ramer, for his successful endeavors on behalf of humanitarian and democratic ideals, his exemplary leadership and for his impressive contributions to the field of law.

IN HONOR OF TOM SUMOWSKI

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Tom Sumowski on receiving the Emergency Medical Technician, EMT, of the Year award by the Knights of Columbus, K of C. Mr. Sumowski was recognized at the annual Knight of Honors event on February 26, 2005, in Bayonne, New Jersey.

For 5 years, Mr. Sumowski has diligently worked at the McCabe Ambulance Service. A quality EMT, he was recently promoted to the rank of Captain. Known for his dedicated service and compassion, he has earned the respect and admiration of colleagues and friends.

Born and raised in Bayonne, Mr. Sumowski graduated from Seton Hall University and the Bergen County Law and Public Safety Institute.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Tom Sumowski for his exceptional service to the people of Bayonne. As a result of his tireless work in the medical field and his commitment and enthusiasm, he continues to play a vital role in the community and has positively affected countless lives.

IN RECOGNITION OF DOMINICAN INDEPENDENCE

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, on February 27, 2005, we celebrated the 161st anniversary of

Dominican independence and the love of liberty that unites the Dominican Republic and the United States and stands as a symbol of freedom worldwide.

The United States is a stronger and better country for the more than one million Dominicans who live here. New York City is even more culturally rich thanks to the more than 650,000 Dominicans who have settled there. I am proud that so many live in my Congressional District.

We, the United States and the Dominican Republic, give each other strength by our mutual support. Americans have always supported Dominican independence and admire the free and fair elections that have helped to make the country a model for emerging democracies. Our friendship inspires us to work towards even greater democratic and economic development.

We in the United States celebrate Dominican independence and the Dominican spirit, a spirit of liberty and courage—a spirit that values family and faith, education and service—the same spirit that has helped to shape America.

Our nations will work together because our futures are bound to one another. Geography makes us neighbors, but our shared values make us friends—a friendship built on common customs and ideals.

The fight for Dominican independence in 1844 continues to inspire us today. It shows that brave and determined people, committed to a noble cause, can do great good. That was true in the Dominican Republic just as it was true for the United States.

We have come a long way together and we shall continue our journey together with respect and understanding, with mutual support, and with customary respect. Long Live the United States and Viva La Republica Dominicana.

INTRODUCTION OF THE POST OFFICE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, one reason I came to Congress is to make the Federal government a better partner to communities. One of the simplest ways to achieve that objective does not require new rules or regulations for local or state governments, and it does not require massive outlays of our budget driving us even deeper into deficit. The simplest answer is for the Federal government to follow the same rules that all others must follow.

To this end, I am reintroducing the Post Office Community Partnership Act. This bill outlines minimum community contact procedures that the United States Postal Service must pursue for any proposed closing, consolidation, relocation, or construction of a post office. Simply put, the bill requires the Postal Service to comply with local zoning, planning, or other land use laws.

This legislation has had the bipartisan support of the majority of the House of Representatives and in past Congresses passed the Senate only to become the victim of the politics of postal reform. In recent sessions there

have been efforts at more comprehensive legislation that all include some variation of this bill as an enticement for passage. The pressure from our legislation has in fact encouraged some within the Postal Service to make significant progress. I've met with members of the Board of Governors of the U.S. Postal Service, the Postal Rate Commissioners, and the National League of Postmasters, and they have made progress. There are outstanding examples of where they have worked with the local community to make the post office an integral part of a downtown or main street.

It is time, however, to make this relationship something that every community can count on. It is time to make this relationship part of the Postal Service's regular activities. It should not be an exception, it should not require luck or extraordinary political action, and there should be no variation in the commitment to providing the finest examples of being a part of each and every community.

Last year, Congress failed on acting expeditiously to pass comprehensive postal legislation that included provisions from the Post Office Community Partnership Act. I am hopeful that this hesitation will not be repeated in the 109th Congress. Congress has the opportunity to set the tone for the Postal Service and federal government to become a full partner in the livability of our communities, leading by example so our families are safer, healthier, and more economically secure.

INTRODUCTION OF H.J. RES. 30
AMENDING THE U.S. CONSTITUTION
TO GUARANTEE A RIGHT
TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleague, Congressman JESSE JACKSON Jr., to introduce an amendment to the US Constitution to guarantee health care as a right in this nation.

The current state of our health care system, if you want to call it a "system," is bleak. Yet, Congress and the White House continue to ignore the problems we face, or worse yet, offer ideological solutions that only exacerbate our current ills. Making changes to the tax code will do nothing to extend high-quality health care to the millions who are left outside of the system today. I am frustrated, as many Americans are, with the lack of leadership on this issue. This is why I have come back to an idea I had more than a decade ago—to force Congress to provide health care of equal high quality for all by guaranteeing this right in our Constitution.

The problems we see today are the same that have been with us for the past century. While some claim that the U.S. has the best health care system in the world, the high-tech medical technologies that are available to some in this country are out of reach to the 45 million uninsured—including eight million children—and millions more who are underinsured and cannot afford this care. Even when people do have health insurance, barebones policies with high out-of-pocket costs help force millions of families into bankruptcy each year. Access to "the best medical care

in the world" shouldn't be determined by your income tax bracket.

And for all the praise of the advanced medical technologies available in this country, high-tech does not necessarily equate to high quality. Although the U.S. spends far more than any other nation on medical care, we do not have the best health status. Studies have shown that overall Americans receive the recommended treatment only 50 percent of the time.

Inequities in our system are not only based on what people can afford or where they live. Perhaps the most disturbing finding in recent years is the disparities in access, treatment, and outcomes that exist for people of color. It is unconscionable that the quality of health care may be determined by skin color, rather than need or proven medical practice.

An individual's health is the key to their ability to achieve the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that this nation was founded on. To ensure these rights are conferred, we must be certain that everyone—regardless of their income, race, education, or job status—can access health care of equal, high quality. Today, only prisoners in the U.S. enjoy this right.

Other countries—both developed and undeveloped—recognize the importance of health care and have guaranteed the right to health care through their constitutions, including Afghanistan, the European Union, Iran, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Somali, and South Africa. Even the provisional constitution of Iraq—written in part by the current Bush Administration—guarantees health care as a right. It is shameful that the U.S., the shining example of prosperity and democracy throughout the world, still leaves so many people on their own when it comes to health care.

For more than 30 years I have served in this body as an advocate for health care for all people. Unfortunately, time and time again I have seen efforts to expand and improve access to health care squashed under the weight of special interests protecting their individual fiefdoms. I firmly believe that until all people have an equal right to high-quality health care guaranteed through the Constitution, their interests will continue to be ignored as those who profit off the existing system maintain their opposition to reform. It's time for a grassroots movement to put the interests of the people first! I look forward to working with the advocacy community to make the shared vision of quality health care for all a reality.

On a final note, I am introducing this amendment today to extend a specific right to all people, which is the purpose of such amendments. Unfortunately, this Congress is likely to consider other amendments to our Constitution that will remove rights and codify discrimination against certain groups of people. Our Nation's most sacred document must never be amended to set aside certain rights for select groups, while barring others from ever realizing these rights. I can only hope that my colleagues take their responsibility to protect equal rights for all people in our democracy as seriously as I do.

BROADCAST DECENCY
ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2005

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, on February 16, 2005, the House approved H.R. 310, the Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act of 2005. It passed the House by a vote of 389 to 38 and had 67 cosponsors when it was considered by the House. Due to a failure to convey in timely fashion a co-sponsorship request from my staff to the bill's sponsor, Chairman FRED UPTON, our colleague Representative GENE TAYLOR (D-MS) was not listed as one of the cosponsors prior to the bill's passage through the House. Representative TAYLOR has been a strong supporter of the bill, and was a cosponsor of the identical legislative effort in the last Congress. I am pleased to have his ardent support for H.R. 310. And I want the RECORD to reflect his intention to be a cosponsor, as well as his early and longstanding support for the public interest in broadcasting and adequate enforcement tools for the Federal Communications Commission.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF JEMEZ
SPRINGS

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor Jemez Springs, New Mexico on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. The citizens of Jemez Springs celebrated its golden anniversary this past weekend with games, food and a chili cook-off in the Jemez Village Park.

I want to offer my sincere congratulations to Mayor John Garcia and all the residents of Jemez Springs on this historic occasion.

Incorporated in 1955, Jemez Springs' caring citizens, diligent community leaders, superior schools, and growing economy have made for an exceptional and unique civic life for its citizens.

Located in the Jemez River canyon, Jemez Springs is nestled amid the high, volcanically layered mesa walls of the Jemez Mountains. The Village is located along Highway 4, the Jemez Mountain Trail. This scenic route has been designated as a National Scenic Byway, an honor given to only 55 routes in the Nation, historic NM 4, and is the main downtown road. There you can find restaurants, galleries, a natural springs bathhouse and several bed and breakfast inns. Horseback tours, cross country skiing and snowshoeing trips are available.

Native Americans inhabited the area as long ago as the 14th century. These were probably the ancestors of the current residents of nearby Jemez Pueblo. The community of Jemez Springs dates from the 19th century. It was originally known as "Hot Springs" and provided services for area ranchers. Today, the community is still best known for its hot springs which are warmed by geothermal activity beneath the Jemez Mountains. The principal industries in the area are tourism and forestry.