

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO JEFFERSON ECONOMIC COUNCIL

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 25, 2005

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Jefferson Economic Council, Colorado's oldest economic development agency. Early next month, the council will be celebrating its 50th anniversary.

The Jefferson Economic Council has worked tirelessly over the last half-century to brighten the future of Jefferson County businesses. And even after fifty years, the Council remains the premier business organization in Jefferson County, adapting to a rapidly changing economy. The council works with county government, cities, other economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, and the business community to create co-operation and common voice for business in the county.

Mr. Speaker, as the council is fond of saying, the greatest strength of any organization is its people. I believe that is true. The hard work and dedication of the members of this organization to improving the business climate and more generally building a better community over the last five decades have been invaluable contributions to the county that I—and many other Colorado residents and businesses—call home.

HONORING POPE BENEDICT XVI

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 25, 2005

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, as people of many faiths around the world celebrate the historic election of Pope Benedict XVI, we look toward His Holiness for faith and inspiration in addressing today's challenges and opportunities for peace and progress.

News of the Pontiff's election was greeted with great enthusiasm by many in the Fifth Congressional District of Illinois, home to St. Benedict Parish on Chicago's Northwest side. The dedicated parishioners of St. Benedict are delighted that the Pope has selected the name of their patron saint and thus feel a special connection to him.

Since the sixth century, the Benedictine tradition reflected austerity and continuous pursuit of knowledge. These principles formed the cornerstone of Saint Benedict Parish, which was founded on the Northwest side of Chicago in 1902. The new parish was created to serve as an educational center for the area's burgeoning German Catholic population. Pope Benedict XVI, a longtime and learned university professor, has demonstrated a life-long commitment to excellence, wholly fitting the tradition of his namesake.

The Fifth District is also home to many people who share German ancestry with Pope Benedict XVI, who was born in Marktl am Inn, Germany. The parishioners of St. Benedict, St. Alphonsus and others have reason to be proud of the first Pope of German ancestry in nearly a millennium.

Pope Benedict XVI is endowed with great vision, intellect, and knowledge of the Church's rich history and tradition. He is further blessed by long service and loyalty to His Holiness, the late Pope John Paul II, whose divine wisdom and charisma set a shining example of leadership and guidance for all who follow him.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the parishioners of St. Benedict, St. Alphonsus and indeed all of Chicago, I wish Pope Benedict XVI good health, longevity and success as the Bishop of Rome and leader of the Roman Catholic Church.

ASTAR AIR CARGO EARNS MILITARY HONORS

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 25, 2005

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the employees and management of ASTAR Air Cargo, which is headquartered in my congressional district in Miami.

In April, the U.S. Air Force Air Mobility Command presented awards to 102 ASTAR Air Cargo employees who operated missions for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. The all-American ASTAR team was put together by John Dasburg, the Chairman, CEO, and President who is a Vietnam veteran. ASTAR is dedicated to providing superior service, and the U.S. military has chosen to recognize that publicly.

U.S. Air Force Major General Mark Volcheff, Director of Operations of the Air Mobility Command, presented the awards to the ASTAR employees.

These awards highlight the dedication of ASTAR employees who are devoted to serving our country in a time of war. Eight loadmasters and three pilots will receive the Aerial Achievement Medals for meritorious achievement during cargo flight missions. These individuals—Harrow Clyde, Thomas Coleman, Anthony Estrella, Steven Garrett, Frank Haidet, Frank Richmond, Philippe Verbrugghen, John Winters, Captain Stan Kahan, First Officer James Huddleston, and Second Officer Bernard Richardson—are being honored for flying at least seven missions during the conflicts. In addition to those medals, the Air Force will present 91 Certificates of Appreciation to ASTAR operations and maintenance employees who performed critical functions in support of those missions.

The Air Mobility Command provides strategic airlift and aerial refueling for all of Amer-

ica's armed forces. The individuals honored displayed commendable efforts in the missions. Without their dedication, such missions would not be possible.

ASTAR flies Department of Defense missions and charters for the Air Mobility Command. The awards presented demonstrate that, in addition to ASTAR's regularly scheduled and special air charter services, ASTAR is committed to supporting U.S. Armed Forces missions and troops in harm's way. ASTAR is also a participant in the United States Civil Reserve Air Fleet program supporting our national defense.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT RUSSELL

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 25, 2005

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a man who has become a source of inspiration for the citizens of Tuscola County, in my district. On May 13, the County's Human Development Commission will gather in Caro for their Annual Meeting, where they will also honor the accomplishments of one of their early pioneers, Mr. Robert Russell, for 35 years of dedicated service to the organization.

The Human Development Commission, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, represents the legacy of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Soon after its passage, Economic Opportunity Action Committees were established in Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, and Tuscola Counties to explore the several possibilities made available by the Act. These committees formed the Human Development Commission on February 8, 1965, with a mission to "empower individuals and communities to identify their needs and secure resources necessary to achieve their goals of self-sufficiency and an improved quality of life."

Shortly after its inception, Bob Russell began his long and distinguished career with the HDC, highlighted by his leadership in various positions as a member of their Board of Directors, Advisory Council, and as a volunteer within various HDC programs. In addition, he represented his community as a member of the Vassar City Council for 10 years and the Tuscola County Commission for 18 years. Prior to this, he served his country proudly in the U.S. Air Force during World War II. All of the accomplishments aside, Bob is also, perhaps first and foremost, a loving husband, father and grandfather.

I am appreciative of Bob Russell's many years of leadership and for the untold number of individuals he has assisted, both personally and indirectly. He helped the agency and its customers overcome many obstacles and celebrate numerous successes. We will always be grateful for his willingness to be an original incorporator of the HDC and for his years of loyalty and dedication to its mission and vision.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring a true public servant, Robert Russell. His service to his community and fellow citizens is a testament to everyone aspiring to make this a better world. His selfless commitment to service has been a benefit to the people of Michigan and beyond.

TRIBUTE TO KATHLEEN SWANSON

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 25, 2005

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ms. Kathleen Swanson. Kathleen has been selected as one of the recipients of the Milken National Educator award. The award is presented for excellence in teaching elementary education, and is designed to help bring recognition to the teaching profession by highlighting the exceptional performance of individual teachers in supporting and promoting student achievement.

Ms. Swanson is a literacy instructional coach at Stein Elementary in Lakewood, Colorado, and she has been teaching for seventeen years. In the past six years, Stein Elementary has gone from being one of the lowest performing schools to one of the highest Title I schools in Jefferson County. This is in no small part to the dedication of educational professionals like Ms. Swanson.

The Milken folks presenting her with the award aren't the only ones who have seen fit to recognize Ms. Swanson's contributions. In fact, the Resource Center at Stein Elementary was recently renamed the "Kathleen Swanson Resource Room," and each class at Stein donated a book in her name to the library.

Mr. Speaker, I hope all of my colleagues will join me in thanking Ms. Swanson for her hard work, and congratulating her on being the recipient of this prestigious award.

GREENVILLE SAFE KIDS COALITION

HON. BOB INGLIS

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 25, 2005

Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, be advised that this resolution is to express appreciation to the Greenville SAFE KIDS Coalition for ten years of distinguished service to the state of South Carolina and our Nation in its work to protect children from unintentional childhood injuries.

Whereas, only a decade ago, Greenville was much less safe for children. Eighty percent of kids rode their bicycles without helmets. About 40 percent of older children traveled in motor vehicles without using a safety belt and countless younger kids did not ride in approved car seats. One in five families went to sleep each night without the benefit of a smoke alarm. In fact, unintentional childhood injury was the leading killer of children 14 and under in Greenville in 1994. To address what was a little-recognized problem Greenville SAFE KIDS Coalition was created.

Whereas, I am pleased to report that since the inception of the Greenville SAFE KIDS Co-

alition, there has been a dramatic 24 percent decline in the unintentional injury death rate among children 14 and under. The combined efforts of Greenville SAFE KIDS Coalition, under the leadership of Greenville Hospital System's Children's Hospital, have led to remarkable achievements in preventing childhood death and injury. The Coalition's multifaceted effort includes public awareness, education, distribution of safety devices, enactment and enforcement of laws, and a grassroots partnership program that embodies the countywide strategy that accounts for the progress.

Whereas, in 10 years, there has been a 50 percent decline in the child pedestrian injury death rate, a 10 percent decline in the child motor vehicle related death rate, a 34 percent decline in the death rate from childhood drowning, a 53 percent decline in the death rate from bicycle injuries and a 56 percent decline in the residential fire-related injury death rate. Unfortunately, even with these impressive advances, unintentional injury is still the number one killer of Greenville's children. Each year, more than 10 children die and more than 8,000 are injured seriously enough to require medical attention. That is a staggering one of four children. The program works with Emergency Rooms, physicians, schools, and Greenville County's Child Fatality Review Task Force to track trends on how and why injuries occur. Programs are then developed in specific injury areas to increase awareness and ultimately prevent injuries. Examples of their activities include assisting high risk families in obtaining smoke detectors, hosting monthly car seat inspections, distributing thousands of bike helmets, and teaching children about home safety through the nationally recognized Buddy's Home Improvement House.

Whereas, Greenville SAFE KIDS first-ever "Progress Report on Preventing Unintentional Injuries" tracks a decade of work in prevention. It presents a detailed picture of the particular risks that kill and disable more children than disease, homicide or suicide. This report also maps out a strategy for the next 10 years and issues specific calls to action across injury areas.

Whereas, in their 10th anniversary year, Greenville SAFE KIDS Coalition looks forward to continued growth through strategic partnerships with sponsors, health professionals, schools, legislators, industry and sister communities. Through these partnerships, Greenville SAFE KIDS will lead important advocacy initiatives that will result in safer environments for children at home, at school, at play and on the way. Greenville SAFE KIDS Coalition remains committed to reducing unintentional childhood injuries and keeping children out of GHS Children's Hospital.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That all members encourage parents, caregivers, schools, business leaders, legislators and health professionals to make preventing unintentional childhood injuries a priority and to continue supporting the efforts of Greenville SAFE KIDS Coalition to save and protect the lives of our children.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Greenville SAFE KIDS, South Carolina SAFE KIDS and National SAFE KIDS.

BANKRUPTCY ABUSE PREVENTION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2005

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to S. 256, a bill to modify our Nation's bankruptcy system. I strongly support holding individuals responsible for paying debts they can reasonably afford. Our banks, credit unions, and other responsible financial institutions should not have to foot the bill for the individuals who take advantage of the system to intentionally avoid their debts. Efforts to curb the number of bankruptcies filed each year, which strain our responsible financial institutions and their ability to provide low-cost services to consumers should be pursued and supported.

But the fact is that millions of Americans face difficult and real financial circumstances that are caused by a personal or family healthcare crisis, unemployment, drastic changes in life situations, such as divorce and family death, and even military service. This legislation makes life much more difficult for hard working families who are already in crisis.

Bankruptcy attorneys from Minnesota whom I have spoken with share my concerns. They believe this bill will be particularly harmful to working families, especially those headed by single parents. Custodial parents will have a more difficult time collecting child support by diverting more of a debtor's money to creditors and allowing other non-child support debts to survive bankruptcy. This bill will also make it easier for landlords to evict families who are in bankruptcy from their homes sending parents and their children on to the streets. This bill strips the authority of bankruptcy judges to consider the special circumstances of working families who have found themselves in overwhelming debt.

While there has been much rhetoric regarding personal responsibility heard on the floor of the House, the bill completely fails to address consumer abuses by the credit card industry. Instead, this bill rewards irresponsible credit card companies who deceive consumers and target vulnerable families with questionable business practices and reckless lending. College students and individuals with already heavy debt loads are especially vulnerable to questionable marketing practices that offer easy credit at low rates that later increase to as much as 20 or 30 percent. Individuals must be responsible, but credit card companies must be held accountable for irresponsible business practices as well.

While credit card companies reap the benefits of this bill, about 50 percent of all families who are forced to file for bankruptcy do so because of expensive medical bills. In another 40 percent of circumstances, a person has suffered a death in the family, lost their job, or have recently divorced their spouse. Almost all who file for bankruptcy do so as a last resort and have other compounding financial challenges. Over 60 percent of bankruptcy filers have gone without medical care. Fifty percent have been unable to fill needed prescriptions. One-third have had their utilities turned off. Twenty-one percent have gone without food.