

necessary to make college more affordable and to ensure our Nation's future economic competitiveness and prosperity.

HEA reauthorization bills typically include all mandatory and discretionary programs in the HEA, and H.R. 609, as reported by the House Education and Workforce Committee, included both mandatory and discretionary programs. The recently enacted Deficit Reduction Act (P.L. 109-171) reauthorized the mandatory Federal student loan programs, but cut Federal student aid programs by \$12.7 billion—the largest cut ever in the Federal student loan program.

Specifically, P.L. 109-171 doubles the origination fee for students getting Direct Loans from an effective 1.5 percent to 3 percent in 2006. Additionally, P.L. 109-171 requires lenders to collect a 1 percent fee on Federal Family Education Loans (FFEL) that may come directly from students' pockets or the lenders' own operating expenses. P.L. 109-171 also increases the fixed rate on parent loans to 8.5 percent (Under current law, beginning in July 2006 parent loans would have a fixed rate of 7.9 percent). Finally, P.L. 109-171 eliminates all mandatory spending for administration of all higher education programs, which shows a savings of \$2.2 billion; however, the only way these savings can occur is if Congress chooses not to appropriate this money—which could jeopardize not only student loan programs, but also programs like Pell Grants, TRIO, and Work Study programs.

H.R. 609 presented the House with an opportunity to correct these misguided increases in fees and rates on students and their families. Unfortunately, the House approved a rule for consideration of H.R. 609, which prohibited amendments from being offered addressing the fee and rate increases for students and their families.

Additionally, while H.R. 609 authorizes a maximum Pell Grant scholarship award of \$6,000, the bill does not include any mandatory spending increases for Pell Grant funding, which will ensure that the amount actually appropriated remains frozen. For instance, the Bush Administration's FY 2007 budget proposes to freeze maximum Pell Grant scholarship award at \$4,050, where it has been held since 2003. This is troubling because, during this same period, the average tuition and fees at a four-year public college have risen by \$1,393. Further, when adjusted for inflation, the maximum Pell Grant award is actually worth \$900 less than the maximum scholarship 30 years ago.

I instead supported the Miller-Kildee-Scott-Davis-Grijalva substitute amendment that boosts college opportunities and makes college more affordable. Specifically, this legislation would offer the 3.4 percent fixed interest rate to students who take out subsidized loans between July 1, 2006, and June 30, 2007, which would lower the cost of college by \$2.4 billion for students and their families. This amendment would have also repealed the single holder rule, which requires student borrowers to consolidate their loans with their existing lender. Under the substitute amendment, the borrower could choose which lender he or she wished to use to consolidate loans. Additionally, this substitute amendment would have provided loan forgiveness for nurses, highly qualified teachers in bilingual and low-income communities, librarians, first responders, and other public servants.

With our Nation is facing increasing competition from rising economic powers, such as China and India, it is more important that ever that Congress work to improve the accessibility and affordability of a college education. Funding for higher education is an investment, not a cost, which will produce an educated, talented workforce to ensure our nation's future economic competitiveness and prosperity.

TRIBUTE TO STAFF SERGEANT RICHARD A. BOETTCHER

HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the patriotism and self sacrifice of Staff Sergeant Richard A. Boettcher of Greeley, Colorado because of his service to our country during World War II.

Boettcher was drafted into the U.S. Army his senior year of high school in 1945 and sent to Ft. Joseph T. Robinson, Arkansas for basic training. At first, his training focused on fighting the Germans in Europe, but when the European war ended, he was transferred to Camp Maxey, Texas. This camp trained soldiers to fight the Japanese in house-to-house combat in anticipation of a ground invasion of Japan.

After his training was completed, he was shipped to the Pacific with the intent to join up in Okinawa with an infantry division known as "Timber Wolf." This group had fought in Europe and had been sent to Okinawa to invade Japan. Yet shortly before Boettcher arrived, President Harry Truman ordered the dropping of two atomic bombs, and Japan surrendered shortly thereafter.

Instead of fighting his way into Japan, Boettcher became part of the occupation force. He worked in an office position and was responsible for preparing payroll for over 500 military personnel using a small Royal typewriter. In rank he started as a Private 1st Class and rose to Staff Sergeant in less than one year. He returned home to Lincoln, Nebraska in October of 1946.

Boettcher attended the University of Nebraska for two years and then transferred to the University of Northern Colorado to complete his education. He continued to serve his country as a member of the Colorado National Guard and received a commission in 1953.

After owning a business for 46 years, Boettcher retired in Greeley, Colorado with his wife Irene of 58 years. Boettcher has three children, seven grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent Mr. Boettcher and the other men and women who have given so much for our freedom. Like so many other members of his generation, Mr. Boettcher set aside his ambitions in service to our nation. I urge my colleagues to join me in expressing my heartfelt gratitude, sincere appreciation, and utmost respect for the patriotic service of Mr. Richard A. Boettcher.

IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF
ERMA ORA JAMES BYRD

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of Erma Ora Byrd, loving wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and dear friend and mentor to many. Her passing marks a great loss for her family and friends, and also for the people of West Virginia, whom she served with the highest level of commitment, concern, integrity and honor.

The daughter of a coal miner, Mrs. Byrd remained deeply connected to the foundation of her childhood—one based on family, faith and community. Whether greeting kings at state dinners or meeting with neighbors at the town hall, Mrs. Byrd reflected a certain grace, kindness and warmth. She shied away from the harsh glare of politics, preferring instead to focus on family and close friends, gently inspiring and teaching by example. Mrs. Byrd and Senator ROBERT BYRD were married for 68 years. They met in grade school and married at the tender age of 19.

Together, they raised two daughters, Mona and Marjorie. Mrs. Byrd's limitless love for her daughters, grandchildren and great-children extended to every child in West Virginia, upon whose behalf she advocated. Though awards and accolades held no significance to her, Mrs. Byrd's outreach and advocacy work has been honored numerous times. Both West Virginia University and Marshall University have established academic scholarship programs in her name.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of Mrs. Erma Ora James Byrd. I extend my deepest condolences to her husband, United States Senator ROBERT BYRD; to her daughters, Mona Carole Byrd Fatemi and Marjorie Ellen Byrd Moore; to her sons-in-law, Mohammed Fatemi and Jon Moore; and to her grandchildren, great-grandchildren and extended family members and many friends. Mrs. Byrd's boundless love for her family, friends and for the people of West Virginia will be remembered always.

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE DENNIS REYNOLDS

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great American, dedicated family man, proud Oregonian, outdoorsman, and a good friend of mine, Judge Dennis Reynolds. Over the last decade, Judge Reynolds has played a significant role in shaping the future of Grant County. Today, as the Judge approaches retirement from elected public service, we thank him for his years of dedication and recognize the numerous contributions he has made during his 12 years in office.

Mr. Speaker, people in my part of the country have a long and rich heritage of being caring stewards of the land and responsible managers of the environment. This is a way of life

that Judge Reynolds has embraced, from his days working in the lumber industry through his many years of unselfish public service. Judge Reynolds has never given up on his belief that to be an Oregonian is to love the land and to treat it with great respect.

The Judge has worked tirelessly at the local level to promote and support good stewardship and sound policies that protect our communities and our precious forests from the threats of catastrophic wildfire, windstorms, and bug infestation. In a county where the majority of its land is in public ownership, it is imperative that county officials and local leaders have a strong working relationship with State and Federal Government. People in all levels of government have appreciated Dennis' polite and straightforward approach. During his tenure, Judge Reynolds has been an effective leader, steadfastly advocating for the wellbeing of all rural communities by promoting an effective use of natural resources that recognizes not only the economic value, but also the social value of a productive environment.

Mr. Speaker, as Grant County's chief executive, he has led the county through tough financial times, overseeing essential projects that have improved the way of life for those who reside in this beautiful Blue Mountain region of Oregon. These projects include the construction of a new county health services center, a new criminal justice center, a remodel of the Grant County Courthouse, a new facility to house the Grant County Road Department, and a new building for the fairgrounds.

Mr. Speaker, although these projects of bricks and mortar and concrete and steel will benefit Grant County for many years to come, Judge Reynolds' real impact has been how he has treated his fellow man and the heart with which he has approached every task. Dennis has cared deeply about the people he has so ably served.

Mr. Speaker, Judge Reynolds' distinguished accomplishments are well known throughout Oregon. However, those who know Dennis know that he would list his most rewarding accomplishments as marrying his wife Julie and together raising their three sons, Percy, Beau, and Jake. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring Judge Dennis Reynolds, a man of vision, a man of heart, and a man of service.

RECOGNIZING COACH GENO
AURIEMMA UPON HIS SELECTION
TO THE NAISMITH MEMORIAL
BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME

HON. ROB SIMMONS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to recognize a man who has long been one of Connecticut's, and America's, great sports treasures.

For 21 seasons Geno Auriemma has coached the University of Connecticut's Lady Huskies Basketball team. During that time he has led the Huskies to 5 national championships. His teams have compiled an incredible record of 589 wins with only 116 losses. In his tenure as head coach the team has gone to

the Final Four eight times and achieved two perfect seasons—that is an NCAA record for consecutive wins. He is the only coach to take a team to 5 straight Final Fours. For the 2002–03 season Coach Auriemma was named the Big East Coach of the Year as well as the United States Basketball Writer's Association Women's Basketball Coach of the Year; he was also named Coach of the Year by the Associated Press.

His leadership, his personal integrity and his deep commitment to his players, both on and off the court, has now earned him the ultimate recognition that his sport can bestow. This year Coach Geno Auriemma will be inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts. He is a first-time candidate, which makes this honor all the more a special.

The personal story of Coach Auriemma is inspirational. It is truly an American story. Born in Naples, Italy, his family was poor. At the age of 7 Geno arrived in this country unable to speak English. But he grew up to achieve the American Dream.

His rise from poor Italian immigrant to one of the most successful coaches in college history stands as an example of what happens when hard work coupled with an indomitable spirit meets opportunity.

In 1985, while assistant coach at Virginia, Coach Auriemma was offered the head coach position with the University of Connecticut Lady Huskies. He had long desired such an opportunity. Now, at that time UConn's Lady Huskies had no great tradition of winning and no significant fan base. In their 11 year history, the Lady Huskies had compiled only 1 winning season. But the coach had a vision and he took the job. He set goals for himself and for his team and within a few years the Lady Huskies were a rising force.

Through hard work, a profound understanding of his sport and the ability to motivate his players in such a way that they draw the best that is within them, Coach Auriemma has transformed the Lady Huskies into a force to be reckoned with on the court. UConn fans across Connecticut and the United States look forward every year to cheering on the Huskies and they know they're going to see a top team that is prepared and ready for Showtime.

But the real lesson to be learned from the Huskies is that winning does not begin on the court. Winning begins in the preparation, both mental and physical. That is a lesson all great coaches teach their players and it is a lesson all great athletes understand. And it is something that all winners throughout our society know. To prepare for a game or a test, to get ready for a challenge or a certain moment—that is what winning is about.

For more than 20 seasons Coach Auriemma has been a winner and he has communicated what it takes to achieve to the athletes that have gone through his program. The fact that those players have all gone on to attain success long after they left UConn is a testament to their mentor—Coach Geno Auriemma.

Congratulations, coach, and thanks for 21 wonderful seasons. We look forward to the next 21.

AVASTIN, A PHARMACEUTICAL
USED ON CANCER

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I sent the attached letter in support of compulsory licensing for Avastin on February 21, 2006.

FEBRUARY 21, 2006.

MIKE LEAVITT,
Secretary, Department of Health and Human
Services, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY LEAVITT: I request that you issue a compulsory license for Avastin in order to bring the price under control and to send a clear signal to the pharmaceutical industry that price gouging will not be tolerated.

As you know, the New York Times reported on February 15, 2006 that Roche and Genentech plan to charge \$100,000 for a year's supply of Avastin to late stage lung and breast cancer victims. This represents a price increase over the already astronomical \$50,000 price tag for its current use for colon cancer. These exorbitant prices bear little on the cost of production, which is "a fraction of what Genentech charges for it."

Roche and Genentech's pricing decisions will force many cancer victims to choose between extending their lives and leaving their family a burden of irreconcilable debt. In fact, the Times reports that some are already opting for less life for cost reasons. Furthermore, the poorest and sickest among us will be the most likely to refuse the treatment. Even those patients with insurance are not protected because the copays are likely to approximate \$1000 per month for Avastin alone, to say nothing of the cost of chemotherapy pharmaceuticals that often accompany it.

Pricing schemes like these will have ripple effects. They will make it easier for other companies with similar drugs to charge higher prices. Insurance companies will pass on much of the cost, accelerating already out of control health care costs. If the trend of this legal price gouging proceeds unchecked, Medicare's own future is imperiled, especially in the absence of the ability to negotiate prices with drug manufacturers.

In the past, the pharmaceutical industry's excuse for charging substantially higher prices for their drugs as compared to the cost of generics in the U.S. has been that they needed to recover their research and development costs. But Roche and Genentech cited a different reason: it is what they can get away with charging. "As we look at Avastin and Herceptin pricing, right now the health economics hold up, and therefore I don't see any reason to be touching them," said William M. Burns, the chief executive of Roche's pharmaceutical division and a member of Genentech's board."

Roche and Genentech have the legal latitude to act in this way through the patent system, which gives pharmaceutical companies a monopoly on drugs they bring to market. But it is not an absolute, unchecked right to extort.

You have the authority to issue a compulsory license. Doing so would allow other manufacturers to compete with Roche/Genentech and therefore drastically lower the price of Avastin. Roche and Genentech would be guaranteed "reasonable and entire compensation" as required by law (28 USC 1498). A compulsory license would also send a clear signal to the pharmaceutical industry that abuse of the patent system, especially when at the expense of health, will not be tolerated.