

I applaud Community Alternatives Kentucky, particularly their wonderful support staff, for all that they do to assist disabled individuals and their families. On behalf of so many in Kentucky's Second Congressional District, I would like to express my profound appreciation for their service and for the many contributions to our communities from the people they serve. Together, they are a true inspiration to us all.

It is my great privilege to recognize Community Alternatives Kentucky today, before the entire U.S. House of Representatives, for their achievements as advocates for disabled citizens. Their unique compassion and dedication to the happiness and well-being of all people make them outstanding citizens worthy of our collective honor and respect.

HONORING OFFICER SCOTT
SEVERNS

HON. CHRIS CHOCOLA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2006

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with a solemn heart to honor a hero. On April 21, 2006 Cpl. Scott Severns of the South Bend Police Department was shot during an attempted robbery. He succumbed to his wounds and passed early the next morning.

I have heard it said that at times like these, we should not focus on how someone dies, but on how they lived, but how Cpl. Severns died was a testament to how he lived. When two would-be robbers approached Cpl. Severns and a female companion, brandished a gun, and threatened them, Cpl. Severns instinctively stepped in between the gunman and his friend. Character like this cannot be taught through a police academy course, and it is not issued to every officer after their swearing in. This type of valor can only come from an individual with the heart of a hero.

We oftentimes do not take enough time to appreciate the sacrifice that law enforcement officers make every single day so that we can live in safety. It is easy for us to go about our daily lives without a thought about those that stand in between us and those that would try to hurt us.

Cpl. Severns's sacrifices from the moment he first put on his uniform, until his tragic, premature end, exemplify the best of American law enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, we would be remiss if we did not take this time to honor his service, remember his sacrifice, and mourn his passing.

INTRODUCTION OF GENETICALLY
ENGINEERED REGULATORY
FRAMEWORK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of six bills I introduced today that will provide a comprehensive regulatory framework for all genetically engineered plants, animals, bacteria, and other organisms. The bills will protect our food, environment, and health. They are a common sense precaution to ensure genetically engineered foods do no harm.

Genetic engineering is having a serious impact on the food we eat, on the environment, and on farmers. To ensure we can maximize benefits and minimize hazards, Congress must provide a comprehensive regulatory framework for all genetically engineered products.

Current laws, such as our food safety and environmental laws, were not written with this technology in mind. Clearer laws are necessary to ensure that these new scientific capabilities and the associated impacts are closely monitored.

The six bills include the Genetically Engineered Food Right to Know Act of 2006, which requires food companies to label all foods that contain or are produced with genetically engineered materials and instructs the Food and Drug Administration to conduct periodic tests to ensure compliance. This is a basic consumer rights and consumer safety issue. People have a right to know what is in the food they are eating, and that the food is safe.

Combined, these bills would ensure that consumers are protected, increase food safety, protect farmers rights, make biotech companies liable for their products, and help developing nations resolve hunger concerns

SUMMARY OF GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOOD
LEGISLATION

THE GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOOD RIGHT TO
KNOW ACT

Consumers wish to know whether the food they purchase and consume is a genetically engineered food. Concerns include the potential transfer of allergens into food and other health risks, potential environmental risks associated with the genetic engineering of crops, and religiously and ethically based dietary restrictions. Adoption and implementation of mandatory labeling requirements for genetically engineered food produced in the United States would facilitate international trade. It would allow American farmers and companies to export and appropriately market their products—both genetically engineered and non-genetically engineered—to foreign customers. This bill acknowledges consumers have a right to know what genetically engineered foods they are eating:

Requires food companies to label all foods that contain or are produced with genetically engineered material and requires the FDA to periodically test products to ensure compliance.

Voluntary, non-GE food labels are authorized.

A legal framework is established to ensure the accuracy of labeling without creating significant economic hardship on the food production system.

THE GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOOD SAFETY
ACT

Given the consensus among the scientific community that genetic engineering can potentially introduce hazards, such as allergens or toxins, genetically engineered foods need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and cannot be presumed to be generally recognized as safe. The possibility of such hazards dictates a cautious approach to genetically engineered food approvals. However, FDA has glossed over the food safety concerns of genetically engineered foods and not taken steps to ensure the safety of these genetically engineered foods. This bill requires that all genetically engineered foods follow a strenuous food safety review process:

Requires FDA to screen all genetically engineered foods through the current food additive process to ensure they are safe for

human consumption, yet continues FDA discretion in applying the safety factors that are generally recognized as appropriate.

Requires that unique concerns be explicitly examined in the review process, a phase out of antibiotic resistance markers, and a prohibition on known allergens.

Requires the FDA to conduct a public comment period of at least 30 days

THE GENETICALLY ENGINEERED CROP AND
ANIMAL FARMER PROTECTION ACT

Agribusiness and biotechnology companies have rapidly consolidated market power at the same time as the average farmer's profits and viability have significantly declined. Policies promoted by biotech corporations have systematically acted to remove basic farmer rights enjoyed since the beginning of agriculture. These policies include unreasonable seed contracts, the intrusion into everyday farm operations, and liability burdens. The introduction of genetically engineered crops has also created obstacles for farmers, including the loss of markets and increased liability concerns. To mitigate the abuses upon farmers, a clear set of farmer rights must be established. This bill provides several farmer rights and protections to maintain the opportunity to farm:

Farmers may save seeds and seek compensation for failed genetically engineered crops.

Biotech companies may not: shift liability to farmers; nor require access to farmer's property; nor mandate arbitration; nor mandate court of jurisdiction; nor require damages beyond actual fees; nor charge more to American farmers for use of this technology, than they charge farmers in other nations, or any other unfair condition.

Seed companies must: ensure seeds labeled non-GE are accurate; provide clear instructions to reduce cross-pollination, which contaminates other fields; and inform farmers of the risks of using genetically engineered crops.

The EPA is required to evaluate the concern of Bt resistant pests and take actions necessary to prevent resistance to Bt, an important organic pesticide.

The bill prohibits genetic engineering designed to produce sterile seeds and loan discrimination based on the choice of seeds an agricultural producer uses.

THE GENETICALLY ENGINEERED ORGANISM
LIABILITY ACT

Biotech companies are selling a technology that is being commercialized far in advance of the new and unknown science of genetic engineering. Farmers may suffer from crop failures, neighboring farmers may suffer from cross pollination, increased insect resistance, and unwanted "volunteer" genetically engineered plants, and consumers may suffer from health and environmental impacts. Therefore, biotech companies should be found liable for the failures of genetically engineered crops. This bill ensures that the creator of the technology assumes all liability:

The bill places all liability from negative impacts of genetically engineered organisms squarely upon the biotechnology companies that created the genetically engineered organism.

Farmers are granted indemnification to protect them from the liabilities of biotech companies.

The bill prohibits any transfer of liability away from the biotechnology companies that created the genetically engineered organism.

REAL SOLUTIONS TO WORLD HUNGER ACT

The demand for mandatory labeling, safety testing, and farmer protections do not constitute obstacles to the cessation of world hunger. Economics remain the significant

barrier to a consistent food supply, and the development of expensive genetically engineered foods may only exacerbate this trend. Almost all research funding for the development of genetically engineered food target the developed nation's agriculture and consumers. However, agroecological interventions have had significantly more success in helping developing nations feed themselves with higher yields and improved environmental practices, all within reasonable costs for developing countries. This bill offers several new initiatives and protections to help developing nations resolve their hunger concerns:

To protect developing nations, genetically engineered exports are restricted to those already approved in the U.S. and approved by the importing nation.

The bill creates an international research fund for sustainable agriculture research paid for the Sustainable Agriculture Trust Fund, a small tax on biotechnology company profits.

THE GENETICALLY ENGINEERED PHARMACEUTICAL AND INDUSTRIAL CROP SAFETY ACT

A pharmaceutical crop or industrial crop is a plant that has been genetically engineered to produce a medical or industrial product, including human and veterinary drugs. Many of the novel substances produced in pharmaceutical crops and industrial crops are for particular medical or industrial purposes only. These substances are not intended to be incorporated in food or to be spread into the environment. That would be equivalent to allowing a prescription drug in the food supply. Experts acknowledge that contamination of human food and animal feed is inevitable due to the inherent imprecision of biological and agricultural systems. This contamination by pharmaceutical crops and industrial crops pose substantial liability and other economic risks to farmers, grain handlers, and food companies. This bill attempts to prevent contamination of our food supply by pharmaceutical crops and industrial crops.

The bill places a temporary moratorium on pharmaceutical crops and industrial crops until all regulations required in this bill are in effect.

The bill places a permanent moratorium on pharmaceutical crops and industrial crops grown in an open-air environment and on pharmaceutical crops and industrial crops grown in a commonly used food source.

The United States Department of Agriculture shall establish a tracking system to regulate the growing, handling, transportation, and disposal of all pharmaceutical and industrial crops and their byproducts to prevent contamination.

The National Academy of Sciences shall submit to Congress a report that explores alternatives methods to produce pharmaceuticals or industrial chemicals that have the advantage of being conducted in controlled production facilities and do not present the risk of contamination.

STATEMENT ON COVER THE UNINSURED WEEK

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2006

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of "Cover the Uninsured Week," which runs from May 1–7, 2006. This annual nationwide campaign asks Americans from all walks of life to demand that health coverage

for Americans be a top priority. I look forward to the day when we will no longer need such a week because all Americans would have the coverage they need.

Mr. Speaker, as it stands, nearly 46 million Americans—8 million of whom are children—have no health care coverage. The health insurance and health care crisis in this country is worsening each year. As health care costs continue to rise, every family's health care coverage is at risk. Job-based health insurance continues to decline, and for millions of low-income workers, health care coverage is not even an option.

I am particularly dismayed about the high rates of uninsurance for certain populations. Californians have among the highest rates of uninsurance in the Nation. More than one in five Californians—nearly 6.6 million children and adults under age 65—were uninsured for all or part of the year. Racial and ethnic minorities also have high rates of uninsurance. Racial and ethnic minorities comprise about one-third of the U.S. population but disproportionately comprise 52 percent of the uninsured. One in five African Americans are uninsured, one in three Latino Americans is uninsured, and nearly one in three Native Americans and Alaska Natives are uninsured.

As Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), I want to highlight the fact that one out of every five Asian Pacific Islander Americans does not have health insurance. Overall, Asian Pacific Islander Americans are far more likely to be uninsured than non-Latino Whites (21 percent vs. 14 percent). Uninsurance rates vary significantly by subgroup. For example, 34 percent of Korean Americans, 27 percent of Southeast Asian Americans, and about 20 percent of Chinese Americans, Filipino Americans, and South Asian Americans do not have health insurance.

The health of our Nation is dependent upon the health of our citizens. We need a healthy society if we are to remain globally competitive in education, technology, business, and other areas. Our top priority in Congress should be to find solutions to transform our healthcare system into one that is comprehensive, universal, and sustainable.

Our Federal investment must reflect this priority to provide coverage for the 46 million Americans across the country who deserve a guaranteed health insurance system. We must expand our Federal safety net, stop slashing Medicare and Medicaid, and work to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities. We owe it to our parents, children, and future generations to solve this problem.

HONORING GOVERNOR JOHN ANDERSON

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2006

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to honor the work of Governor John Anderson, a man who chose a life of public service. His service to Kansas and the United States was spread across the middle part of this century and spread across the three branches of our government.

After being educated by both Kansas State University and the University of Kansas he

began his career as a public servant by joining the staff of U.S. District Court Judge Walter Huxman. Continuing with the judicial branch, Governor Anderson was elected as Johnson County Attorney in 1947. His election to Kansas State Senate in 1953 gave him the opportunity to serve as one of Kansas' state legislators for three years. Governor Anderson was appointed as Kansas Attorney General in 1956 and was then elected Governor in 1960.

During his two years in the state's top position, Governor Anderson used his diverse government experiences to help reform and restructure several institutions, including: the state's pardon and parole systems; the public welfare system; and the state's public school system.

I would encourage my colleagues in the House to join me in honoring this public servant by passing H.R. 4674, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 110 North Chestnut Street in Olathe, Kansas, as the "Governor John Anderson, Jr. Post Office Building."

HONORING NOTRE DAME SCHOOL IN MICHIGAN CITY, IN

HON. CHRIS CHOCOLA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2006

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Speaker, today I have the privilege of honoring an academic institution that should stand as an example of what is good and right about our education system in America. All too often we rush to give a speech about what we feel is wrong in this country, but I believe that it is much more admirable to have that same intensity with what is right about our great country.

Notre Dame School has provided an excellent education for preschoolers all the way through 8th graders for 50 years. They have built and strengthened the characters of thousands of students instilling in them an appreciation of service and the discipline of excellence.

Notre Dame School students have consistently scored in the 95th percentile on Indiana's statewide standardized tests, and have continually produced leaders for this country, most notably our current Chief Justice of the Supreme Court John Roberts.

Mr. Speaker, words cannot convey how privileged I feel to have such a school within the 2nd Congressional District. I congratulate Principal Karen Breen, all of the teachers, administrators, staff and students of Notre Dame School on 50 years of excellence, and I look forward to 50 more years of great achievements.

A TAX CUT FOR THE REST OF US

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2006

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, the "Tax Cut for the Rest of Us" Act of 2006 (H.R. 5257) transforms the standard income tax deduction into a "refundable" standard tax credit. Doing so will not only simplify the tax code, but put