

INTRODUCTION OF THE RURAL AMERICA DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY ACT

HON. JOHN M. McHUGH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. McHUGH. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Rural America Digital Accessibility Act, which is designed to enhance access to high speed internet connections in rural areas like Central and Northern New York, which I represent. Specifically, this legislation, which I have offered in each of the past three Congresses, would provide four incentives to encourage broadband development, thereby reducing the digital divide, creating jobs, and helping to stem migration from rural areas.

First, the Rural America Digital Accessibility Act would authorize technology bonds to provide a new type of tax incentive to help, and even encourage, state and local governments to invest in the necessary telecommunications infrastructure. The technology bonds would further aid these communities' efforts to partner with the private sector to expand broadband deployment in their regions. In addition, the bill's Broadband Expansion Grant Initiative would complement the technology bonds by utilizing grants and loan guarantees to accelerate private-sector deployment of high-speed connections.

Many rural regions, such as Central and Northern New York, have an abundance of excellent institutions of higher education. However, to fully develop the potential of these centers, communities must be able to utilize the resources and expertise offered through these universities and colleges. Thus, the third incentive contained in the legislation would help small- and medium-sized businesses connect with educational institutions to receive the technological assistance needed to enhance their competitiveness and promote economic growth. The final provision of the bill would authorize research funding to increase rural America's broadband accessibility and make it more cost-effective.

Enhanced internet access is necessary to further much-needed economic development in rural areas of our Nation; it is particularly important to my constituents. Seven of the 11 counties I represent have poverty rates greater than the national rate of 12.7 percent and five of my constituent counties have experienced a decrease in their populations since 2000. Accordingly, I ask my colleagues to join with me as I work to enact the Rural America Digital Accessibility Act.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF
MELVIN B. LANE

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to honor a distinguished American, a trusted friend and constituent, Melvin B. Lane, who passed away on July 28, 2007 at the age of 85.

Mel Lane was born in 1922 in Des Moines, Iowa, and moved to San Francisco in 1928

with his family when his father purchased Sunset Magazine, a travel magazine. He graduated from Palo Alto High School and Pomona College and earned his Bachelor's Degree from Stanford University. He married the love of his life, Joan Fletcher Lane, and they had two beautiful daughters, Whitney and Julie.

Mel returned home after serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II and began working for Lane Publishing Co. and Sunset Magazine and Books. He and his brother, Ambassador L.W. "Bill" Lane, ran Lane Publishing for nearly 40 years, during which they helped make Sunset a national leader in advertising and transformed the book division into a major enterprise with hundreds of successful titles.

In 1965, Mel was drawn into environmental politics when then-Governor Pat Brown appointed him to the post of Chairman of the newly-established San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, a partnership of industry, government and the environmental community. Under Mel's strong leadership, the Commission established and implemented a plan to govern use of San Francisco Bay, which supports one of the Nation's busiest ports as well as a wide variety of fish and wildlife. His success on the Commission led to his appointment by Governor Ronald Reagan in 1972 as the first Chairman of the California Coastal Commission. The San Francisco Bay Plan and the California Coastal Plan, both of which were developed under Mel's leadership, still serve to this day as the blueprint for coastal protection around the world. Throughout his tenure on the Commission, Mel was an extraordinary advocate for environmental protection, always arguing that it was crucial to a healthy economy.

After retiring from the Commission in 1977, Mel continued his conservation work with the Peninsula Open Space Trust, the World Wildlife Fund, and he helped to establish the California Environmental Trust. He also served as a Trustee at Stanford University from 1981 to 1991, where he created an environmental institute and led efforts to establish a long-range land-use plan on campus in addition to rebuilding Stanford Memorial Church after the Loma Prieta earthquake. He also chaired the Sierra Club's National Advisory Committee, the California Fund for the Environment and the Conservation Foundation. In 1998, he was named Conservationist of the Year by the California League of Conservation Voters.

Mel was well-known amongst his friends and colleagues for his loyalty, his reliability and his quiet strength which he brought to everything he did. He was a man of great integrity and everyone who knew him came away a better person.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a national treasure and an exemplary American who changed the way we think about conservation. Mel Lane was a beloved husband, devoted father and trusted friend. He loved his community and his country, served both with distinction, making our Nation a better place for generations to come.

CELEBRATING BELLA ZELDA "JEANETTE" KOLBER ON THE OCCASION OF HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a great milestone for one of my constituents, Bella Zelda "Jeanette" Kolber. On Sunday, August 5, Mrs. Kolber will mark her 100th birthday, an event that her entire family and many friends are looking forward to celebrating with her.

Born at home on August 5, 1907 to Pearl and Louis Cohn, the first of their six children, Mrs. Kolber has lived in the Ninth Congressional District for decades and the city of Chicago her entire life.

As a child, Mrs. Kolber attended Von Humboldt Elementary School and Wells High School in Chicago. In 1934, Mrs. Kolber married her beloved Leo "Lefty" Kolber. After the birth of their two children, Lois and Marshall, she became an active volunteer with the Bernard Moos PTA and was the PTA president in 1951. Mrs. Kolber enjoyed a long working career. She worked for many years at the Heineman's silk company. She also worked at Marshall Field for almost 20 years in the personal shopping department. After being forced to retire from Marshall Field, due to her age, she was hired by Lord & Taylor, where she worked almost 20 more years, and achieved the highest honors—gold and diamond awards for her outstanding work there.

Mrs. Kolber is an avid ballroom dancer. She has danced all over Chicago, winning trophies at numerous contests throughout the years. From Daley Plaza to the Aragon Theater and the Levy Center to outdoor music festivals and family events, she's never resisted a chance to get up and move to the music. And she's still dancing.

On the occasion of her 100th birthday this year Mrs. Kolber has decided she wants to officially correct an error that occurred years ago. She was erroneously given the name "Jeanette" upon entering elementary school, by a teacher who simply did not like her given name. As a result, throughout her life Mrs. Kolber has gone by "Jeanette," but has recently asked to be referred to by her given name, Bella Zelda. And so, I am pleased to stand up before the U.S. House of Representatives to honor and recognize Mrs. Kolber and to officially recognize her given name.

Above all else in her life, Mrs. Kolber is devoted to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren and her dear extended family and friends. She has done more than her share of caring for and giving to them over the years. Mrs. Kolber brings great joy and inspiration to her family and close friends and I am proud to join them in celebrating this remarkable woman on the occasion of her 100th birthday.

Happy 100th birthday and keep dancing, Mrs. Bella Zelda Kolber.