

also found time to letter in varsity track; the mile relay team of which he was a part won their conference championship.

Dr. Irons graduated from the University of Alabama Medical College at Birmingham with a straight "A" record. While in medical school, he was selected by the American Medical Association as one of the top two medical students in the country. For his superior scholastic record, leadership and service he received the Alabama Medical School's Stuart Graves Award.

Since then his professional accomplishments have been truly phenomenal. After duty as flight surgeon (Captain, U.S. Air Force), and internship, Barnes Hospital, St. Louis, Missouri, Dr. Irons served as Chief Resident in Cardiology, University of Chicago (Billings Hospital). Dr. Irons then joined the Duke University Medical School Faculty in 1964, where he was named Fellow in Cardiovascular Diseases. Since 1966, he has been in active practice in Charlotte, North Carolina, as the first board certified cardiologist in western North Carolina. Dr. Irons is Founder and President of Mid-Carolina Cardiology, the premiere coronary care provider in the Carolinas, serving some ten cities in several states. He begins his sixth decade of active practice.

Having published in leading medical journals here and internationally, he was honored by induction as a Fellow into the American College of Cardiology and received a special citation Award of Merit from the National Association of Cardiologists for his research contributions to the science of coronary disease. For distinctive scientific accomplishments, he received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Alpha Epsilon Delta National Pre-Medical Society.

He has served the Nation in numerous medical associations, such as the Alabama Medical Association, American Society of Internal Medicine, Council on Clinical Cardiology (Fellow), American College of Physicians (Fellow), American Heart Association (Fellow), and the American Board of Internal Medicine (Diplomate), Alpha Omega Alpha (President).

Recently the State of North Carolina honored Dr. Irons for his half-century of service as eminent cardiologist, President and Founder Mid-Carolina Cardiology, and as the first board certified cardiologist in western North Carolina. He was also honored by his home state. The State of Alabama, on February 28, 2007, by Joint House Senate Resolution, honored him for his lifetime of achievements as distinguished cardiologist and for his notable research contributions to the science of coronary disease.

Madam Speaker, I commend Dr. Irons lifetime scientific achievements, distinguished research and his superior devotion to optimal patient care. His dedication and exploration in the science of coronary diseases to provide a better life through improved medical technology and treatment, reflect great credit upon all who serve our Nation in his profession.

Madam Speaker, I view Dr. Irons as America's foremost cardiologist and proudly salute him for the nationwide impact of his work.

HONEST LEADERSHIP AND OPEN GOVERNMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, Section 213 provides that Congress will receive annual reports regarding the extent to which lobbyists, lobbying firms and other registrants are complying with the amended Lobbying Disclosure Act.

Under Section 213(a), the Comptroller General will annually review random samples of publicly-available registrations and reports filed by lobbyists, lobbying firms, and registrants and evaluate compliance by those individuals and entities with the Act. The use of the term "publicly available" in Section 213(a) is designed to ensure that the registrations and reports that the Comptroller General samples are the same registration and reports that are available to the public. Furthermore, the term "publicly available" also requires the Comptroller General to obtain copies of the registration and reports from the same public websites and in the same manner as the public obtains that information. This will better ensure that the information evaluated by the Comptroller General will be identical to the information the public obtains. Accordingly, Section 213 does not authorize the Comptroller General to request information from the Clerk of the House of Representatives or the Secretary of the Senate, except pursuant to the same methods and procedures by which the public requests or obtains such information. Section 213 therefore does not authorize the Comptroller General to audit, investigate or review the Clerk's and/or Secretary's compliance with the Act, or their receipt, compilation, or dissemination, and/or review of information filed under the Act.

The Comptroller General is expected to use appropriate judgment in assessing the size of the random sample and the manner of identifying the sample. The Comptroller General should ensure that the size and manner of its random sampling are designed to ensure that the sample adequately represents a fair and complete cross-section of all registrations and reports filed pursuant to the Act.

Section 213(b) provides that the Comptroller General will submit annual reports by each April 1 to the Congress identifying the results of its analyses of the random samples, and also providing recommendations to the Congress to improve compliance with the Act by lobbyists, lobbying firms, and registrants. The reports shall also assess whether and to what extent the Department of Justice has sufficient resources and statutory authority to enforce the Act and, if not, recommendations regarding what specific resources or authorities Congress should provide to the Department of Justice. In complying with this Section, it is expected that the Comptroller General will consult with the Department of Justice.

Section 213(c) provides the Comptroller General with the tools necessary to evaluate whether the information included by lobbyists, lobbying firms and registrants in the reports filed under this Act is accurate and complete, and thus whether these individuals and entities are complying with the Act. This sub-

section thus authorizes the Comptroller General to request and receive information from lobbyists, lobbying firms and registrants (and their employees). The information the Comptroller General may request from lobbyists, lobbying firms and registrants is broad and need only relate to the purposes of the Act. In other words, the Comptroller General is expected to request sufficient documentation from lobbyists, lobbying firms and registrants to fully evaluate whether the information contained on the registrations and reports filed by the lobbyists, lobbying firms and registrants is accurate and complete. This will often necessarily entail more information from the lobbyists, lobbying firms and registrants than is contained within the reports.

Section 301 prohibits House Members from engaging in any agreements or negotiations with regard to future employment or salary until his or her successor has been selected unless he or she, within 3 business days after the commencement of such negotiations or agreements, files a signed statement disclosing the nature of such negotiations or agreements, the name of the private entity or entities involved, and the date such negotiations commenced with the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. It requires senior staff to notify the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct within 3 days if they engage in negotiations or agreements for future employment or compensation. The prospective employment or compensation negotiations or agreements in Section 301 are intended to refer only to those conducted with a private entity or private entities. Additionally, the negotiations and agreements referenced are intended to refer to actual bargaining over the terms of possible employment.

Section 305 provides that Members shall be prohibited from attending national political convention parties that are held in their honor if such parties have been paid for by a lobbyist, or an entity that employs lobbyists, unless the Member is the party's presidential or vice presidential nominee. This provision will have the effect of preventing lobbyists or an entity employing such lobbyists from directly paying for a party to honor a specific Member.

SUCCESS OF TITLE V FUNDING IN SOUTH CAROLINA

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Title V Abstinence Education program, and support its reauthorization. Without action by Congress, this important program will expire on September 30, 2007. This program provides the States that choose to accept these dollars with funding to implement abstinence education programs. In FY 2006, the State of South Carolina received over \$750,000 in Title V funding.

Abstinence education is working in South Carolina. A sharp decline in teen pregnancy began in 1996 after the South Carolina law established a policy that all the Title V, Section 510 dollars were to be used to implement a statewide strategy that stresses the importance of abstaining until marriage. Additionally,

South Carolina set a goal to create a replicable plan with intense evaluation and feedback to be used statewide. Since the initiation of abstinence education in South Carolina, 9 years ago, South Carolina teen pregnancy rates have been reduced by 35 percent, falling from 53 (per 1,000) in 1996 to 34.3 in 2005 among 15- to 17-year-olds.

Parents nationwide prefer abstinence education over so-called "comprehensive" sex education by a 2 to 1 margin, regardless of political or religious affiliation, according to a recent Zogby poll. Abstinence education is defined by its exclusive purpose of teaching the social, psychological and health gains to be realized by abstaining from sexual activity until marriage. Abstinence education permits an age-appropriate discussion of contraception, but within the context of promoting abstinence as the healthiest choice.

I am concerned that the program as reauthorized in the SCHIP bill contains new requirements for medical accuracy and proven effectiveness. These new requirements apply only to abstinence education. Placing accountability on all adolescent health programs funded by the Federal Government is an appropriate standard for the spending of Federal tax-dollars and the protection of children's health. These funds must be based on health outcomes and equally applied to all federally funded adolescent health programs.

Reauthorization of the Title V Abstinence Education Program and funding is critical in supporting the majority of communities who wish to promote the optimal health message for our Nation's youth. Title V Abstinence Education is working in South Carolina, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting a reauthorization of the program as it was originally designed.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WEATHER MITIGATION RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2007

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Weather Mitigation Research and Technology Transfer Authorization Act. This bill will increase and enhance research and development in weather mitigation to better understand its effectiveness in addressing drought in our country.

The western part of our country, including my own State of Colorado, has experienced drought conditions in recent years. Efforts have been made to address drought recovery, preparedness, and alleviation. Weather mitigation, which means the use of artificial methods to change or control the natural formation of cloud forms or precipitation forms, causing, for example, snowpack augmentation or rain enhancement, could also contribute to solving this problem. However, little fundamental research has been done to better understand weather mitigation and modification.

The National Academies of Science report Critical Issues in Weather Modification Research, released in 2003, noted that there is no scientific proof that weather modification or mitigation is effective; however, the report at-

tributes this to a lack of understanding of "critical atmospheric processes" that have caused unpredictable results with weather mitigation, not a lack of success with such efforts. The report called for a national program for a sustained research effort in weather modification and mitigation research to enhance the effectiveness and predictability of weather mitigation.

There is currently no federal investment in weather mitigation, though there are private funds that are largely going toward unproven techniques. My bill, similar to a bill introduced in the Senate by Senator KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, establishes a federal research and development effort to improve our understanding of the atmosphere and develop more effective weather modification technologies and techniques.

In my own State, the Denver Water Department, which has been impacted by the prolonged drought conditions, implemented a cloud seeding program to help increase the snowpack in its watersheds along the mountains of the Front Range. This was not a major program, but it was an attempt to modify the drought conditions for the benefit of the over 2.5 million people in the Denver area that are served by Denver Water. This bill would help augment these types of efforts by promoting greater research into how best to employ such techniques in a safe and effective manner.

Specifically, the bill creates a Weather Mitigation Advisory and Research Board in the Department of Commerce to promote the "theoretical and practical knowledge of weather mitigation" through the funding of research and development projects. The board will be made up of representatives from the American Meteorological Society, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the National Academy of Sciences, the National Center for Atmospheric Research, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a higher education institution, and a state which is currently supporting operational weather modification projects.

In Colorado, a large portion of our water source comes from the snowpack runoff each year. A better understanding of weather mitigations has the potential to enhance our snowpacks, and thus assist in addressing drought concerns.

But the needs for this research extend beyond the western United States. The need for this research is becoming even more urgent with the reports that other countries are successfully exploring this area of research. China in particular has focused on the possibility that weather mitigation technology would allow the government to control the weather during the Beijing Olympics in 2008. The Chinese already spend more than \$50 million annually on weather mitigation. As the weather conditions in China can have an impact on North American weather as well, we must understand how these changes will change our weather. This is quickly becoming an issue of national and economic security.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support the expansion of the research and development of weather mitigation and urge a swift passage of this bill.

BLUE DIAMOND GROWERS

HON. DEVIN NUNES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. NUNES. Madam Speaker, on behalf of Representative KEVIN MCCARTHY and myself, I would like to address remarks that were made on the House floor concerning a grower owned nonprofit marketing cooperative in our districts.

Yesterday, during debate related to the 2008 Agriculture Appropriations bill, inaccurate information was conveyed that undermined the integrity of Blue Diamond Growers. I take this opportunity to provide clarifying facts to my colleagues.

Blue Diamond is approaching its 100th anniversary as a nonprofit marketing cooperative for thousands of growers in California. Many of the grower members live in my district, and produce the world's best almonds. Blue Diamond is very proud of the fact that the average tenure of its employees is approximately twenty years. This is an outstanding record and demonstrates employee satisfaction with their jobs.

The International Longshoreman and Warehouseman's Union has tried to organize Blue Diamond since the late 1980s. They have had no success. Diamond's employees do not want to be in the union and express high job satisfaction. In 1990, the ILWU held an election at Blue Diamond and lost. As recently as May of 2005, Blue Diamond asked the NLRB to hold an election so that Blue Diamond's employees would have the opportunity to vote on whether or not they wished to be members of the ILWU. The ILWU immediately filed a letter with the NLRB stating that they had no interest in representing Blue Diamond workers. Therefore, the election was cancelled. Blue Diamond is ready and willing to hold an election, supervised by the NLRB, at any time the employees want it.

Since that time, the ILWU has filed numerous complaints with the NLRB. The original complaints have been resolved to the satisfaction of the NLRB. They covered three employee terminations. It is my understanding that the employees were fired for actions endangering their own personal safety or threatening food quality. However, the NLRB found that two of the firings were improper and those employees were re-hired and given all of their back pay and benefits. The NLRB found the third firing to be proper.

In what appears to be an ongoing harassment action against Blue Diamond Growers, the ILWU filed three additional complaints over the firing of employees. The NLRB held all of these firings to be proper, and found in favor of Blue Diamond.

Madam Speaker, it is important to have the record clear on this matter, since Blue Diamond Growers treats its employees fairly in all respects. This is clearly demonstrated by the length of employment of most of the employees. I hope that in the future, Representatives concerned about the rights of workers in our districts would more fully examine the facts before making unfounded claims on the House Floor. Blue Diamond Growers and the thousands of farmers and workers who they represent deserve better from this House.