

has created a real-time, web-based burn-bed capacity system in the national emergency preparedness center and funded Advanced Burn Life Support (ABLS) and clinical, on-site burn nurse training for 200 public health service nurses as a reserve capacity for potential mass burn casualty incidents, as well as supporting more than 20 ABLS courses with over 600 first-responders in ten key areas of the country.

The 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C., and major accidents like the Rhode Island nightclub fire and North Carolina chemical plant explosions demonstrate the substantial number of burn injuries that can result from such events. Over one-third of those hospitalized in New York on 9/11 had severe burn injuries. The Department of Homeland Security has recognized that there would be mass burn casualties in terrorist acts, and there is a need for appropriate preparedness activities. For example, if the United States should suffer further terrorist attacks using explosions, incendiary devices or chemical weapons, most victims would suffer severe burn injuries.

Even a relatively modest number of burn injuries can consume large segments of the nation's burn bed capacity. For example, the victims of the Rhode Island nightclub fire absorbed the burn bed capacity of most of the northern East Coast of the United States. Mass burn casualties that reach into the hundreds or thousands would strain the system to the breaking point.

It is clear that burn centers are a national resource and a critical link to public health emergency preparedness. Medicare coverage for serious, disabling burn injuries would enable these burn centers to remain financially viable and preserve an essential component of our public health emergency infrastructure.

This legislation follows an approach already taken with respect to End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease), both of which result in waivers of the 24-month waiting period for Medicare eligibility. While these two diseases tend to be progressive in nature, the very initial phase of a serious burn injury is when things are most acute.

Providing immediate Medicare coverage for uninsured patients suffering serious, disabling burn injuries is a fully justified and necessary step. Although not all hospitalized burn injuries would qualify as "disabling" and thus result in immediate Medicare coverage, this legislation is about providing coverage for the many uninsured patients suffering from serious burn injuries and ensuring the survival of a vital national resource that already is in jeopardy, a situation we cannot accept as we seek to prepare the nation to deal with potential mass casualty terrorist events.

PARAMOUNT 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, 50 years ago, on January 30, 1957, the village residents of Clearwater and Hynes, who shared a five-square mile area of Southeast Los Angeles, came together

to preserve a way of life by merging their communities into the City of Paramount.

Clearwater, first settled in 1886, and Hynes, settled in 1898, were two villages mutually bonded through their shared dairy and hay industries. The new city was named after the main boulevard that ran through the business district. At the time of Paramount's incorporation, the area was one of the Nation's largest dairy producers and the world's biggest receiving point for hay. Paramount began as home to more cows than people, with an estimated 25,000 cows in its city limits. During this time Paramount did \$1 million worth of business a month—\$150,000 from cream alone. As the dairies thrived, so did the banks, grocery stores, businesses, and restaurants downtown.

During the 1960s and 70s, Paramount transitioned into a more urban landscape with many of the dairies moving out to more rural areas, taking a large portion of the local workforce with them. Neighboring and nearby cities built suburban shopping malls and housing developments, which strained the small merchants of Paramount and aided in the City's loss of business revenue.

By the late 1970s, the major agricultural centers of Paramount, known for its dairies and hay market, fields and feedlots, were overtaken by concrete and asphalt. Unfortunately, county planners thought Paramount was better suited for auto repair shops and salvage yards. The following years brought uncontrolled growth and ultimately lead to an overbuilt environment that eventually deteriorated in many areas of town. Despite such challenges, Paramount's fate was not sealed.

Paramount became the exception to the rule. The City took heed of its "disaster area" status in the early 1980s and, rather than sink under the weight of its problems, chose a proactive plan to turn itself around. This eventually turned Paramount's "Rust Belt" status into "The Revitalization of Paramount."

The City launched a concerted effort to make physical improvements everywhere in town. By using municipal tools like zoning ordinances, planning regulations, design guidelines, redevelopment, and economic incentives, the City took it upon itself to inspire its residents and business owners to think big and reach for something more. Thus began Paramount's turnaround.

By confronting urban blight and providing exceptional city services, Paramount thrived economically and culturally. Paramount, California is now known for its successful transformation and its attractive business climate and quality of life. The City has received numerous awards for its forward thinking.

Today, Paramount is a growing community of landscaped boulevards, enhanced police service, parks, recreation programs, affordable housing, public art, and tree-lined neighborhoods with white picket fences.

I want to share Paramount's success with the rest of our Nation as a model of one city's can-do attitude and ability to overcome the destruction that urban blight can wreak on our most precious assets—our communities and the people that live in them.

TRIBUTE TO CARLOS LEZAMA, FATHER OF THE LABOR DAY CARNIVAL IN BROOKLYN

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

Ms. CLARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay homage to a great American, a role model, leader, innovator and certainly one of the finest gentlemen in the history of my home state of New York.

I extend my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Carlos Lezama, the Father of Brooklyn's world-famous West Indian-American Labor Day Carnival.

Carlos Lezama was born of humble beginnings in the Caribbean nation of Trinidad & Tobago.

What is now the largest outdoor summer festival in the United States began over 40 years ago as a small celebration of Caribbean immigrants in Harlem. It was initially held each February to coincide with Carnival celebrations in Trinidad & Tobago. As the wintry weather typical of New York in February began to impact the nascent celebration, Mr. Lezama moved Carnival to Labor Day Weekend and relocated the festivities to Brooklyn, in the heart of the eleventh Congressional District. Under Carlos' guidance and innovation, Brooklyn's Labor Day Carnival has grown to attract more than four million participants every year from all walks of life across the city and across the Nation.

Carlos molded a nostalgic longing for "the old country" into an integral part of the fabric of New York City. For immigrant families like my own, Labor Day Carnival has always been a source of pride. Its very existence says there is a place for me in this great Nation; my parents are Caribbean-Americans who emigrated from Jamaica to this country in search of the American dream. The success of Labor Day Carnival and Mr. Lezama himself is a testament to the promise of America.

Carlos Lezama passed away on Tuesday, January 22, 2007. As he joins the ancestors, it is my honor to salute him. A great son of Trinidad and Tobago and a great American; Carlos Lezama will be sorely missed.

TRAVIS McCORMICK KLEENWOOD DAY

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, Saturday, January 27, 2007, is not an ordinary day for the community of Kingwood, Texas. Before many people get out of bed, residents will be up armed with trash bags waging a war against litter.

The "Travis McCormick Kleenwood Day" is an annual event where people of all ages volunteer to clean up their neighborhoods. They don't do it because they have to; they do it because they have pride in their community.

This year will mark the fourth annual Kleenwood Day. This effort is spearheaded by Kingwood Chamber of Commerce President Sparky Nolan. Because of Sparky's determination and enthusiasm, the number of volunteers continues to grow exponentially.

This year, beginning at their neighborhood pools, residents will pick up thousands of pounds of litter near sidewalks, greenbelt trails and curbs.

These volunteer efforts are commendable and an inspiration for others to show pride in their communities.

I am proud to have Kingwood, Texas, in my district.

That's just the way it is.

THE COLLEGE STUDENT RELIEF
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. PETER HOEKSTRA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak in opposition of H.R. 5.

Today we are considering the College Student Relief Act of 2007. Democrats have claimed that this legislation will provide relief to students going to college. However, what they have done is propose a classic bait and switch.

This bill will not improve access to higher education for low- and middle-income Americans nor will it provide relief for students in college today. This relief, when fully phased in, will benefit college graduates for only 6 months.

H.R. 5 reduces interest rates for only undergraduate subsidized loans over 5 years from 6.8 percent to 3.4 percent.

By the time the interest rate is cut in half, the 3.4 percent interest rate is only in effect for half a year. The student loan interest rate goes back to 6.8 percent permanently starting January 1, 2012. In other words, it snaps back just 6 months after it is fully phased in at a cost of \$7 billion.

The reality of the situation is that the Democrats could not follow through on their campaign promise to cut interest rates in half because they couldn't pay for it.

So first they narrowed the field down to one subset of student loans. Then, they phased the rate cut in. Then, they ended it after 5 years. What is left is this "bait and switch" benefit that will expire in a mere 6 months after it is fully phased in.

Democrats have talked about improving access to higher education for lower- and middle-income Americans. H.R. 5 does not provide relief to college students seeking to pay their tuition. It does not do anything to get more students into college.

This bill provides a back-end benefit to college graduates instead of a front-end benefit for those trying to get in the door of a university.

The bill will not help a single graduate student saddled with a heavy financial burden.

H.R. 5 is a boon to the Direct Loan Program. The Direct Loan Program's market share has fallen to 22 percent because schools have chosen FFEL. Cutting FFEL lenders is the only way to increase the competitive position of direct lending, a program that is withering on the vine through the voluntary attrition of colleges.

CBO estimates that cutting interest rates will cost taxpayers more than \$7 billion. In order to off-set the cost, the proposal before us will cut

government payments to loan providers. While reducing lender payments, I'm concerned that rate reductions, fee waivers, loan forgiveness and other benefits will be taken away from students seeking higher education loans.

Lowering interest rates for borrowers could result in schools increasing tuition. If that is the result, borrowers won't get any relief at all. The real issue is college cost, not student loan interest rates!

During the 109th Congress, we enacted policies that reduced student loan fees by allowing students to consolidate with lenders that best met their needs. Origination fees were reduced and loan limits were also increased, allowing more students to gain access to much-needed financial aid.

Supporting H.R. 5 will not help students achieve higher education affordability.

RECOGNIZING MS. SANDRA J. ELLIS FOR HER SERVICE AND DEDICATION ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

Mr. FORBES. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Ms. Sandra J. Ellis for her loyal service to the United States of America.

Sandy's commitment to the armed services of our country and the Fort Lee community is to be highly commended.

Sandra J. Ellis was born in Petersburg, Virginia on June 16, 1948, which is Flag Day. The daughter of an Air Force officer, Sandy grew up in a military family that lived in Illinois, South Dakota, and years later returned to Virginia.

While Sandy's first roles at Fort Lee were as a stage performer with Special Services and as an entertainer at the hospital ward there, it was after high school that Sandy entered Petersburg General Hospital School of Nursing/Richard Bland College. In 1967 she decided to take a semester off and took a part-time position at Fort Lee. In a short while, she was offered a permanent position which she accepted. At a time when many young men and women were joining the Army during the build-up in Vietnam, Sandy chose to serve her country at Fort Lee; and so she did for 40 years.

Sandy began her dedicated service to the Army as a Military Personnel Clerk. During her career, she consistently earned more responsibility and took on positions as a Port Call Clerk, Secretary, Congressional Inquiry Specialist, Administrative Specialist, and Protocol Officer. Most recently, she has served as the Public Affairs Officer, where she has been the officer responsible for media and community relations at Fort Lee, an Army community of more than 12,000 and home of the Quartermaster Center and School. As the chief liaison to the surrounding community, Sandy played a central role in steering the installation and the community through the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure process.

Sandy Ellis has shown a demonstrated commitment to the Army, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the nation that is rarely equaled. She has served during eight different Presidential administrations, and her loyalty to

the servicemen and women at Fort Lee deserves particular attention and admiration. Today, we salute her for her unwavering dedication to her profession and the American people. Furthermore, we salute her husband John Ellis, and her son, Jay, without whom Sandy's work would not have been possible nor as meaningful as it has been.

Madam Speaker, please join me in honoring Sandy Ellis on her retirement from Federal service in the United States Army.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING HELEN BASS SMITH ON HER 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker, Whereas, Mrs. Smith has shown an extraordinary commitment to her community by volunteering at the Salvation Army in Cadiz, Ohio, and at the Harrison Community Hospital, where she has been president of the Hospital Auxiliary for 4 years; and

Whereas, Mrs. Smith has demonstrated values of hard work and service throughout her life, always maintaining a positive outlook; and

Whereas, Mrs. Smith has worked for the United States Department of Agriculture, the Scio Pottery Company, Lib Gray's Dressmaker Shop, and as a farmer for many years and still continues her active lifestyle by walking 2 miles every day; and

Whereas, Mrs. Smith's character has been praised by her hospital volunteer coordinator, who describes her as "nothing short of magnificent" and that her spirit is "not a day over 14;" Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that along with her friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I wish Helen Bass-Smith a happy and healthy 90th birthday. We recognize the tremendous impact she has had in her community and in the lives of all those people she has touched.

NEW DIRECTION FOR IRAQ ACT OF 2007

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing, along with Congresswoman TAMMY BALDWIN and Congressman SAM FARR, the New Direction for Iraq Act, the first legislation introduced in Congress to deal comprehensively with the military, diplomatic, political, economic and humanitarian strategies needed to move forward in Iraq.

On November 7th, the American people sent a strong and clear message that it's time to change the course in Iraq. Unfortunately, President Bush is proposing more of the same. Instead of listening to the majority of Americans, Iraqis, and military experts, the President's stubborn adherence to a clearly failed strategy is undermining our security and putting more of our troops and Iraqis at risk. Our troops have performed valiantly, but