

achievement. Mr. Kryza, who is now the Michigan State Veterans Director, will also be on hand to celebrate this occasion and spread the holiday cheer.

I would like to recognize Gary Bjorkquist for his vision and his tenacity in keeping the Veterans Food Drive alive and running all these years. As old and new volunteers gather on December 14, 2007 for the 20th anniversary Veteran Food Drive, I salute the great number of individuals who volunteer their time going door to door with holiday baskets in hand as well as those who have graciously donated to the Veterans Food Drive each year.

The duty, honor, and commitment these volunteers show to those who have sacrificed for our country are just a few of the values that make this Veterans Food Drive special.

Madam Speaker, as we honor our brave fighting men and women serving around the world and especially in Iraq and Afghanistan this holiday season, it is important that we care for their families. In that spirit, for 20 years, the Veterans Food Drive has truly provided a helping hand to those who have served our country. Given the unique spirit of volunteerism and community service exhibited by Gary Bjorkquist and the local community, I know we can expect the Veterans Food Drive to be serving today's soldiers, when they are tomorrow's veterans, 20 years from now.

Madam Speaker, I close by asking that you and the U.S. House of Representatives join me in paying tribute to the Veterans Food Drive, Gary Bjorkquist, and all the volunteers and contributors who are truly serving those who have served all of us. In this time of conflict, it is more vital than ever that we retain those values of volunteerism, duty, honor, and commitment—values that the Veterans Food Drive truly exemplifies.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2007

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, due to official business in my district, I missed rollcall votes 1145 through 1155 on Wednesday, December 12, 2007.

Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall vote 1145.

On rollcall vote 1146, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall vote 1147, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall vote 1148, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall vote 1149, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall vote 1150, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall vote 1151, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall vote 1152, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall vote 1153, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall vote 1154, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall vote 1155, I would have voted "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2007

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, December 12, 2007, I inadvertently missed two votes. Had I been present and voting, I would have voted as follows:

(1) Rollcall No. 1154: "yea." On motion to postpone consideration of the veto message.

(2) Rollcall No. 1155: "yea." On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ACCESS AND IMPLEMENTATION ACT OF 2007

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2007

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Environmental Justice Access and Implementation Act of 2007. I am pleased to stand with my friends Representatives Hilda Solis, Keith Ellison and John Conyers for the environmental health of all communities by reintroducing this legislation updated from its previous introduction as H.R. 1648 in the 109th Congress. Once again, this bill will seek to direct federal agencies to establish offices of environmental justice, integrate environmental justice into the core missions of Federal agencies, and establish community technology centers to increase access to information about environmental hazards.

Since the late 1970s and early 1980s, environmental injustices against communities of color and lower-income families have been identified throughout the Nation. Coupled with decades of thorough research acknowledging "environmental racism" and encouraging the pursuit of "environmental justice," a tremendous movement has emerged.

Recently, the United Church of Christ report "Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty: 1987–2007" was released, synthesizing decades of environmental justice movement developments. This groundbreaking document chronicles the experiences of many communities throughout our Nation disadvantaged by environmental burdens. This report and other research demonstrate that federal agencies need to put their money where their mouth is to meet the expectations of Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations, which was signed by former President Clinton on February 11, 1994. Our communities deserve access to information about the hazards of their immediate environment and have waited well over a decade for the goals set forth by the Executive Order to be met.

Madam Speaker, I first introduced this legislation with a number of my colleagues in 2005 and eventually garnered the support of 67 co-sponsors. To once again meet these goals and better compliment other legislative initiatives to achieve environmental justice, I have made a few key updates to this legislation in consultation with many stakeholders. Updates

to this legislation include authorization of \$1,000,000 annually for each established office of environmental justice in relevant agencies, as well as reporting requirements to increase the effectiveness of federal agency implementation and ensure proper Congressional oversight. This legislation has also been updated to refine criteria for the development of community technology centers, which will increase the accessibility of information about environmental hazards in many communities.

For over a decade, agencies have been mandated to examine the impact of their policies on the environmental health of minority and low-income communities. Once we give those mandates true legal standing, we will be able to turn those mandates into action that directly serves our communities. We must legislate accountability and conscience in our permitting processes and environmental action to reduce the burden on low-income populations and communities of color. I am confident that the provisions of the Environmental Justice Access and Implementation Act will do just that.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I encourage my colleagues to support this necessary legislation and look forward to its expedient passage.

DENIEL BENAC RETIREMENT TRIBUTE

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2007

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to a man who is a long-time activist in labor, politics, and community service in Northern Michigan. With that in mind, I ask that all of my colleagues join me in celebrating the retirement of Daniel A. Benac of Montmorency County, Michigan. Dan Benac will retire on January 4, 2008 after a distinguished career in the United States Army, at General Motors, and as an advocate for his fellow workers and veterans.

Dan Benac was born in Alpena, Michigan on June 8, 1922, as one of twelve children of George and Rose Benac. Nearly 65 years ago he married Geraldine on February 9, 1943 and the couple raised three children: Charlotte, Carolyn, and David. Dan and Geraldine have eight grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren.

Dan Benac served in the U.S. Army's 103rd Infantry Division from 1942 until receiving an honorable medical discharge. After serving his country, he then began his career as a skilled tradesman at Besser Manufacturing in Alpena.

Dan then worked at a small manufacturing plant in Walled Lake, Michigan before taking a position with Pontiac Motors in 1948. He tried his hand as an entrepreneur in 1955, when he started and operated two gas stations. During the time he ran these businesses he began an apprenticeship as an electrician and earned the status of a journeyman electrician in 1962.

In 1969, Dan Benac took his skills to Warren, Michigan, where he worked at General Motors' Chevrolet plant. He began his union career in 1948 when he joined the United Auto Workers. While at the Chevrolet plant, Dan accepted the position as a UAW committeeman.

In 1974 Dan Benac took a medical retirement from General Motors, but as with so

many union brothers and sisters, Dan continued his work with the union. In addition to his membership in the UAW, he also joined the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in 1956.

In 1983 Dan was named chairman of the UAW Retirees for the Alpena International Council. As chairman, he organized presentations on a monthly basis for his fellow retirees that ranged from elected officials to speeches about prescription drugs and Medicare.

Dan was later named chairman of the UAW Region 1-D retirees, serving members from sixty-two counties. He was also a board member of the UAW statewide coordinating committee for the Democratic Party.

In addition to his union activities, Dan Benac was instrumental in forming the Montmorency County Democratic Party, and served as chairman for many years. While he is no longer chairman, he remains active in the Party.

Dan Benac was a board member of the National Council for Senior Citizens and was nominated Senior of the Year in Region 4 in 1995 and 2003. He is also a member of other organizations including the Shrine Club, Disabled American Veterans, American Legion, and Masons. He was also chairman of the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund for Montmorency County.

Madam Speaker, Dan Benac's activities are amazing for a person of any age but as an eight-five year old his many activities are exceptionally admirable. Dan and Geraldine have been great assets to their family, their fellow workers, and their community, as well as good friends of mine. On January 4, 2008, family and friends will gather for a well deserved and final retirement party for Daniel Benac at the Addison Oaks Conference Center in Leonard, Michigan.

Today, as Dan prepares to enter a well deserved retirement, I offer him, his wife Geraldine, his three children, eight grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren all the best for the future. I would ask, Madam Speaker, that you and the entire U.S. House of Representatives join me in thanking Dan Benac for his service to the Montmorency community and commending him for the many years he has spent his life in service to others.

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN EDWARD
HUTCHINSON

HON. TIM MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2007

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the career of John Edward "Hutch" Hutchinson. Hutch has served as the Greensburg Fire Chief in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, for the past 55 years.

The position of fire chief in Greensburg is an elected office. Since 1952, the residents of the community have resoundingly affirmed they appreciate Hutch's dedication to the job by reelecting him.

Since taking office, Hutch has made countless improvements to the department. His firefighters are all volunteers, highly trained and specialized. Hutch has developed a dive team,

a swift water rescue, large foam and vent operations, a bloodhound team, and an air rescue team.

In 1997, the Greensburg Fire Department First Responders were prepared to handle a large community disaster, including attacks involving weapons of mass destruction. Few in 1997 could have seen the value in this forward-thinking for a volunteer department, yet it is essential knowledge for all firefighters today.

Under Hutch's leadership, the Greensburg Fire Department has assisted with natural disaster response nationwide. From helping rebuild a community playground in Alabama to clearing trees off roads in South Carolina, Hutch has turned the Greensburg Fire Department into a humanitarian outlet.

Hutch takes his job beyond the walls of the firehouse into the community. He established health and fitness centers for the community, firefighters, and City employees.

Hutch has developed burn prevention classes for the local elementary and middle schools. He has served on the local hospital board, the Greensburg YMCA Board, the aerobics center board, and the camp cadet board.

Though he's been in office for 55 years, Hutch has no interest in slowing down. He calls himself "a young kid"—and isn't that a wonderful attitude? Hutch refuses to let his age be a factor. He works out twice a day, 7 days a week, to ensure that he's not asking his firefighters to do anything he can't do himself.

It is my great honor to recognize the long career of John Edward "Hutch" Hutchinson, a man who has given immeasurable amounts to the city of Greensburg, to Pennsylvania, and to our nation during his five and a half decades of service as fire chief.

INTRODUCING THE CANCER AND
TERMINAL ILLNESS PATIENT
HEALTH CARE ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise to help working Americans stricken with cancer or other terminal illnesses, and their families, by introducing the Cancer and Terminal Illness Patient Health Care Act. This act exempts people with terminal illnesses from the employee portion of payroll taxes while they are suffering from such illnesses or are incurring significant medical costs associated with their conditions. The Cancer and Terminal Illness Patient Health Care Act also provides a payroll deduction to any worker who is the primary caregiver for a spouse, parent, or child with a terminal illness.

When stricken with cancer or another terminal disease, many Americans struggle to pay for the treatment necessary to save, or extend, their lives. Even employees with health insurance incur costs such as for transportation to and from care centers, prescription drugs not covered by their insurance, or for child care while they are receiving treatment. Yet, the Federal Government continues to force these employees to pay for retirement benefits they may never live to see!

Many Americans struggle to pay the costs of treating children, a spouse, or a parent with

a terminal illness. My bill also provides much needed tax relief for those who are providing care to a loved one with a terminal disease.

As a physician who has specialized in women's health issues for decades, I know how critical it is that cancer patients and others suffering from terminal illnesses have the resources they need to combat these illnesses. The Cancer and Terminal Illness Patient Health Care Act provides a realistic way to help people suffering from cancer or other terminal illnesses receive quality health care.

It is hard to think of a more compassionate tax policy this Congress could enact than to stop taking the resources away from working Americans that could help them treat cancer, AIDS, or other terrible health problems. I hope all my colleagues will help people suffering from terminal illnesses, and their caregivers, by cosponsoring the Cancer and Terminal Illness Patient Health Care Act.

HONORING THE LIFE OF PATSY
SANDERS

HON. DAVID DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2007

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory and life of Patsy Marie Fitzgerald Sanders, a resident of the First Congressional District of Tennessee, who passed away December 12, 2007.

Patsy Sanders was a foundation to her family and our thoughts and prayers are with her husband of 52 years, Joe, and their daughters Jolene, Arlene, Darlene, and son Jacky.

As a lifetime member of Hales Chapel Christian Church, Patsy showed the love for her family and community that would shine to all who met her.

She was also a member of the Washington County Commission. As a Commissioner, she had a reputation of fairness and concern for the advancement of her county.

Madam Speaker, I ask that the House join me this evening in offering our sympathies to the family and friends of Patsy Marie Fitzgerald Sanders. She was a dedicated mother and an irreplaceable servant of her community.

Her service is greatly appreciated, and she will be deeply missed throughout Northeast Tennessee.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF ALICE
KATHERINE MATTOS SANDERS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2007

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise along with my colleague from California, Congressman DENNIS CARDOZA to pay tribute to the life of Alice Katherine Mattos Sanders of Merced, CA, who recently passed away at 110 years of age. Mrs. Sanders was an outstanding lady filled with energy, love and high spirits. She leaves behind a loving family including a daughter-in-law, six grandchildren, fourteen great-grandchildren and twelve great-great-grandchildren.