

CONGRATULATING THE ROCKWALL
HIGH SCHOOL LADY JACKETS

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 23, 2007

Mr. HALL of Texas. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate the players and coaches of the 2007 Rockwall High School Lady Jackets. On March 3, the Lady Jackets became the third girls team in State history to complete a 40–0 season when they won the Texas 5A championship. Joining this exclusive club with the 1980 South Oak Cliff team and Duncanville's 1997 squad was even more exciting since it marked the first-ever State basketball title for Rockwall's girls. By defeating Houston Cypress Fairbanks 59–54 in the State championship and thereby finishing a 40 and 0 season, the Lady jackets made an unprecedented achievement that certainly merits recognition.

With both Houston Cypress Fairbanks and Rockwall holding pristine 39–0 records prior to the championship game, the State championship promised to be an exciting match. However, by games end the Lady Jackets scored their 40th victory in overtime. Having won the silver medal last year against Plano West, the team was well motivated to come back this year and win gold, and with their championship victory they did just that.

Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate the Rockwall Lady Jackets for their tremendous success, not only in tournament play but also throughout the entire season. Through their hard work and dedication they have made Rockwall very proud. I ask each of my colleagues to join me in honoring Rockwall High School. Finally, I want to commend Superintendent Dr. Gene Burton, Principal Dr. Mark LeMaster, Athletic Director Mark Elam, Athletic Coordinator Scott Smith, Head Coach Jill McDill, Varsity Assistant Casey Reeves, JV Coach Brad Blalock, and Freshman Coach Cody Christenberry for helping to lead the Lady Jackets on to victory. I'd like to congratulate each of the talented players on the 2007 Championship Lady jacket team: Shelby Adamson, Emily McCallum, Arielle Andres, Haley Day, Peyton Adamson, Samantha Shaw, Meredith Gordon, Sunny Satery, Brittany Coleman, Kayla Kimmons, Ariel Coleman, Genevieve Campbell, Lindsay Wack, and Kiara Slayton. I'd also like to honor Ashlie Strange, Rebekah Jones, Lauren Hurt, Nichole Schueneman, and Taylor Whitehead who all served as managers for the team.

I especially salute head coach Jill McDill on her devotion to duty, her super guidance of our girls, never looking ahead but taking the games one at a time. Coach McDill is a thorough coach where every detail is practiced over and over by her girls. Just as this stellar group of players took its schedule one game at a time, so too have they been taught to live life. Coach McDill has instilled in them the desire to live every day doing their best, to be unafraid of the future, and be loyal to your goals, your school, your family, and your God.

The combination of a talented group of girls, a head coach who has previously won State titles at other schools, a Superintendent and faculty who fully supports, and parents and loyal Yellow Jacket supporters yielded a Rockwall girls Basketball State 5A Championship and a number 3 national ranking.

Girls, coaches, parents, faculty, and student body—you made Rockwall, Texas, smallest county of 254 counties, very proud.

God bless all of you and thank you again! As we close and leave this floor of Congress on this 23rd day of March, let us do so in respect and recognition that the Rockwall Girls Basketball team is the champion of the largest State in the union—the State of Texas.

INTRODUCING THE MEDICARE
MENTAL HEALTH MODERNIZA-
TION ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 23, 2007

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues JIM RAMSTAD of Minnesota and PATRICK KENNEDY from Rhode Island to introduce the Medicare Mental Health Modernization Act, a bill to provide mental health parity in Medicare. I have introduced a version of this bill in every Congress since 1994. Perhaps this time we can actually enact it.

Medicare's mental health benefit is fashioned on treatments provided in 1965, but mental health care has changed dramatically over the last 42 years. Medicare limits inpatient coverage at psychiatric hospitals to 190 days over an individual's lifetime. In addition, beneficiaries are charged a discriminatory 50 percent coinsurance for outpatient psychotherapy services, compared to 20 percent for physical health services.

The Medicare Mental Health Modernization Act eliminates this blatant mental health discrimination under Medicare and modernizes the Medicare mental health benefit to meet today's standards of care.

This bill is long overdue. One in five members of our senior population displays mental difficulties that are not part of the normal aging process. In primary care settings, more than a third of senior citizens demonstrate symptoms of depression and impaired social functioning. Yet only one out of every three mentally ill seniors receives the mental health services he/she needs. Older adults also have one of the highest rates of suicide of any segment of our population. In addition, mental illness is the single largest diagnostic category for Medicare beneficiaries who qualify as disabled.

There is a critical need for effective and accessible mental health care for our Medicare population. Recent research has found a direct relationship between treating depression in older adults and improved physical functioning associated with independent living. Unfortunately, the current structure of Medicare mental health benefits is inadequate and presents multiple barriers to access of essential treatment. This bill addresses these problems.

The Medicare Mental Health Modernization Act is a straightforward bill that improves Medicare's mental health benefits as follows:

It reduces the discriminatory co-payment for outpatient mental health services from 50 percent to the 20 percent level charged for most other Part B medical services.

It eliminates the arbitrary 190-day lifetime cap on inpatient services in psychiatric hospitals.

It improves beneficiary access to mental health services by including within Medicare a

number of community-based residential and intensive outpatient mental health services that characterize today's state-of-the-art clinical practices.

It further improves access to needed mental health services by addressing the shortage of qualified mental health professionals serving older and disabled Americans in rural and other medically underserved areas by allowing state licensed marriage and family therapists and mental health counselors to provide Medicare-covered services.

Similarly, it corrects a legislative oversight that will facilitate the provision of mental health services by clinical social workers within skilled nursing facilities.

It requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study to examine whether the Medicare criteria to cover therapeutic services to beneficiaries with Alzheimer's and related cognitive disorders discriminates by being too restrictive.

In April 2002, President Bush identified unfair treatment limitations placed on mental health benefits as a major barrier to mental health care and urged Congress to enact legislation that would provide full parity in the health insurance coverage of mental and physical illnesses. We've made important strides forward for the under-65 population. Twenty-six states have enacted full mental health parity. The Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan (FEHBP) was improved in 2001 to assure that all federal employees and members of Congress are provided parity for mental health and substance abuse treatment. This month, Representatives KENNEDY and RAMSTAD introduced H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act, to provide full parity for mental health and substance abuse in the private insurance market nationwide. I'm proud to join them in support of this legislation, which was introduced with 256 cosponsors—well more than the 218 majority needed to pass the House of Representatives.

While some in the business community are concerned about increased costs associated with providing these benefits, a recent study of the FEHBP mental health coverage concluded that implementation of parity benefits led to negligible cost increases. In fact, some businesses are now embracing parity because they recognize the increased productivity from workers over the long run and how improving access to mental health services has the potential to avoid other additional costly care.

I am similarly sure that modernizing the Medicare mental health benefit will reduce unnecessary spending. Medicare mental health expenses have historically been heavily skewed toward more expensive inpatient services, with 56 percent of the total going to inpatient care and only 30 percent toward outpatient services in 2001. This relationship is in contrast to national trends showing a reversal in inpatient and outpatient spending over the past decade. In the last 10 years, inpatient spending declined from 40 percent to 24 percent, while outpatient spending increased from 36 percent to 50 percent of all mental health spending. In addition, improving beneficiary access to timely mental health care could well yield savings by minimizing the need for other services.

Science has demonstrated that mental illness and substance abuse are manifestations of biological diseases. It is long past time for

us to take action with regard to Medicare's inadequate mental health benefits and structure. Over the years, Congress has updated Medicare's benefits for treatment of physical illnesses as the practice of medicine has changed. The mental health field has undergone many advances over the past several decades. Effective research-validated interventions have been developed for many mental conditions that affect stricken beneficiaries. Most mental conditions no longer require long-term hospitalizations, and can be effectively treated in less restrictive community settings. This bill recognizes these advances in clinical treatment practices and adjusts Medicare's mental health coverage to account for them.

The Medicare Mental Health Modernization Act removes discriminatory features from the Medicare mental health benefits while facilitating access to up-to-date and affordable mental health services for our senior citizens and people with disabilities. I urge my colleagues to join Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. KENNEDY, and myself in support of this important legislation and to work with us to improve mental health coverage for everyone.

TRIBUTE TO PHYLLIS MAKI

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 23, 2007

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an extraordinary woman who has made tremendous contributions to Michigan's Upper Peninsula, to the County and City of Marquette and to Northern Michigan University.

A Marquette native, Phyllis Maki is a graduate of Bishop Baraga High School. She has spent nearly her entire life in Marquette and, over the years, Ms. Maki has involved herself in countless local community organizations, winning the admiration of her friends and neighbors as someone upon whom her community could always depend.

Phyllis Maki is active on the Board of the Lake Superior Community Partnership, which fosters economic growth throughout Marquette and surrounding, smaller communities. She was Treasurer of the Lake Superior Community Partnership and Lake Superior Jobs Coalition. She represented the interests of Marquette City by serving as a "Marquette County Ambassador," traveling to Lansing to advocate for the community before the state House and Senate and to bring money back from the state capital to invest in important programs in the Marquette area. She further helped drive economic growth in the area by serving on the board of the Economic Club of Marquette County.

She has served on the boards of the Marquette County YMCA, the KI Sawyer Heritage Museum and the Northern Michigan University Centennial Committee. She has worked towards access to healthcare for my constituents by serving on the Marquette Community Access to Health Care Finance Committee. She has served as a member of the U.S. Olympic Education Committee and the Michigan Department of Transportation Focus Group. As one of her friends recently commented, "She is involved in everything!"

She has been recognized with multiple awards in the past, including the Athena

Award in 1998, which recognizes excellence of female leaders in their profession. She herself served for several years on the Athena Board Steering Committee. She also received the Paul Harris Fellow Award, an International Rotary Award for assisting others in the community to reach their goals.

An honorary alumna of Northern Michigan University (NMU), Ms. Maki's ties to Northern Michigan University run deep. She has served many years on the Northern Michigan University Foundation Board of Trustees and as past president of this Board of Trustees for 11 years. She was also a member of NMU's Golden Wildcat Club, Blue Line Club and a member of NMU's Forest Roberts Theater.

Ms. Maki can perhaps best be described as "tireless." In all areas of her life, Phyllis Maki exhibits a tenacious, irrepressible spirit. While her involvement in her community demanded much of her time, she also made time for family: a single parent, she raised two children largely on her own.

She is known for waking early in the morning to tackle the day. She would start almost every morning with a 4:30 a.m. run, finishing in time to be in her office or in meetings as early as 6 a.m. Her runs were so notoriously early that one morning, she is said to have encountered a moose. She was up so early that the only living creatures up with her at that hour were wildlife!

While she has given freely of her personal time and raised a family, Ms. Maki was also able to lead a rich and rewarding career in the private sector. In February of this year, she retired as the Chief Financial Officer of a local car dealership. During her 37 years of work there, she was the driving force in building the company's philanthropic activities, encouraging them to regularly donate vehicles to various charities and non-profits. Coincidentally, the name of her long time employer reflects Ms. Maki's altruistic spirit: the car dealership is called Public Service Garage.

An active member of St. Peter's Catholic Church, Ms. Maki's faith has always been a strong foundation in her life, providing her the spiritual endurance to give so much to so many.

Tomorrow, Phyllis Maki will receive the Northern Michigan University President's Lifetime Achievement Award. This prestigious honor is bestowed upon men and women whose lives are truly outstanding. As the citation for this award reads, "A beautiful person inside and out, she leads with strength and vision and lives with a kind heart and generous soul. She is the best kind of friend—the forever kind."

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and the entire U.S. House of Representatives join me in saluting my friend, Ms. Phyllis Maki, for her lifetime of contributions and in wishing her, Carlo, Deborah, David and Michael all the best on this momentous occasion.

PUT ASIDE PARTISANSHIP TO PASS COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 23, 2007

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased that we in the House of Representa-

tives finally have a comprehensive immigration reform bill that we can debate, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of this bipartisan legislation authored by Congressman GUTIERREZ and Congressman FLAKE.

Members in this chamber now have the opportunity to pass a bill that will secure the border and end our nation's illegal immigration crisis.

Given that the challenge of illegal immigration is complex, the solution must address all aspects of this problem—border security, the hiring of illegal immigrants, labor shortages in certain sectors of our economy, and the millions of illegal immigrants currently living in the United States.

A piecemeal approach will simply not work. If we truly want to end illegal immigration, the only option is to pass a comprehensive bill that is tough, practical, and effective.

I stand here today ready to work with members of both parties, ready to listen to everyone's concerns, and steadfast in my conviction that, if we can put aside partisanship and compromise with each other, we can reach an agreement.

In my district in southern Arizona, the need for reform is critical. In 2006, 4,000 illegal immigrants a day crossed the border into Arizona. Our schools, hospitals, and law enforcement agencies are overwhelmed. Our environment and homeland security are threatened.

In the weeks ahead, I will be holding several forums on this legislation in my district, so I can receive feedback from the folks on the front lines of the immigration crisis. After listening to a range of experts and local residents, I will recommend possible improvements before we vote on this bill.

WOODROW WILSON PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 23, 2007

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will establish the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library in Staunton, Virginia. In studying the life and times of the 28th President, we see how Woodrow Wilson affected and continues to influence how the United States responds to national and international crises. This bill is identical to legislation that passed on the House floor by Voice Vote in the 109th Congress September 28, 2006.

As a statesman, scholar, and President, Woodrow Wilson faced economic crisis, democratic decay, and a world war. Presidential historians agree that World War I, and President Wilson's leadership, radically altered the role of diplomacy as a tool of foreign policy—a policy that established a new path for America's role in promoting democracies throughout the world. So too did Wilson's high-minded ideals craft a legacy that shaped the powers and responsibilities of the executive branch in times of war.

As a professor and president of Princeton University, Wilson created a more selective and accountable system for higher education. By instituting curriculum reform, Wilson revolutionized the roles of teachers and students and quickly made Princeton one of the most