

However, in 2005, as part of the Deficit Reduction Act, Congress repealed the “50-percent rule”, which could potentially result in rapid expansion of distance education programs. While the House-version of this bill included an amendment I offered to have the National Academy of Sciences conduct a study, this provision was stripped out during conference because of the arcane “Byrd rule,” which prohibits provisions without a fiscal impact in budget reconciliation bills.

Please know that I am not against distance education. In fact, as a K-12 student, I completed correspondence courses by distance. But, before we spend more federal dollars on this, we need to know more about the quality of distance education programs, as compared to campus-based programs. Simply put, the Independent Study of Distance Education Act will provide scientifically correct, statistically valid information on which to base future votes and policy decisions related to distance education programs.

I urge all Members to support this important legislation.

FAIR MINIMUM WAGE ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, this week presents Congress the chance to deal with some long overdue business.

It's been more than nine years since the Minimum Wage was increased. It's been nearly six years since the President cut off federal funding for stem cell research. And, it's been nearly two and a half years since the 9/11 Commission released its recommendations.

Its recommendations were a clear road map to what the Government needed to do to reduce the chances of another terrorist attack and prepare if we were to be attacked again. But many of the recommendations went unheeded.

In December 2005, the Commission gave the government a shameful report card—17 D's and F's. An F because our first responders still can't communicate with each other. An F for failing to screen airline passengers. And an F for basing Homeland Security funding on politics instead of risk.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we will turn these F's to A's—from failure to action.

The bill before us is a strong first step for this Congress towards securing our country and preventing another 9/11. I am proud to say that this bill includes a provision to create a director of non-proliferation within the White House to coordinate efforts at the Departments of Defense, Energy and State.

This provision was introduced in the 108th Congress, and again in the 109th Congress, by myself, Mrs. TAUSCHER and Mr. SPRATT, and believe that it is crucial to our efforts to create a comprehensive strategy to deal with the threats of Weapons of Mass Destruction. I was proud to work with both Mrs. TAUSCHER and Mr. SPRATT on this provision and I thank them for their leadership on this issue.

After today, America will be a safer place. 9/11 must never happen again. I strongly encourage members to vote in favor of it.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLIE NORWOOD

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. NORWOOD. Madam Speaker, on roll-call No. 17; On Motion to Recommit with Instructions (H.R. 2). Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

IN RECOGNITION OF JOHN A. McGINNESS, FOR MORE THAN 40 YEARS OF SERVICE TO LOCAL 12 OF THE UNITED ASSOCIATION OF JOURNEYMEN AND APPRENTICES OF THE PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING INDUSTRY OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of a man whose professional life has been dedicated to improving the lives of working men and women in Massachusetts, across our nation and beyond our borders. Jack McGinness is a remarkable labor leader with a long and illustrious career in the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada.

Brother Jack McGinness, the youngest of six children, was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts to William and Anne McGinness. He grew up in the City of Cambridge and graduated from Cambridge High and Latin School. After graduation, Jack honorably served our country by enlisting in the United States Marine Corps.

Jack was initiated into the Plumbers Apprenticeship Program on September 28, 1964. In his first year, Jack worked for the George Murphy Company in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Following the completion of his five year apprentice training program, Jack worked as a plumber and foreman for U.A. Contractors within the jurisdiction of Local 12 but also other U.A. contractors on the road in the U.S. and Canada.

During his tenure, brother McGinness served as a member of Plumbers Local 12, as an officer on Local 12's Joint Conference Board, Executive Board, the Apprentice Committee as well as served as Trustee for the Local 12 Health and Welfare Fund, delegate to the United Association's National Convention in 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2006. Brother McGinness served on the Sergeant of Arms Committee from 2001 until 2006. He was elected Business Agent in 1994.

Jack's dedication to the men and women of the Building Trades has been regularly acknowledged by his peers. He was elected by his brothers and sisters of labor to serve as President of the Framingham-Newton Building Trades Council as well as to serve on the State Building Trades Executive Board as a Delegate to the National Building Trades Convention in 2001 and 2005.

Anyone who has had the privilege to work along side Jack knows that he is a dedicated

and thoughtful individual, concerned primarily for the safety and welfare of his union brothers and sisters and their families.

Beyond his professional commitment, Jack devoted much of his time to developing Local 12's annual participation in Dads' Day and Toys for Tots as well as the Local 12 Golf Committee and the Local 12 Social Committee.

Madam Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the Floor of the House today to join with Jack McGinness' family, friends and brothers and sisters of labor to thank him for more than forty years of remarkable service to the American Labor Movement. I hope my Colleagues will join me in celebrating Jack's distinguished career and wishing him good health and God's blessing in all his future endeavors.

BOBBY GOLD REMEMBERED

HON. BRAD ELLSWORTH

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Bobby L. Gold, a man who dedicated his life's work to the concerns of poor, elderly and minority residents of Evansville, Indiana. Mr. Gold passed away on Thursday, January 4 at the age 61.

He began his advocacy in the 1960s, fighting for civil rights and against poverty in Evansville. His work in public service included the Community Action Program of Evansville and the AARP Senior Community Service Employment Program.

During his life, Mr. Gold sought to improve opportunities for the children of Evansville, especially those from low income backgrounds. While serving as a youth counselor for the Community Action Program of Evansville, he worked for the creation of a school breakfast program. He also recruited high school and college students to tutor local elementary school students in math and reading.

In his last years of his life, Mr. Gold devoted his time to the Evansville Housing Authority. His activism for public housing was enhanced by passion and understanding that being a resident of that system provided. He pushed for a zero tolerance policy for illegal drugs on the property of the housing authority to promote safety and security for residents. Even as his health deteriorated near the end of his life, Mr. Gold remained interested and involved in the work of the Housing Authority.

For his hard work, Mr. Gold was bestowed with the Indiana State Human Rights Award in 1999, and in September 2005 Evansville Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel presented him with a Celebration of Diversity Award.

Throughout his life, Mr. Gold was a strong voice for those in the Evansville community who needed it most. The people of Evansville have lost a dear friend and outspoken advocate. Bobby Gold will be missed, but his spirit of public service will live on. I'm proud to call him my friend.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION
TO REPEAL THE SELECTIVE
SERVICE ACT AND RELATED
PARTS OF THE UNITED STATES
CODE

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I am today introducing legislation to repeal the Selective Service Act and related parts of the United States Code. The Department of Defense, in response to calls to reinstate the draft, has confirmed that conscription serves no military need.

In his December confirmation hearings, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated his opposition to a military draft. Secretary Gates' immediate predecessor, Donald Rumsfeld, also publicly opposed reinstating the draft. The opposition of the two most recent Defense Secretaries is only the most recent confirmation that the draft serves no military purpose.

Obviously, if there is no military need for the draft, then there is no need for Selective Service registration. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, Selective Service registration is an outdated and outmoded system, which has been made obsolete by technological advances.

In fact, in 1993, the Department of Defense issued a report stating that registration could be stopped "with no effect on military mobilization and no measurable effect on the time it would take to mobilize, and no measurable effect on military recruitment." Yet the American taxpayer has been forced to spend over \$500 million dollars on an outdated system "with no measurable effect on military mobilization!"

Shutting down Selective Service will give taxpayers a break without adversely affecting military efforts. Shutting down Selective Service will also end a program that violates the very principals of individual liberty our Nation was founded upon. The moral case against the draft was eloquently expressed by former President Ronald Regan in the publication *Human Events* in 1979: ". . . it [conscription] rests on the assumption that your kids belong to the state. If we buy that assumption then it is for the state—not for parents, the community, the religious institutions or teachers—to decide who shall have what values and who shall do what work, when, where and how in our society. That assumption isn't a new one. The Nazis thought it was a great idea."

I hope all my colleagues join me in working to shut down this un-American relic of a by-gone era and help realize the financial savings and the gains to individual liberties that can be achieved by ending Selective Service registration.

LEE'S SUMMIT JOURNAL

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize the Lee's Summit Journal in Lee's Summit, Missouri. This newspaper will be celebrating its 125th anniversary of publica-

tion this month. Over the past 125 years, this newspaper has provided valuable services to its readers in their local communities.

As a staple of the community for all these years, the newspaper went through growth and expansion along with the community it serves. From its humble beginnings of being a 4-page paper, to its current publication schedule of twice a week, this newspaper has been and continues to be a stabilizing force within the community.

Since its inception in 1887, the Lee's Summit Journal provided quality news coverage for its reading community. Even through tough times, such as a fire which destroyed the newspaper office, the Lee's Summit Journal continued to deliver quality and reliable news service to the community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing the Lee's Summit Journal. The services the outstanding staff of the Lee's Summit Journal have provided over these 125 years have been an essential part of the community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLIE NORWOOD

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. NORWOOD. Madam Speaker, on roll-call No. 16, on Motion to Table the Appeal of the Ruling of the Chair (H.R. 2), had I been present, I would have voted "no."

INTRODUCTION OF THE PRESER-
VATION OF RECORDS OF SER-
VITUDE, EMANCIPATION, AND
POST-CIVIL WAR RECONSTRU-
CTION ACT

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to reintroduce H.R. 390, the Preservation of Records of Servitude, Emancipation, and Post-Civil War Reconstruction Act. This important legislation, which passed the Government Reform Committee unanimously last year, will ensure that African-Americans who want to trace their family's history in our country are not prevented from doing so because of inadequate preservation and access to the records.

Madam Speaker, as you are aware, for most Americans, researching their genealogical history involves searching through municipal birth, death, and marriage records—almost all of which have been properly archived as public historical documents. However, African-Americans in the United States face a unique challenge when conducting genealogical research due to our Nation's history of slavery and discrimination. Instead of looking up wills, land deeds, birth and death certificates, or other traditional genealogical research documents, African-Americans must often try to identify the name of former slave owners, hoping that the owners kept records of pertinent information, such as births and deaths.

To compound this difficulty, African-American genealogists find that most current records of servitude, emancipation, and post-Civil War reconstruction are frequently inaccessible, poorly catalogued, and inadequately preserved from decay. While some states and localities have undertaken efforts to collect these documents with varying degrees of success, there has not been any national effort to preserve these pieces of public and personal history to make them readily and easily accessible to all Americans.

Madam Speaker, in 2000, both the House and Senate unanimously passed the Freedmen's Bureau Records Preservation Act, which became Public Law 106-444, and required the Archivist of the United States to create a searchable indexing system to catalogue the genealogical records from the post-Civil War Reconstruction period. This law was the first step towards ensuring that many of these valuable and important records are appropriately accessible to genealogists and historians, and based on its success we now recognize the need to expand the scope of the original law or risk losing other critically important historic documents.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 390, the Preservation of Records of Servitude, Emancipation, and Post-Civil War Reconstruction Act, tackles the problems of poorly catalogued and inadequately preserved records in two ways. First, it will make sure that records of servitude, emancipation, and post-Civil War reconstruction currently being stored within the various agencies of the federal government will be properly preserved. This will protect a vast amount of genealogical information, including records from the Southern Claims Commission Records, the Records of the Freedmen's Bank, the Slave Impressments Records, and even Slave Payroll Records and Slave Manifests. By providing the Archivist of the United States with the resources necessary to preserve, maintain and electronically catalogue these important records we can eliminate many of the barriers that African-Americans encounter when trying to engage in a proper genealogy search. However, since many of these records are disbursed around the country in non-federal depositories, this legislation would also authorize the National Archives to distribute grants to the States, academic institutions, and genealogical associations in order to preserve and establish online databases of these important local records of servitude, emancipation, and post-Civil War reconstruction. These grants will ensure that families doing research in my home State of California or anywhere in the country will access to these treasure troves of genealogical information without having to leave the comforts of their computer chair.

Madam Speaker, I am delighted to be joined by colleagues from both sides of the aisle who are original cosponsors of my legislation and particularly appreciate the support of my good friends and colleagues, TOM DAVIS, and ELIJAH CUMMINGS, whose assistance in drafting this bill has been monumental. I would urge the rest of our colleagues to support this legislation and hope that we will be voting on this bill soon.