

VETERANS' HEALTH CARE POLICY ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation, which will bar the collection of co-payments from veterans for hospital and nursing home care if the veteran is considered catastrophically disabled. I strongly advocate a noninterventionist foreign policy that would result in far fewer wars and, thankfully, far fewer catastrophically disabled veterans. But I also strongly believe that we must take care of those veterans who have been so severely wounded or otherwise disabled. Too often those who are most vocal in support of foreign military action are most silent when it comes time to take care of those who have paid a very high price for these actions. This legislation will provide at least a little relief to the most seriously injured veterans.

I am concerned, however, that this bill incorporates language from H.R. 6114, which rescinds a current law requirement that the VA obtain a signed consent form from a veteran before conducting an HIV test. We have seen veterans punished severely for attempting to avoid the required but controversial myriad of inoculations they are required to receive. Now we see that they will have less control over what medical tests to which they might be subjected. I am concerned over this loss of control over one's healthcare decisions among those who voluntarily join the military, and I urge the adoption of a more flexible policy. I would also urge my colleagues and the American people to contemplate this deprivation of medical and privacy rights on a massive scale should we ever reinstate the draft. I believe taking care of veterans should include both providing promised benefits and protecting their privacy rights.

INTRODUCING THE "PROHIBITING THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR'S SECRET RULE ACT"

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to stop the Department of Labor from proceeding with a new proposed rule that would seriously undermine the ability of the Federal Government to protect workers' health. The Department's proposal is the product of a flawed, politicized process.

On July 7, 2008, the Department of Labor submitted a proposed regulation entitled "Requirements for DOL Agencies' Assessment of Occupational Health Risks" to the Office of Management and Budget, OMB, for E.O. 12866 regulatory review.

This proposal is being made in contravention of a number of rules and processes. No notice of this rule was published in the semi-annual Regulatory Agenda as required under Executive Order 12866. Furthermore, unlike all other DOL regulatory submissions to OMB,

the information provided on the OMB Web site did not originally contain the rule's abstract, legal authority, timetable, agency contact, and other information required by the Executive Order. Although the intent is to finalize this rule before the end of the Bush administration, this submission violated the White House's own directive prohibiting submission of new regulations to OMB after June 1 except in "extraordinary circumstances."

What are the "extraordinary circumstances" that are being used to rush through this last minute, secret regulation on a subject as arcane and technical as "risk assessment?" Assessing risk is the backbone of any OSHA or MSHA standard that addresses hazards posed by chemicals or other health hazards. Changing the assumptions underlying risk assessment to those favored by industry can seriously erode the effectiveness of all future OSHA or MSHA standards far beyond the life of this administration.

The Department claims that this proposal was not published in the most recent regulatory agenda because when the last regulatory agenda was issued, they had not yet decided whether they would issue a proposal. But the Washington Post has revealed that they have been working on this regulation as far back as September 2007, when they paid \$349,000 to outside consultants to conduct a study of the risk-assessment process.

The entire proposal appears to have been designed and originated by political appointees at the Department of Labor, bypassing the real experts at OSHA and MSHA. According to the Washington Post, when a draft was finally shown to health scientists in MSHA and OSHA, they objected to both the legality and substance of the proposal and suggested that the proposal not be issued. The political appointees at the Department went ahead anyway.

In the last 7½ years, the Department has only managed to issue one health standard—and that was done under court order. It has failed to meet its own deadlines on regulations to protect workers against the health effects of silica, against the health effects of beryllium, or against the serious health effects of diacetyl, which causes popcorn lung.

Yet, suddenly, the Department of Labor has decided that further weakening the ability of OSHA or MSHA to issue any future health standards has become its highest priority.

No one is arguing that OSHA or MSHA do not need guidance for risk assessment. But the Department of Labor already has such guidance. This new regulation, however, which clearly has the potential to weaken worker protections, will be codified, binding all future administrations. Other agencies that have such guidance, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, note that "because the science of risk assessment continues to develop rapidly . . . risk assessments will be modified to use different approaches if appropriate."

The new Labor regulation, on the other hand, would add an entire additional layer of review to the already overstressed regulatory process by requiring notice and comments for all risk-related studies before a proposal can be issued. This would be in addition to numerous economic reviews, small business reviews, OMB reviews, public comments and public hearings that are already required before a standard is issued.

This Congress will not stand for further weakening of worker protections, particularly when it's done secretly—as this administration heads out of town. This bill would forbid the Department of Labor from issuing, administering or enforcing any rule, regulation, or requirement derived from the proposal submitted to the Office of Management and Budget. The Department's proposal is the product of a flawed, politicized process that has failed to properly consider the views of experts or the consequences for workplace health.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

PILOT MOUNTAIN STATE PARK CELEBRATES 40TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 40th anniversary of Pilot Mountain State Park in Surry County, North Carolina.

Pilot Mountain rises above the North Carolina Piedmont to a height of 2,421 feet and has been a local landmark since the first settlers came to the region. It's been said that climbers can see more than 3,000 square miles of beautiful North Carolina country from the peak when skies are clear.

The mountain received the name Pilot Mountain in 1753 and the State of North Carolina designated the mountain a State park in 1968. Before becoming North Carolina's 14th State park, it was privately owned and changed hands many times.

Pilot Mountain is a distinctive and beautiful piece of North Carolina's natural heritage. Its peak, a bald crop of quartzite, stands in stark contrast to the farmland and wooded areas that surround it.

According to local lore, the Saura Indian tribe employed the mountain as a very intuitive guide to the outlying lands and it is their use of the mountain that may have contributed to its eventual naming.

Today the Pilot Mountain State Park takes in more than 3,600 acres and attracts more than 400,000 visitors a year. It is undoubtedly one of North Carolina's greatest natural treasures and I join the county and State in celebrating 40 years of conservation and public enjoyment of this wonderful State park.

CONGRATULATING BUSKEN BAKERY

HON. JEAN SCHMIDT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Busken Bakery on their 80th birthday. Busken Bakery is truly an American success story. From humble beginnings, Busken's has grown into a Cincinnati institution through hard work, innovation, and a commitment to the local community.

Joseph and Daisie Busken began their business in 1928, opening their first bakery in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Cincinnati. Their goals were modest. According to Busken's

website, Joseph Busken was just looking for a way to feed his family and keep them happy. During the Great Depression, when other companies were failing, Busken's survived by offering products that their customers loved.

Following World War II, Joseph's son, Joe, Jr., entered the family baking business and began making his mark. Joe, Jr., streamlined production and expanded business to local grocery stores. He introduced the city's first 24-hour drive-in bakery and began offering dinner rolls—something unheard of at that time. Some of Joe, Jr.'s other touches are still in existence today, such as his recipe for double-butter coffee cake. Today, Busken Bakery is still run by family including: Page Busken, chairman of the board, Brian Busken, senior vice-president, and Dan Busken, CEO. And, the family has continued to change and innovate with the times. On a personal note, I must admit my favorite Busken item is the Maysville chocolate brownie.

Madam Speaker, please join me in celebrating the rich history of Busken's Bakery and wishing the entire Busken family continued success in years to come.

TRIBUTE TO RESIDENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today in honor of Residential Opportunities Incorporated of Kalamazoo, Michigan, to commemorate their 30th anniversary.

Residential Opportunities was incorporated in December of 1977 to address growing concerns regarding the lack of a standard of care for developmentally disabled adults. Based on the principle of normalization, Residential Opportunities began establishing group homes in an effort to combine an independent living experience with a high standard of care. Since that time, ROI has expanded their programs, and this year alone has improved the quality of life for 648 people.

Today, Residential Opportunities operates Homestead Housing Service, which helps find safe, affordable housing; Stone Cottage, a 24-hour residential and support center for military veterans; and Home Health Aide, which provides in-home support to developmentally disabled children. In addition to these endeavors, ROI operates 21 group homes that currently serve 148 of Southwest Michigan's most vulnerable adults.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the staff and caregivers of Residential Opportunities Incorporated, whose compassion, dedication, and strength has brightened the lives of so many. I am confident that the 30 years of good works provided by ROI is just the tip of the iceberg, and we can expect many more years of exceptional care and service to come.

TRIBUTE TO DR. YUHUA WANG

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to Dr. Yuhua Wang, who has been recognized as a great artist and sculptor.

Dr. Wang was born in China, and permanently resides in the United States. Since 2000, she has worked as a visiting professor of oriental arts in the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University, where she has received several commendation certificates for excellent work performance.

In August 2008, Dr. Wang's book entitled World's Highest-Level Color Paintings and Ink-Wash Paintings will be published and distributed worldwide by International Arts Publishing. Dr. Wang has meticulously and delicately applied fine-brushwork and oil colors on hand-sculpted coral and cobblestones which have become treasures of the world.

In the history of Chinese art, her lotus flower paintings are unsurpassed and are extremely valuable. In addition to being proficient in Chinese paintings, she is a highly talented sculptor whose themes are nature's mountains, rocks and plants. Dr. Wang's skills in the creation of colors, paintings and sculptures have reached the acme of perfection in their exquisiteness, elegance and beauty.

Dr. Wang, who takes great pleasure in helping others, is a selfless person whose moral character is noble, which is evidenced by the numerous awards and honors she has received. She has made great contributions to the development of cultural exchange between the East and West. Through her practice of Buddhism; Professor Wang benefits humanity and all living beings.

Madam Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Dr. Yuhua Wang, an outstanding artist and scholar, who has chosen to make her home here in the United States because she has heartfelt love for its people.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO LEW AND AMY KIRSCHNER

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Mr. HINCHEY. Madam Speaker, I am please to congratulate my constituents, Lew and Amy Kirschner, on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. Mr. and Mrs. Kirschner are venerated members of our community, and I am proud to recognize their commitment to each other.

Amy and Lew Kirschner are a remarkable couple, who have dedicated themselves to each other and to the greater good of their community. In each endeavor they undertake, their remarkable sense of purpose and loyalty shines through. Over the years they have invested much of their time in serving their community in various manners. Lew's work on the boards of many area organizations and Amy's dedication to a variety of community based organizations has kept them at the heart of all

of the most pressing issues facing our city. Their advice and firm support have been invaluable.

Lew and Amy have truly achieved a tremendous accomplishment in being able to look back and celebrate fifty-years of shared love, personal growth and hard work, knowing that they have remained steadfast in their commitment to one another, their family and their community.

Madam Speaker, I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Lew and Amy for more than thirty years. They have been good friends and outstanding citizens. I am pleased to be able to recognize and congratulate them on this momentous occasion.

CONGRATULATIONS TO UNITED SPACE SCHOOL PROGRAM

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, on August 5 the Foundation for International Space Education (FISE) will host United Space School Day at the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) in Galveston, Texas. The United Space School Day is a summer science camp/health careers promotion activity coordinated by the East Texas Area Health Education Center (AHEC). The United Space School Day's activities will focus on the education pathways appropriate for students interested in careers in life sciences, aerospace medicine, and bioastronautics.

United Space School Day is just one part of FISE's United Space School program. The United Space School program, established in 1994, is the major way FISE carries out its mission of providing space-based academic instruction to pre-collegiate students from across America and around the world who are interested in science, engineering, technology, or mathematics careers. The United Space School gives these students the opportunity to learn from some of the space industry's leading experts. Participants in the programs follow a curriculum specially designed to provide appropriate training and development by instructors qualified and knowledgeable in the proper disciplines.

As the students visit the various educational venues and participate in the space-related learning initiatives, they are exposed to myriad examples of space-related careers as well as careers in industries that support the space programs. United Space School students also benefit from daily one-on-one interaction with leading aerospace professionals from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) or the Johnson Space Center (JSC), and the supporting aerospace community.

United Space School participants are also given a unique "hands on" learning experience through the development of a Manned Mission to Mars Project. United Space School's organization, schedule, and curriculum are designed to provide the structure, knowledge, resources, mentoring, and appropriate settings to complete the Manned Mission to Mars project.

Madam Speaker, FISE's United Space School program is doing invaluable work in preparing the next generation of scientists and