Yorker, daughter of Haitian immigrant parents and raised in public housing, Ms. Joseph conducted her undergraduate studies at the University of California at Berkley where she double majored in psychology and legal studies, with a minor in education, earning her Bachelor of Arts degree in just three years. After graduating from Berkley in 1994, Sheila began her legal studies at Georgetown University Law School in Washington, DC. While a student at Georgetown, she worked as a student attorney handling juvenile delinquency cases in the District of Columbia Superior Court.

Upon completing her legal studies in 1997, Ms. Joseph returned to her native New York and spent the next four years working as an attorney for indigent clients, first as a staff attorney with the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, then as a law guardian with The Children's Law Center of New York. Based on her experiences as a law student and lawyer, she became increasingly frustrated by the limitations of the law as an instrument for empowering young people and communities. She determined that the best long term course was to be an educator and have a positive impact on children and impoverished communities.

In 2001, Sheila Joseph applied for, and was accepted into, the New York City Teaching Fellows Program and taught math and science at P.S. 40 in Queens while earning a Master of Science degree in Elementary and Early Childhood Education from Queens College. In September 2004, Ms. Joseph began a one-year residency with Building Excellent Schools, a prestigious and rigorous Boston-based program that trains and supports aspiring charter school founders. She founded the East New York Preparatory Charter School in August 2005.

East New York Prep, ENYP, opened its doors to 100 kindergarten and first grade students in September 2006 to ensure that boys and girls growing up in East New York would have the same opportunity for a good life as children in wealthier communities. ENYP's mission is to address the specific needs and challenges of children in East New York to ensure that students achieve or exceed grade-level mastery of academic content, knowledge and skills.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Sheila Joseph and her impressive accomplishments in academia. Her passion and concern for inner-city children's educational needs is noteworthy indeed.

ESTABLISHING AN OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL ETHICS—CONTINUED

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2008

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House passed H. Res. 895, a resolution establishing an independent Office of Congressional Ethics within the House of Representatives. I believe it is a long overdue, although partial, step to protect the public trust and bring greater transparency and accountability to the people's House.

At the beginning of the 110th Congress, the Speaker said we must drain the swamp. We made some changes to the House Rules and passed legislation that mandated more extensive limits on gifts and travel, greater disclosure of activities by lobbyists, helped slow the revolving door of Members of Congress and staff to lobbying on behalf of private interests and brought greater transparency to the earmark process. Yesterday, following painstaking drafts, we took further steps.

The scandals that have embroiled this institution over the last few years because of the unethical conduct of certain Members of Congress have eroded the faith that Americans have in our legislative branch of government. What has only deepened this cynicism is the belief that Congress does a very poor job in investigating the ethical lapses of its own Members. The contentious nature of the current ethics process has too often led to deadlock and an inability to truly investigate claims concerning Members of both parties. While I commend the leadership and the membership of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct for the work they have done under trying circumstances, it is clear that the process has been missing an independent voice that can help us get above the partisanship and rancor that too often accompany these types of investigations. This bill is a step toward creating that independent voice.

The legislation establishes an Independent Office of Congressional Ethics, composed of six members jointly appointed by the Speaker and the Minority Leader. Three of the members of the office will be nominated by the Speaker with the concurrence of the Minority Leader; three members would be nominated by the Minority Leader with the concurrence of the Speaker. The members, who cannot be current Members of the House, Federal employees or lobbyists, would serve four-year terms with one reappointment possible. The Office would have the ability to initiate review by written notice provided by two Office members, one of which must be appointed by the Speaker, the other by the Minority Leader. The Office would have the ability to refer a matter if three members affirmatively vote to move it to the Ethics Committee.

The legislation has the support of a number of groups that have called for strong reform of the ethics process, including Common Cause, U.S. PIRG and recognized public policy experts such as Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute and Thomas Mann at the Brookings Institute. They recognize that in the past, the principle of Congress policing itself has just not worked. They have played a vital role in making sure that today's resolution comes to a vote so that all of us live up to the oath of office we take the first day of every new Congress. I also want to commend the Speaker who has promised and delivered on her pledge to bring vigorous, ethical leadership to this institution. Without taking action, we will only allow public cynicism about government to continue to grow. This important resolution will bring real ethics reform to Congress. It will help reestablish the trust and confidence of the American people in this institution and in the principle of honest and open government.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concerns with a provision contained in H.R. 1424, the ''Paul Wellstone Mental Health Addiction and Equity Act of 2007.'' I find it ironic that the House passed a bill intending to provide access to treatment for those with mental illnesses, but did so at the expense of the pharmaceutical researchers who we look to treat many of these conditions.

This legislation provides for more than a 30-percent increase in Medicaid prescription drug rebates. This will do significant damage to domestic manufacturers. You read the headlines—one pharmaceutical company after another is laying off thousands of employees. This industry, like so many others in manufacturing, is facing significant challenges. We want these companies to continue to invest in America and create the research jobs, which find tomorrow's cures. We want to continue to be known as the innovators of the world, and we should not out source this intellectual capital. Therefore, I urge that the bill's sponsors strike this provision from the bill at conference committee and look to find solutions that do not jeopardize American jobs.

HONORING 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF HARRISVILLE LIONS CLUB

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate the members of the Harrisville Lions Club as they celebrate their 60th Anniversary this year.

For over half a century, the Harrisville Lions Club has been dedicated to helping the less fortunate. As a Lions Club, the organization is part of the world's largest service organization with over 1.3 million members worldwide.

They have provided aid for those in need, whether it is helping local residents obtain eyeglasses or assisting families after disasters. The Club has been involved in several children's programs, including supporting a camp for local blind children and sponsoring a drug poster program aimed to raise awareness among elementary students of the problems associated with drug use.

I commend Harrisville club president, Lion Connie Rider, for her leadership and dedication to the organization. I'd also like to recognize Lion Leroy Montgomery, who at the age of 99, remains a very active member of the Harrisville Lions Club. I applaud Mr. Montgomery for his lifetime of dedication to helping the less fortunate in his community. His efforts have certainly not gone unnoticed.

I hope my colleagues will join me at this time in recognizing the accomplishments of these individuals as well as all of the other members of the Harrisville Lions Club. Congratulations on 60 years of service.