

needed to determine the true FMAP rates for the territories is presently lacking from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), this bill would direct the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to take steps to ensure that the FMAP rates for the territories are calculated in a fair and appropriate manner.

It is clear from all the evidence that the federal funding caps and the FMAP set in statute at 50% (which applies solely to the territories) have created significant health disparities between residents of the territories and their fellow citizens residing in the 50 states. Additionally, this policy has resulted in the territorial governments shouldering a disproportionately high financial liability when it comes to providing health care services to their indigent populations. Treating the territories in such fashion is as unjust in principle as it is harmful in effect.

The bill I have introduced today, along with my colleagues from the territories, is needed as Congress continues the debate over comprehensive health care reform. Based on a report released last year by the Office of Insular Affairs, within the Department of the Interior, the territories' health jurisdictions are "at the crossroads of a total breakdown." Combined with the financial state of the territorial governments, operating under decreasing revenues due to an economic downturn, the territories must bear a majority of the payment for indigent care under the current arrangements. Accordingly, eliminating the funding caps and adjusting the FMAPs for the territories are both critically important to public health in these U.S. jurisdictions.

Additionally there is a provision in this bill that extends the Medicaid program to the citizens of the Freely Associated States (FAS), which is comprised of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Republic of Palau (RoP). The FAS governments have special relationships with the United States, as they entered into Compacts of Free Association that have been approved by the Congress of the United States. One component of these international, federally-negotiated agreements, allows for the unrestricted entry of citizens of the FAS to the United States, including the territories, without visas. Many FAS citizens have settled in the Pacific territories of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. They also constitute a significant and growing presence in the states of Hawaii and Arkansas. This section of the bill is important as it extends federal Medicaid coverage to them and would set an FMAP for otherwise qualified services rendered by the states and territories to them at 100%. This change in law would ensure that the territorial and state governments do not shoulder the sole costs of providing care for these citizens. I believe that this provision is consistent with the intent of the Medicaid program and provides for health equity to a disenfranchised population.

This bill represents policy for which I and my colleagues from the territories—Mr. PIERLUISI of Puerto Rico, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN of the Virgin Islands, Mr. SABLAN of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Mr. FALCOMA of American Samoa—have collaborated. We are grateful for the support that we have received from Mr. SERRANO, who joins us as an original co-sponsor. Each of us and our predecessors has worked on improving the federal Medicaid

program for the territories. This bill is to serve as starting point for advancing parity in treatment for the territories, with respect to the national health care reform debate. There are other areas of federal law that need to be amended in order to improve public health in the territories and to bring full parity. These include, for example, amendments to law governing Medicare Part D and the Supplemental Security Income Program (SSI). We look forward to working with the leaders in the House of Representatives and the Senate, and the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the committees of jurisdiction in both chambers in advancing legislation addressing these issues, including the bill we have introduced today.

THE LUMBEE RECOGNITION ACT
AND THE THOMASINA E. JORDAN
INDIAN TRIBES OF VIRGINIA
FEDERAL RECOGNITION ACT OF
2009

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 3, 2009

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, I am honored to join my colleagues to once again support H.R. 31, the Lumbee Recognition Act offered by Rep. MCINTYRE and H.R. 1385, the Thomasina E. Jordan Indian Tribes of Virginia Recognition Act of 2009 introduced by Rep. MORAN.

It is only fitting that these indigenous populations be officially recognized as Native peoples of this land. As we move forward as a Nation to level the playing field for all citizens, H.R. 31 and H.R. 1385 is undoubtedly a monumental step in righting these historical tragedies. I second the sentiments of our President in his remarks that Congress should intervene and recognize the Lumbee Indians as a tribal group.

Aptly extending federal distinction to the Lumbee, Chickahominy, Chickahominy—Eastern Division, Upper Mataponi, Rappahannock, Monacan and Nansemond tribes is the only way to address hundreds of years of injustice endured.

Federal recognition will dramatically transform the lives of the Native American tribes currently being considered. Our failure to extend federal recognition to them has meant years of discriminatory treatment. Countless individuals have had difficulty naming children, getting marriage licenses and even getting inducted into military service. Other communities have been disproportionately affected by interruptions and cuts in funding that are crucial to services provided by tribal programs.

It has been a long time coming, but it is high time that they are ascribed the rights and protections afforded to other citizens of our Country.

While this is a time marked by challenge for the entire Nation, it is my hope that this legislation be stalled no more and swiftly enacted into law.

I urge my colleagues to support this very important piece of legislation.

RESOURCES, REVENUE, AND RESPONSIBILITY: STRENGTHENING REVENUE AND BUDGET TRANSPARENCY THROUGH THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 3, 2009

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, as Co-Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (commonly referred to as the Helsinki Commission), I recently returned from a meeting in Dublin, Ireland, with almost 100 parliamentarians from 30 countries where we had the opportunity to discuss responses to the global economic crisis. The meeting was organized by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) and the Parliament of Ireland. All countries are grappling with difficult national problems related to the economic crisis. And indeed, we are in a crisis, and for America, this is the worst economy we've experienced since the Great Depression in the 1920s. People all across America, and in my home state of Florida, are losing their homes, their jobs, and are unable to provide for their families.

In addition to discussions on financial regulation, trade protectionism, good governance, and the social consequences of the crisis, I was pleased that we also discussed revenue transparency in the extractive industries as an integral part of creating more transparency in the global financial system overall. As legislators, we have a duty to find ways to relieve the suffering caused by the financial crisis through vital investments in health care, education, infrastructure, and job creation so that we can emerge from this crisis stronger and better than before. But part of the solution is looking at how we even got into this crisis. Transparency—or the lack of it—in the financial world is certainly one of the culprits. And as revenue dwindles, making the most of what we have becomes even more important.

The way I see it, improvements in revenue transparency, particularly when we focus on the extractive industries, are important in at least three key ways: The first is to help alleviate poverty. 3.5 billion people live in countries that are rich in oil, gas and minerals. With good governance, the exploitation of these resources can generate large revenues to foster growth and reduce poverty. Resource revenue transparency is necessary in order for citizens—the true owners of their country's natural wealth—to be able to demand greater accountability from their governments for spending that serves the public interest.

The second is to promote stable investment climates. Mandatory disclosure can help diminish the political instability caused by opaque governance. Since extractive industries are capital-intensive and dependent on long-term stability to generate returns, transparency of payments made to a government can help mitigate political and reputational risks and also allow shareholders to make better-informed assessments of opportunity costs.

The third area is to enhance energy security. Opening the extractive industries sector to greater public scrutiny is key to increasing civil society participation in government. This form

of transparency, in conjunction with an increasingly active civil society, can help create more stable, democratic governments, as well as stable business environments.

It's a well-known, and well-bemoaned, fact that the United States is becoming more and more reliant on imported energy to fuel our economy. We are the world's largest consumer of oil—we account for an astounding 25 percent of global daily oil demand—despite having less than 3 percent of the world's proven reserves. And we source that oil from some unstable and unfriendly places in the world such as Nigeria and Venezuela.

In the context of today's discussion some of you may wonder why the United States should care what is happening in Turkmenistan or Kazakhstan, when we don't rely on these countries for our energy supplies. Russia is only number eight on our list of top ten oil suppliers and Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan don't even make it into the top twenty.

The answer is that unlike natural gas, oil is a commodity, so regardless of where we source our oil, what happens in other oil-rich countries impacts the stability of our price and our supply as well. Truly, no one country can achieve energy security without global energy security.

I think we can all agree that relying on a country as a source of energy can distort a bilateral relationship. I'm sure you can imagine how drastically different our interactions with some countries would be if we did not rely so heavily on these countries' resources. I think it goes without saying that we would have more leverage to promote democracy and civil society. Clearly oil constrains, if not drives, our foreign policy.

So while it is imperative that we work to limit our dependence on foreign oil and change the dynamic of supply and demand, it is just as important to create more stable and reliable sources of energy. One of the key ways the international community has sought to counteract the political and economic instability inherent in the resource curse is through programs that seek to instill transparency and accountability into the resource payment system.

As legislators, there is a lot that we can do to further the cause of transparency in the extractive industries.

As Co-Chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, I have held hearings and briefings on energy security and transparency that call attention to problems and advocate for solutions. I have also written letters—co-signed by a number of my congressional colleagues—on this topic to the Executive Branch to advocate for specific policy stances related to U.S. participation in EITI. Drafting and passing legislation is also important, and in 2007 we were successful in passing legislation that spells out the importance of extractive industries transparency in U.S. foreign policy and directs the U.S. State Department to actively promote EITI.

I also co-sponsored legislation that would require oil, gas, and mining companies registered with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to publicly disclose the payments they make to foreign governments for the extraction of natural resources. The information would be included in financial statements already required by the SEC and would apply to both American and foreign companies listed with the SEC, which includes 90 percent

of the world's largest oil, gas and mining companies. I'm hopeful that we will see that legislation pass in this Congress.

Another tool is direct communication with the Executive Branch. One thing we have already started discussions with the Obama Administration on is how we can play a responsible role—not dominant—in EITI. I strongly believe that the best thing we can do to help boost EITI is to follow the lead of other OSCE member states such as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Norway and become a Candidate Country with the goal of becoming fully compliant with EITI standards. Right now we think that can be accomplished without any legislative action by the Congress, but if we do need to make some legal changes, then that is something we will work on.

If there is one word that has gotten us in this problem, it is greed. This needs to be said so that we as legislators can do something about it. As we are talking about hedge funds, and all these other mechanisms for moving money, we can't ignore the impact of the shadow economy. It is something that we need to address because it fuels crime and instability.

Madam Speaker, in the Dublin meeting there were many opinions about the roots of the crisis and potential solutions. However, one clear message I took away from that meeting is that we must work together to find a global solution to a global crisis.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. J. GRESHAM BARRETT

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 3, 2009

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, unfortunately I missed recorded votes on the House floor on Tuesday, June 2, 2009.

Had I been present, I would have voted "Aye" on Roll Call vote #292 (Motion to suspend the rules and Agree to H. Res. 421), "Aye" on Roll Call vote #293 (Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree to H.J. Res. 40), "Aye" on Roll Call vote #294 (Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree to H. Res. 489)

UPON THE CHANGE OF COMMAND AT THE PORT OF BALTIMORE

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 3, 2009

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Captain Brian Kelley, who has served as the Commander of Coast Guard Sector Baltimore since June 2006. He is transferring out of this assignment on May 29.

As Captain of the Port of Baltimore, Captain Kelley oversaw all Coast Guard operations at this major port, currently ranked 12th in value of foreign cargo handled and 14th in foreign tonnage handled.

During his tenure, Captain Kelley conducted Major Control actions or detentions of 23 for-

eign vessels for safety violations—ensuring the safety of vessel operations in the Port of Baltimore. He also managed more than 1,100 search and rescue cases that saved the lives of more than 250 mariners in distress.

Captain Kelley oversaw a major effort to improve environmental conditions at Sector Baltimore and directed the clean-up of the abandoned vessel Sea Witch, preventing the release of more than half a million gallons of oil into the environment.

Captain Kelley's next assignment will be as the Deputy Commander of the Coast Guard's Personnel Services Command. As such, he will assist in managing all personnel services for all of the Coast Guard's nearly 42,000 active duty military members and in supervising the Coast Guard's recruiting efforts.

Since graduating from the Coast Guard Academy in 1982, Captain Kelley's assignments have included service as the Commander of cutters ATTU and POINT FRANKLIN. He also served as Chief of the Strategic and Business Planning Division at Coast Guard headquarters and was a Federal Executive Fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

On a personal note, I have known Captain Kelley to be an extraordinarily conscientious leader—and have appreciated his personal hospitality during numerous events at Sector Baltimore.

I have also appreciated his diligence in keeping me and my staff fully informed of developments at Sector Baltimore, including the Sector's evaluation of the proposed LNG terminal at Sparrow's Point in the Port of Baltimore.

Captain Kelley is an outstanding officer who embodies the highest ideals of the Coast Guard and I commend him for his dedication to excellence in the service of our nation.

HONORING THE WORK AND SERVICE OF JACK E. SINGLEY

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 3, 2009

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Jack E. Singley and the 43 years he spent in service to Irving Independent School District.

Jack Singley began his career in 1965 by teaching Math at MacArthur High School in Irving, Texas, and rose through the ranks of the school district to become superintendent in 1988. He served in that role for nearly 21 years making him one of the longest serving school administrators in Texas. Earlier this year, he announced that 2009 would mark the end of his remarkable career, and his determination, strength of character, and wisdom will be greatly missed.

Throughout his career, Mr. Singley saw the transformation of Irving ISD from a small suburban school district to the large vibrant school district it is today. During his tenure as superintendent, eight schools were added to the school district and the number of employees serving in Irving ISD nearly doubled. One of Mr. Singley's most impressive successes was the creation of The Academy of Irving ISD. This high school opened in 2001 and is considered to be at the forefront of technological innovation and educational philosophy.