

adopted by the TSA to develop its Civil Aviation Security Rules—the South Capitol Heliport continued to receive corporate commercial clients and news gathering helicopters. Yet, without explanation, beginning in October 2003, commercial operators have been altogether restricted from using the heliport, despite the fact that the heliport owners have been clear that they are willing to comply with any and all security demands.

The nation's capital has all but lost helicopter service, even for the vital security purposes our heliport has performed. Without corporate commercial clients the South Capitol Heliport cannot generate enough revenue to survive. The owner has submitted the highest level security plans, but the TSA and the Department of Homeland Security have failed to respond. At my request, the Committee on Homeland Security has added heliports specifically to the list of entities on the general aviation working group. This heliport is vital for both security and commercial helicopter operations that the District of Columbia cannot afford to lose. While we pause to recognize the importance of general aviation to the U.S. economy, I use this occasion to remind my colleagues in the Congress and the Administration to recognize the importance of general aviation to the nation's capital.

CITY OF NEWCASTLE

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 31, 2009

Mr. REICHERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the City of Newcastle, Washington, which was recently ranked seventeenth by Money Magazine on their list of "America's Best Small Towns." I'm proud to represent Newcastle, a city that affords residents a unique opportunity to live near the "hustle and bustle" of everyday life while retreating into a rural small town setting.

It is fitting that Money Magazine released its rankings the same week that Newcastle held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on a multi-year, multi-phase public works project that shows the city's true colors: leadership, patience and encouragement. Although I couldn't be at the celebration personally, I once again congratulate them on the expansion of the Coal Creek Parkway, to help alleviate the flow of traffic for its businesses and citizens.

Newcastle has grown by leaps and bounds, developing and offering new attractions and conveniences for citizens and businesses alike. Officially incorporated in 1994, Newcastle's population at the time was 7,000. 15 years later, Newcastle's population has grown to about 10,000 and the city's amenities continue to grow as well. A new YMCA will open in September, complete with swimming pools, community rooms, and gyms. A new transit center currently under construction will provide new bus shelters and improve the city's main intersection, benefiting commuters, pedestrians and bicyclists.

In true Pacific Northwest tradition, Newcastle also boasts a vast array of accessible natural resources and outdoor activities. Lake Boren Park, the city's best known location in its parks and trails system, offers walking trails, tennis and basketball courts, playground

equipment for children and is home to special events: the Fourth of July fireworks celebration and Newcastle's summer series of "Concerts in the Park." Of course, I must mention Newcastle's wonderful golf club; perhaps the city's most marketable asset as well as a terrific place for civic engagement and community fundraising. The course is truly beautiful and attracts attendees from all over the Pacific Northwest.

Newcastle is a beautiful city filled with a great mix of small town charm, big city access and natural, fantastic neighborhoods and open spaces, and is very well-deserving of this award to one of America's best small towns in the country. I look forward to continuing to support the goals and ideals of Newcastle residents and its elected leaders.

AMERICA'S AFFORDABLE HEALTH CHOICES ACT

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 31, 2009

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of real health care reform for the American people. As a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, I have been working hard to develop a bill that really makes health care better.

What stands out to me the most from my work are the stories I hear from my district in California. Neighbors like Blasa Ochoa, who lost her insurance when her employer went bankrupt, and who has been unable to get another policy because she has a pre-existing condition.

Or Denise from Lakewood who told me that doctors treat her special-needs son like a number and not a person.

The other night, I spoke to several hundred of my neighbors during a telephone town hall, and they told me about the problems with the current system: high costs, exclusions for pre-existing conditions, and the flat out inability to find a plan for those 60 and older.

I'm working so hard on this issue because I know health care reform is what my neighbors back home in California want and need.

America's Affordable Health Choices Act will fix these problems and more.

But sadly, there are still many misconceptions out there.

So let me clear some things up.

This bill will put a stop to abusive insurance company practices, so that you can get a policy no matter what your age or whether you have a pre-existing condition.

This bill will control skyrocketing health costs and make health insurance more affordable. Its strongest cost-control tool is the public health plan option.

We need a strong and stable public option because the private plans, busy seeking profits, have been unsuccessful in controlling the growth in healthcare costs. Their idea of controlling costs is denying care!

But a robust public plan, like the one in this bill, will give the private plans real competition and persuade them to change their ways. This makes health care cheaper for you.

A strong public plan will show how investing in comprehensive, high-quality care, including preventive care, will make Americans healthier and save money at the same time.

An NBC/Wall Street Journal Poll from earlier this year showed that 76 percent of American voters want a public health plan option. And I am proud to have worked on a bill that gives them just that.

But the public plan option is not the only standout provision in this bill.

This bill will protect small businesses and their employees.

This bill is going to help small businesses offer health insurance to their employees—something most small employers want, but can't afford to do right now.

Currently, small businesses pay an average of 18 percent more for health coverage than large businesses.

But with the America's Affordable Health Choices Act, small businesses will have access to the new Health Insurance Exchange, giving them the benefits of lower rates that only large businesses now enjoy. The exchange will also give small businesses more plans to choose from.

The bill also creates a new tax credit—worth up to half the cost of health insurance premiums—to assist small employers who want to offer coverage.

Finally, small businesses will be exempt from the "pay or play" requirements that will apply to large employers. Small businesses with a total payroll of \$250,000 or less—that's \$250,000 in employee payroll, and doesn't count the owner's take home pay—will be exempt from "pay or play."

Altogether, the bill makes it easier for small businesses and their employees to afford high quality care while protecting their bottom line.

I encourage my colleagues in both chambers and on both sides of the aisle to stop the bickering—and stop spreading misconceptions that are delaying this much-needed reform bill.

Americans cannot wait any longer. They're counting on us to get this done. We need to pass reform that lowers cost, promotes choice and provides care for all, no matter where they work or how large—or small—their paychecks.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 31, 2009

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Fiscal Year 2010 Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 2996). This important bill makes timely investments to protect and preserve our country's natural resources, enhance climate change research and adaptation efforts, empower Native American communities, and support the arts. I thank Chairman OBEY, Chairman DICKS, my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee, and the House leadership for their hard work on this legislation.

This legislation upholds America's leadership in environmental stewardship. It includes an 8 percent funding increase for the National Parks Service and a 6 percent increase for the National Wildlife Refuges. I am pleased that the bill includes my language for the first ever

national, comprehensive study to identify best practices to protect and preserve the Mississippi River, America's greatest waterway. Additionally, by passing this bill, Congress is investing in tackling the urgent challenge of global climate change. The bill provides over \$178 million for climate change programs in the Department of the Interior, \$80 million for climate change planning and on-the-ground conservation efforts at the Fish and Wildlife Service, and \$31 million for climate change adaptation activities at the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, and Bureau of Indian Affairs. Climate change is happening now, and Congress must invest to adapt to its impacts on America's lands and economy.

My state of Minnesota is blessed with fresh water resources, including over 10,000 lakes and the headwaters of the Mississippi River. This legislation provides \$667 million—\$507 million over FY2009—in much-needed investments to promote and protect our nation's great water bodies. This includes \$475 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which will involve the coordination and collaboration of 16 Federal agencies, the States of the Great Lakes Region, local government, and citizens groups in an effort to restore the source of 20 percent of the world's fresh surface water. This bill also directs EPA to invest in essential research on the human health and environmental impacts of endocrine disrupting compounds and other contaminants in our water supply.

This bill makes important investments to empower our country's Native American communities and enhance support of the arts. It provides \$6.8 billion for programs at the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service, including almost an almost \$7 million increase in funding for the Urban Indian Health Program. And finally, H.R. 2996 includes funding increases for the National Endowment of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. I strongly support these investments and applaud the Committee for these including these provisions.

I urge passage of this legislation.

IN MEMORY OF FATHER FLOYD LOTITO

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 31, 2009

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I pay tribute today to a man of God who dedicated his life to improving the lives of those less fortunate. Father Floyd Lotito, the heart and soul of St. Anthony's Dining Room, left our world on July 14, ending his long and valiant struggle with Parkinson's disease.

Born in Los Angeles, as Alfonso Joseph Lotito, he took Floyd as his religious name when he entered the Franciscan Order in 1953, prior to being ordained into the priesthood seven years later. He received his Bachelor of Sacred Theology from Old Mission Theological Seminary in Santa Barbara and his Masters in Speech and Communication Arts from Marquette University.

Before joining the St. Anthony Foundation in 1968, Father Floyd spent time as a high school teacher in Santa Barbara and as a par-

ish priest in communities all across our country.

When I think of Father Floyd, I remember a man who knew everyone's name, yet called us all "brother" or "sister" as a sign of respect. He went out of his way to make people feel special and was known locally for his annual Blessing of the Taxi Fleet and the Blessing of the Animals.

Father Floyd's wisdom and eloquence garnered him invitations to give the benediction at the 1984 Democratic National Convention in San Francisco, the opening of Pacific Bell Park in 2000, and many others.

The St. Anthony Foundation has ministered to the poor and down-on-their-luck for more than 40 years, in large part due to Father Floyd's ability to reach people of all types in profoundly personal ways. He did not see rich or poor, he only saw those who could help and those who needed help.

Father Floyd held many positions at St. Anthony's, but nearest to his heart was the St. Anthony Dining Room. Opened in 1981, it is now the leading free-meal program in the city, providing more than 2,500 meals a day to San Francisco's poor. Earlier this year, Father Floyd served his 35 millionth meal.

Madam Speaker, our community is fortunate to have been blessed with Father Floyd. He leaves our community better than he found it and it brightens my heart to know that San Francisco has yet another angel to help guide us.

A TRIBUTE HONORING THE FALKENTHAL-NICHOLS WEDDING

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 31, 2009

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to extend my best wishes to two young Americans who are starting their new life together. On Friday, June 4, 2009, Michelle Lynn Falkenthal and Michael David Nichols were joined in matrimony surrounded by their loving family and friends at the Earl Burns Miller Japanese Garden located on the campus of California State University, Long Beach.

Michelle Falkenthal was born in West Covina, California on December 24, 1979. Her mother, Evelyn Bobbitt, is an accounting technician for the County of San Bernardino, and her step-father, David Bobbitt, is a director of audits for Riverside Community College. Her father is Robert Falkenthal, an attorney in private practice, and her step-mother is Jennette Falkenthal, a homemaker. Michelle graduated from Colton high school and is currently employed as a billing agent for Cox Communications.

Michael Nichols was born in Arcadia, California on December 12, 1980. His mother, Linda Nichols, is a secretary at Arcadia High School, and his father, Ken Nichols, is a general contractor. Michael attended Arcadia High School and Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona. He is employed as an independent contractor pilot.

In this constantly developing age of electronic communications, it's no surprise that the young couple first met via the internet. After several weeks of getting acquainted online,

Michelle and Michael had their first date on June 5, 2007. They were engaged fifteen months later on September 14, 2008. The couple enjoys spending time with family and friends, going to Big Bear Lake, bike riding, and remodeling their new home, among other activities. Their many friends say Michelle and Michael are very well suited for each other, and their families already consider each of them a member of the family. The newlywed couple will make their home in the city of Chino Hills in Los Angeles County.

Michelle and Michael were joined in their wedding celebration in Long Beach by guests from across town and across the country. Family and friends traveled from Maryland, Washington, DC, Sacramento, Oxnard, Newberry Park, the Inland Empire, and from across southern California. Special participants in the wedding ceremony included the maid of honor Casandra Holiday, the bridesmaids, Sally Lara and Evie Bobbitt, the bride's niece and sister respectively, and the groomsmen Travis Amezcua, Ryan Benigno, Caleb Gray, and Dustin Mullins. Leading the bridal party and assembled family and guests in the wedding celebration and officiating the vows was the Reverend Doctor Paul Yestebo of the New Hope Community Church in Huntington Beach.

Madam Speaker, I offer my best congratulations to the Bobbitt, Falkenthal, and Nichols families, and their friends and guests on this happy and memorable occasion. To Michelle and Michael, I offer the sentiment and gifts which George Bailey offered the Martini family as they moved into their new home in the classic film, "It's a Wonderful Life": "Bread! That their house may never know hunger. Salt! That life may always have flavor. And wine! That joy and prosperity may reign forever." Lastly, I wish that throughout their wonderful life together, Michelle and Michael will always have an abundance of what St. Paul wrote of in his letter to the Corinthians, "faith, hope, and love; and the greatest of these is love."

FOOD SAFETY ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2009

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in reluctant support of H.R. 2749, the Food Safety Enhancement Act of 2009. While I support the legislation, it is by no means perfect and it is my sincere hope that the concerns I share with my colleagues in the House will be addressed as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Ensuring the safety of America's food supply is a critical issue, which warrants our utmost attention. In light of recent outbreaks of food-borne illnesses that have caused sickness and death in our country, I believe it is imperative the action be taken to restore confidence to the American people in the food they eat. This task requires careful analysis of our current food supply dynamic, as well as thoughtful consideration of implications of any potential solutions. Our constituents deserve no less.