

SAFRA provides access to quality early childhood education by making new investments in innovative birth through five programs. The bill ensures that every child enters kindergarten ready to succeed by transforming early education standards and building our early childhood workforce.

And finally, it provides access to safe places to learn with funds to repair crumbling schools and make energy-efficiency improvements to save money over the long term.

Importantly, SAFRA makes these vital investments without adding a single penny to the federal deficit. In fact, it would return \$10 billion in savings to the Treasury.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and ensure that every child has access to a high quality education, from birth to graduation day.

HONORING THE SERVICE AND SACRIFICE OF UNITED STATES ARMY SPECIALIST NATHAN SPANGENBERG

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor United States Army Specialist Nathan Spangenberg, who died from an illness at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii on September 8, 2009 following his last deployment. He leaves behind his mother, Lois, his brother, Colin, sister, Megan and a niece and nephew.

Born in Tucson, Nathan attended Mountain View High School from 2004 to 2006, then transferred to Mountain Rose Academy charter school before joining the Army in 2007. SPC Spangenberg was an infantryman with the 2nd Stryker Brigade, 25th Infantry Division headquartered in Hawaii.

He and his unit returned there in February after a 15-month tour in Iraq. The Warrior Brigade, as they are known, was responsible for securing an 800 square mile area North of Baghdad that remains one of the most dangerous places for U.S. forces.

Appropriately, Nathan was a warrior. He survived his extended tour in Iraq only to be taken from us too soon.

We remember SPC Spangenberg and offer our deepest condolences and sincerest prayers to his mother, brother, sister, niece and nephew. My words cannot effectively convey the feeling of great loss nor can they offer adequate consolation. However, it is my hope that in future days, his family may take some comfort in knowing that Nathan's legacy reaches beyond the desolate landscape of Iraq and the barracks of Hawaii and into the hearts of a grateful nation.

This body and this country owe Nathan and his family a debt of gratitude and it is vital that we remember him and his fellow servicemembers who have paid the ultimate price.

Nathan is a hero both to his country and to his wonderful family. We salute his selfless service and bravery. May he not be forgotten and may his mission continue in the work of this body and the hearts of all Americans.

DR. ROBERT H. KNAPP

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Dr. Robert H. Knapp who passed away suddenly on July 13, 2009. I extend my condolences to Dr. Knapp's wife of 31 years, Judy, and his daughters Megan and Sarah, as well as his extended family.

Dr. Knapp attended Wayne State University Medical School in Detroit, Michigan and was a long-time pathologist in the Grand Rapids, Michigan area practicing at Spectrum Health and most recently Grandville Pathology Laboratory.

Dr. Knapp began his service to medicine at the local level. He served as President and Trustee of the Michigan Society of Pathologists and was a member of the Kent County Medical Society and the Michigan State Medical Society.

Dr. Knapp's leadership in pathology allowed him to demonstrate outstanding service to the profession of medicine and his community by serving as an advocate for the important role that pathologists play in improving the quality of health care for Americans.

In fact, Dr. Knapp was very active in advocacy efforts on behalf of both the College of American Pathologists and the American Society of Cytopathology. He visited with me and my staff numerous times over the past few years and hosted me for a laboratory tour at his facility last fall.

In addition to his professional career, Dr. Knapp was an avid cheesemaker and lover of opera.

Dr. Knapp was a dedicated, knowledgeable advocate and respected pathologist. He deserves to be remembered kindly for his legacy of service to the Grand Rapids community and to the medical profession.

STUDENT AID AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3221) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes:

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Chair, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3221, the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act. For far too long private lenders have saddled our students with thousands of dollars of debt, all so they could make a profit. Today Congress puts an end to this ensuring that all students who desire a higher education can do so in an affordable manner.

When I was growing up I was told that in order to have a good job you must graduate from grade school, and then it was high school and now it is college. Unfortunately the reality is that all too often, many of our brightest and best are not pursuing college because they cannot afford to do so. I hear time and

time again from my young constituents who are working two or three part-time jobs all so they can take a class or two a semester. We cannot allow our brightest minds to burn out before they can complete their degree. Higher education should be an opportunity and not a burden.

H.R. 3221 will change this by ensuring that the students are the focus of our higher education system once again. This legislation will change the way the student loan system functions by ensuring all new loans are operated through the Direct Loan program, saving the taxpayers \$87 billion and guaranteeing our students have access to low-cost, reliable federal loans.

The savings from this change will be directed towards increasing government grant loan assistance for tuition payments. Pell grants, which serve nearly seven million students, will be increased to \$5,550 in 2010 and to \$6,900 by 2019. To ensure that these grants continue to keep up with the rising costs of tuition, beginning in 2011 the grants will be linked to the Consumer Price Index.

In my district more than 13,000 students rely on the Pell grant to help pay for their schooling. This increase of funding would be critical for each one of these students and would increase the total amount of Pell grant awards in the 15th District from \$34 million to over \$85 million.

This legislation will also simplify the FAFSA, making it easier for families to apply for financial aid. By permitting families to use information from their tax returns, the FAFSA process will be more streamlined and effective for our students. This is critical for families in the 15th District who submitted nearly 38,000 applications last year and are anticipated to submit 56,000 in the 2012 school year.

H.R. 3221 also lowers the interest rates on government-subsidized loans helping to lower college debt after graduation, which will be critical to the nearly 334,000 students in Michigan who rely on these loans.

Increased funding will also be directed to our community colleges, many of whom in Michigan are overwhelmed with trying to serve the thousands of dislocated workers who are looking to start their second career. I have always believed that our community colleges and universities deserve equal treatment; however, this recession has made demonstrated the many different types of students our community colleges serve. This legislation will help these colleges to work more closely with our business community, the state and job training programs and adult education programs to ensure our adult learners have access to the support they need to complete their degree or certificate. And for the over 177,000 students currently enrolled in Michigan community colleges, we must ensure that they have safe, quality facilities in which to learn. Under H.R. 3221 Michigan will receive nearly \$88 million to help finance projects to repair or construct new community college facilities.

Overall this legislation makes unprecedented and much-needed reforms to our student aid system, however, we must also ensure that our colleges and universities have the resources and the support they need to implement this bill. I know for the colleges and universities in my district, they are already struggling with reduced financial assistance from the state, therefore, we must ensure that the consideration of any financial match is

weighed against the current situation in our economy, and what our schools are already committed to doing to assist needy students.

Madam Chair, I am pleased to rise in support of this legislation and I urge strongly that my colleagues do the same. We have all watched the tuition at public and private colleges double, then triple as time has passed, creating a burdensome gap for our students to overcome. The students of this country are our greatest hope—they are our future doctors, our future lawyers, our future teachers and our future public servants. To not ensure that they have an affordable, quality education would be to shortchange their success and the success of our country.

INTRODUCTION OF "NEWSPAPER REVITALIZATION ACT OF 2009"

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the "Newspaper Revitalization Act of 2009," the companion to legislation introduced in the Senate by Senator CARDIN (D-MD). This legislation will help newspapers across the country that are closing down or facing bankruptcy at an alarming rate by allowing them to become non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations similar to public broadcasting. Large cities whose newspapers include, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Seattle Post-Intelligencer, The Rocky Mountain News, San Francisco Chronicle, and The Baltimore Sun are at risk of losing their dailies. Unless something is done soon, it is possible that many metropolitan regions may have no local daily newspapers.

Many bloggers, Google news, and punditry get their original news from the diligent work of beat reporters for daily newspapers who have invested years on their beat and provide the best information on an issue from many perspectives. This type of beat reporting requires commitments of both time and money, and unfortunately, the current economic climate has only worsened the already precarious business situation for many newspapers. This bill would provide for a voluntary option for newspapers and a way for a community or foundations to step in and preserve their local papers that are rapidly disappearing.

Newspapers are an essential component to our free democratic society. Studies have shown that areas where daily newspapers have gone out of business there has been a rise in corruption in government and plummeting civil engagement in politics. With the state of the current newspaper model, dependent on advertising and circulation revenue, it will be difficult for newspapers to maintain and produce high quality news without bold changes. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation as an important first step in saving them.

NATIONAL GEAR UP DAY

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program, or GEAR UP. This program has improved educational outcomes for over a million low-income students across the United States by providing college readiness partnerships and scholarships for low income students.

Tomorrow, September 18th, is the first annual "National GEAR UP Day" to acknowledge the success GEAR UP has had in providing students with the resources they need to go to college despite the challenges they may face in their communities. Over 1.5 million GEAR UP students have been served over the last ten years. GEAR UP offers comprehensive mentoring, tutoring, financial aid counseling and also provides information and activities regarding college admissions.

With my colleagues, Congressman CROWLEY and Congressman SERRANO, I would like to recognize the success of the Bronx Institute at Lehman College which administers three GEAR UP grants in more than 50 schools in the Bronx. These programs serve more than 8,500 Bronx students in grades 8, 9 and 11. They offer after school, weekend and evening classes and workshops for students and parents. Their project staff provides one to one counseling and college readiness support to all students and families. They have in place, and continue to develop and support, rigorous instructional programs that serve to prepare students for college level learning. Additionally, the Bronx Institute at Lehman College's technology program has distributed more than 6,500 laptops to students and will add to that number this year.

In the 110th Congress I was proud to have been a cosponsor and supporter of H. Res. 1311, expressing support for the designation of a National GEAR UP Day and am glad that it has come to realization.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join with me in recognizing and commending the students, families, education professionals, and business and community leaders involved in GEAR UP on its 10th anniversary.

STUDENT AID AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3221) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes:

Ms. WATERS. Madam Chair, I rise to support H.R. 3221, the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2009. I'd also like to commend my colleague from California, Chairman GEORGE MILLER for his hard work to bring this bill to the floor today.

Now more than ever, Americans need affordable and quality educational opportunities that will help make our economy stronger and more competitive. This bill embraces President Obama's challenge to produce more college graduates by the year 2020 by making higher education more accessible. This legislation achieves that goal by transforming the way student loan programs operate.

The Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act is the single largest investment in aid to help students and families pay for college in history—and it does so at no cost to taxpayers. The bill reforms the system of federal student loans to save taxpayers \$87 billion—and then invests \$77 billion of those savings back into education, particularly by making college more affordable, and directs \$10 billion back to the Treasury to reduce entitlement spending. Among its many provisions, I am especially pleased that the maximum Pell Grant is increased from \$5,350 in 2009 to \$5,550 in 2010 and to \$6,900 in 2019 and that interest rates are kept low on subsidized federal student loans. This will help more students graduate with less debt. Unfortunately, too many students are graduating with record debt, partly because grant aid doesn't cover nearly as large a share of college costs as it used to. This legislation will allow us to invest \$40 billion in the Pell Grant scholarship, to keep interest rates affordable on need-based federal student loans, to simplify the federal student aid application process, and to invest in other forms of aid that will help low-income, middle class and minority students pay for and complete college.

H.R. 3221 will also stabilize and safeguard the federal student loan program that students and families depend on to pay for college. The intertwined economic and credit crises have exposed serious vulnerabilities in the structure of the federally-guaranteed student loan program—putting it on life support. Families shouldn't have to worry about whether the roller coaster fluctuations of the financial markets will hurt their access to low-cost student loans. By originating all new federal loans through the cheaper Direct Loan program, students and parents will be able to receive the same loans with the added assurance that these loans are entirely reliable, no matter what happens in the economy. This simple change will save taxpayers \$87 billion over 10 years.

H.R. 3221 also builds on the best of what works in the private sector to provide borrowers with top-notch customer service. The legislation will allow state non-profit lenders and private industry to continue doing what they do best—servicing loans. It will allow private entities to compete for contracts to service these loans—ensuring that students get the best services available and maintaining jobs in communities across the country. This bill also eliminates waste and creates a streamlined, cost-effective program for families and taxpayers. Each year, billions of taxpayers' dollars are being sent into a program that no longer works—and that the Department of Education can administer for a much lower cost. This is exactly the kind of waste we need to eliminate in tough fiscal times. By cutting out the middleman, this legislation will save taxpayers \$87 billion over 10 years, according to the Congressional Budget Office. It's a smarter business decision for taxpayers and families.