

on for survival. It is imperative that we look at all the options available to us for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases.

While most of us are familiar with the harmful effects of CO₂, methane is a greenhouse gas that is even more harmful. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that methane is over 20 times more effective at trapping heat in the atmosphere than CO₂. Decomposing waste in landfills is the largest source of U.S. anthropogenic methane emissions, accounting for approximately 24 percent of these emissions. About 138 million tons of municipal solid waste were discarded into 1,754 landfills in 2006, according to EPA estimates. Municipal and other landfills emitted over 6 million metric tons of methane gas into the atmosphere in 2005, the equivalent of 132 million tons of CO₂.

The Solid Waste Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act will create a new national program to address these emissions. By requiring the owner or operator of a municipal solid waste landfill to collect a modest fee on each ton of waste disposed of, revenue will be made available to support programs to reduce the amount of waste entering landfills and to make beneficial use of the methane generated by decomposing landfill waste.

A fee of \$5.00 per ton will produce close to \$700 million in revenue for this program. The fees will be remitted to the local government having jurisdiction over the area in which the landfill is located. The local government could use the fees itself to undertake greenhouse gas reduction projects that were determined by EPA to be cost-effective. Alternatively, the local government could provide grants, loans, or other financial assistance to other entities to undertake such projects, or could transfer the fees to the State for that purpose. Projects could include waste reduction measures or recycling programs to reduce the amount of methane generated by decomposition, landfill gas recovery, and waste recovery including energy generation.

Americans understand the enormous challenge we face as a nation in preventing global warming and are asking how they can make a difference. With the funding provided by this legislation, local communities can identify and implement projects that will make a real contribution to reducing greenhouse gases. I urge my colleagues to support the "Solid Waste Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act."

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE GARAWAY HIGH SCHOOL GOLF TEAM ON THEIR SECOND STRAIGHT DIVISION III STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, the Garaway High School Pirates Golf team competed in the Ohio State Division III Boys Golf Championship Tournament; and

Whereas, under the direction of head coach Ryan Taggart and assistant coach Mike Felton, the team overcame a two stroke deficit to Lima Central Catholic after the first day of play to win the tournament by eight strokes with a combined score of 631 to Lima's 639, and

Whereas, this is the team's second consecutive win in the Division III championship tournament and its third in five years, creating a dynastic legacy of sportsmanship, skill, and determination, and

Whereas, Garaway's Kevin Miller, finished as the individual state champion for the second year in a row defeating challenger Nathan Tarter of Mogadore High School, 141 to 144; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that along with the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I commend Kolt Andreas, Donny Beechy, Michael Dague, Kevin Miller, Greg Moomaw, and Ryan Troyer for their excellent performance on the golf course and congratulate them on their second win in as many years. The Garaway High School Golf Team has shown exemplary sportsmanship and skill under the management of Coaches Taggart and Felton, and should be proud of their achievement.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS TO HELP THE UNEMPLOYED

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing two pieces of legislation to help the increasing number of Americans who, because of the recession, have lost their jobs. The first bill, the Unemployed Tax Relief Act, makes a laid-off worker's last paycheck tax free.

The second bill, the Unemployment Assistance Act, allows unemployed people to make penalty-free withdrawals from accounts such as Roth IRAs and 401(k)s, to cover living expenses, health care, education, and job training expenses. People who make these penalty-free withdrawals while unemployed will be able to replenish their accounts once they have started new jobs.

Madam Speaker, while we may disagree about the best solutions to the economic crisis gripping the nation, I hope my colleagues will at least agree on these commonsense measures and cosponsor the Unemployed Tax Relief Act and the Unemployment Assistance Act.

PAUL HARVEY

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. I rise today to remember Paul Harvey, one of our nation's great storytellers and a fixture for anyone who spent time listening to radio while traveling Nebraska's highways.

Unfortunately, we lost one of our most distinctive voices on Saturday when Harvey passed away at the age of 90.

Since 1951, his signature "Stand by . . . for news" alerted listeners to both stories which would strike a chord for the common man, and for commentary which would bring smiles to faces and nods across our country.

Paul Harvey's strength was his ability to tap into the humor, empathy and charm which

made him unique. In a day of constantly streaming news and information, Harvey made each of us feel like we were listening to a local radio commentator, not a national program.

America's air waves are a little quieter today.

So I end today with the immortal words of Mr. Harvey, "Good day, America."

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO ESTABLISH THE POSITION OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT SERVICES WITHIN THE OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR HEALTH

HON. PHIL HARE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. HARE. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce a bill today that would elevate the current position of Physicians Assistant (PA) Advisor to a full-time Director of PA Services in the VA Central Office.

I would like to thank my good friend Representative JERRY MORAN for leading this effort with me, as well as Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER and all of my colleagues who are original cosponsors of this legislation. I would also like to thank the American Academy of Physician Assistants for their tireless work on this bill.

There are currently about 1,600 PAs serving in the Veterans' Health Administration (VHA), including many veterans, National Guard and Reservists. PAs are a critical component of the health care delivery system and are responsible for roughly one-quarter of all primary care patients seen in the VHA.

The change from the current role of PA Advisor, who works part time and is based in the field, to a full-time Director is necessary in order to ensure that PAs are being appropriately and effectively utilized throughout the VHA. Right now, the PA Advisor is being left out of strategic planning discussions and long-term staffing initiatives, leaving PAs with no voice and no advocate.

Additionally, there is a severe disparity throughout VHA facilities in how PAs are being utilized, what medical services they can perform, and even whether facilities can hire PAs.

Most importantly, the unnecessary restrictions and widespread confusion are causing the VA to miss an important opportunity to improve the quality of health care for veterans.

One of the biggest challenges facing current and future PAs in the VA system is their exclusion from any recruitment and retention efforts or benefits; the VA designates certain positions, such as physicians and nurses, as critical occupations, which are given priority in loan repayment and scholarship programs. Since PAs are not designated as a critical occupation, they are excluded from these monies, despite the fact that the VA has determined PAs and Nurse Practitioners are functionally interchangeable and equal in the work they perform.

The underutilization, lack of recruitment and retention efforts, and pay disparity are all leading PAs to not consider the VHA as a viable employment option.

PAs are very important for veterans living in rural areas, like those living in my congressional district. Veterans that live in underserved areas made the same sacrifices as their urban and suburban counterparts. With a disproportionate number of these brave men and women being cared for by PAs, it is critical that we establish a system that will best serve the needs of those veterans so as not to compromise their care.

Considering the fact that nearly 40 percent of all VA PAs are projected to retire in the next five years, the VA is in danger of losing its PA workforce unless some attention is paid to this critical group.

My bill will allow the Director of PA Services to become an integral component within the VA system, to proactively solve the many issues facing PAs, and give PAs a fair and long overdue voice within the VA.

Madam Speaker, this commonsense legislation promotes quality medical care for our veterans and I am proud to introduce it again this Congress. This bill (H.R. 2790) passed the House in the 110th Congress, but stalled in the Senate. I look forward to working with my Congressional colleagues to once again bring this measure to the floor so our nation's heroes have access to the care they need and deserve.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE
200TH ANNIVERSARY OF
TUSCARAWAS COUNTY

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, Tuscarawas County is celebrating the 200th anniversary of its organization; and

Whereas, Tuscarawas County has contributed greatly to the history and culture of eastern Ohio and its residents should take pride in the accomplishments of the county and look forward to its future; and

Whereas, the residents of Tuscarawas County will celebrate the county's 200th anniversary with a Bicentennial Parade, fireworks show, music by local school and adult performers, and exhibits commemorating the history and culture of Tuscarawas County; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that along with the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I commend the residents of Tuscarawas County, past and present, for their contribution to the state of Ohio over the last 200 years, congratulate them on the bicentennial of the county, and wish them well in the festivities planned to commemorate this once in a lifetime event.

INTRODUCTION OF DOMESTIC
TUNA CANNING BILL

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to clarify existing tariff law and protect our domestic tuna canning industry. Bumble Bee Foods operates the only

tuna cannery remaining in the United States in Santa Fe Springs, CA in my 38th Congressional District. This cannery relies on imported tuna loins from Asia to manufacture canned tuna in the U.S.

For 75 years, Congress and the administration have implemented a \$10 per loin ton (less than 1%) duty rate on tuna loins while having a 12.5% duty rate on canned tuna. The difference in these duty rates is to encourage companies like Bumble Bee to can tuna in the United States. Given our current economic situation, it is of maximum importance to help maintain and create jobs in the United States.

Bumble Bee imported tuna loins in plastic bags sealed with metal clips and paid the lesser duty rate. At the direction of the Food and Drug Administration in 2000, Bumble Bee stopped this practice and instead began packaging loins with a heat seal to improve product quality and safety.

Upon inspection of the heat sealed bags in August 2006, the local Customs Service at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach concluded that the new bags were airtight and imposed increased duties of 12.5%. This is contradictory to Congress' intent and the historical application of customs regulations that put a lower tariff rate on imported tuna loins to promote the domestic tuna canning industry. The fact that current imports of loins are in heat sealed plastic bags to more effectively prevent contamination of frozen tuna loins should not change the underlying classification of the product.

The bill I am introducing today will clarify the previously long standing customs regulations and allow tuna companies to continue to safely import tuna loins at a lower duty rate to can in the U.S. The bill requires Customs to adopt a clear test to determine whether a container is "airtight" that is based on universal standards, promotes health and safety, and comports with the intent of the tariff legislation. Under such a test, heat sealed loin bags would not be subject to the higher duty rate paid by canned tuna imports.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill which will clarify Congress' intent to protect the domestic canning industry by maintaining a lower duty rate on imported tuna loins.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. JEFF FORTENBERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on member requests, I am submitting the following information regarding an earmark I received as part of H.R. 1105, the FY09 Omnibus Appropriations Bill:

Requesting Member: Congressman JEFF FORTENBERRY

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY09 Omnibus Appropriations Bill

Account: Corps of Engineers—Construction Project Name: Antelope Creek Flood Damage Reduction Project

Amount: \$4,620,000

Name and Address of Requesting Entity: Lower Platte South Natural Resources District located at 3125 Portia Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68521.

Description: The Antelope Creek Flood Damage Reduction Project is a critical element of a flood control, transportation and community revitalization project known as the Antelope Valley Project. The project is being constructed in central Lincoln adjacent to the University of Nebraska Lincoln main campus to improve flood control, transportation networks and community well-being in the city's downtown area.

A CALL FOR CONGRESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to a cost-of-living increase for Members of Congress. Across our country, the faltering economy is closing businesses and leaving many without jobs. Our national debt is climbing to levels that future generations will be responsible for. I believe it is past time for Congress to be responsible. One action we can take is to cancel the automatic pay increase.

Without a direct yes-or-no vote on this provision, we add to the impression that too many people have of Congress. If Congress is to vote itself a raise in pay, it should be done in full view.

This process should be reformed. Members of Congress should not be able to receive an automatic cost-of-living increase. Each of us should be on the record with the citizens of our districts whether we believe an increase to our own salary is justified. In this time of increased economic hardship, I am going on the record in firm opposition to this increase in pay. Since I was not allowed to directly vote yes or no, this forum has become my only recourse. We will not have the transparent process promised to my fellow Americans until we cease this automatic system. I only wish I could do more to right this injustice to the American taxpayer. We have a long way to go in gaining the people's trust. Ending this unfair practice would help.

2009 ACADEMY NOMINEES

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Madam Speaker, every year more high school seniors from the 11th Congressional District trade in varsity jackets for Navy pea coats, Air Force flight suits, and Army brass buckles than most other districts in the country. But this is nothing new. Our area has repeatedly sent an above average contingent of its sons and daughters to the nation's military academies for decades.

This should not come as a surprise. The educational excellence of our area's schools is well known and has long been a magnet for families looking for the best environment in which to raise their children. Our graduates are skilled not only in mathematics, science, and social studies, but also have solid backgrounds in sports, debate teams, and other