

Madam Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Community Soup Kitchen of Morristown and Outreach Center as they celebrate 25 dedicated years of service.

IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL ARTS
IN THE SCHOOL DAY

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 2010

Mrs. LOWEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to National Arts in the School Day. This great program gives young people the opportunity to experience and be exposed to art of all kinds. Last year, six schools in Port Chester, New York opened their doors to 35 guest artists who shared their work with students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and I am pleased that schools will be participating again this year on April 15th.

Research has shown that arts education is closely linked to academic achievement, social and emotional development, civic engagement, and equitable opportunity. Experiencing art can connect people more deeply to the world around them, encourage students to be open to new perceptions of the world, and create foundations for social bonds and community cohesion.

I encourage all schools around the country to celebrate the arts on National Arts in the School Day. Through projects large or small—school-wide performances or even inviting local artists to help children appreciate art in all forms—we can raise awareness of the importance of art and art appreciation and renew our commitment to arts education.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 10TH AN-
NIVERSARY OF GIRLS ON THE
RUN OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 2010

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Girls on the Run of Northern Virginia and to congratulate them on the occasion of their 10th Anniversary.

All of us who have a daughter or niece, or even know a young or pre-teen girl, understand very well the difficulties that many experience on their journey to adulthood. Peer pressure, the media, and other external influences can often cause our young daughters to feel inadequate or simply not good enough. Girls on the Run seeks to address this issue by encouraging healthy choices and instilling confidence that all girls belong “just the way they are.”

Girls on the Run was originally founded in 1996 by Molly Barker, a four-time Hawaii Ironman triathlete to celebrate the gifts of girlhood and fight what she calls “Girl-Box” issues. Girl-Box is a place where girls and young teens are valued more for their outward appearance than their character inside. This can result in low self-esteem and a distorted body image which have been linked to eating disorders, teen pregnancy and substance

abuse. Girls on the Run focuses on the development of a healthy, positive self-image and strives to empowers all girls to have a strong sense of identity, resist peer pressure, stand up for themselves in a healthy manner, and understand their importance as individuals and as part of the larger community. In just 15 years, Girls on the Run now serves over 60,000 girls annually throughout the United States and into Canada.

Girls on the Run came to Northern Virginia in 2001 and initially had only 2 sites serving 27 girls. In 2010, Girls on the Run of NOVA, as the largest chapter in the national organization, will offer over 200 programs in 172 locations and serve more than 6,000 girls. Based out of public and private schools in Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties as well as the cities of Alexandria, Manassas, Manassas Park, Fairfax City and Falls Church, Girls on the Run NOVA reaches across all ethnic, racial and socio-economic lines. No girl is ever denied because of inability to pay the modest fees assessed for this program—financial aid is offered to qualifying individuals. In 2008 over one-third of all participants received financial assistance.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating Girls on the Run of Northern Virginia on the occasion of their 10th Anniversary and also in thanking them for their commitment to instilling self-respect and dignity to all of our daughters in Northern Virginia.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 4992

HON. ZACH WAMP

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 2010

Mr. WAMP. Madam Speaker, today I introduced the First Responders Protection Act to better protect the men and women who risk their lives every day on our behalf from the financial hardship related to potentially frivolous lawsuits. Too often, first responders can be forced to deplete their savings, put their own homes in jeopardy or sacrifice their retirement to pay for legal counsel to defend themselves.

The First Responders Protection Act gives employers the authority to provide financial assistance for employees facing litigation after certain events that occur when performing their jobs. This bill would not override the comparable policies that some States already have in place, and it would offer assistance to any States to implement one.

Upon review by attorneys and law enforcement experts, H.R. 413, which I previously supported, simply went too far without fully addressing this real issue affecting these men and women. My legislation, the First Responders Protection Act, is more narrowly crafted to keep first responders and their families from being financially drained as a result of frivolous lawsuits. I urge its passage in lieu of the previous bill.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE
AMERICAN HELLENIC INSTITUTE

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 2010

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker, Whereas, the American Hellenic Institute was founded in 1974 with a commitment to upholding fairness and justice for the people of Greece and Cyprus;

Whereas, the American Hellenic Institute has sponsored education initiatives to promote peace and mutual understanding between peoples;

Whereas, the American Hellenic Institute has increased cultural awareness and preservation for Greek-Americans and Hellenic people across the world;

Whereas, the American Hellenic Institute has steadfastly worked for the reunification of Cyprus;

Whereas, the American Hellenic Institute has stood by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople;

Whereas, the American Hellenic Institute has worked tirelessly to improve U.S. foreign relations with the people of Greece and Cyprus: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That as a proud Greek American, I commend the American Hellenic Institute for its principled commitment to the causes important to Hellenic people across the world, and in honor of the 189th year of Greek Independence, I stand firmly behind the American Hellenic Institute's efforts to represent the interests and values of Hellenic people everywhere.

LADYWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 2010

Mr. McCOTTER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor and acknowledge Ladywood High School, Catholic college preparatory school in the Felician/Franciscan tradition, as they celebrate their 60 years of educating young women in my hometown of Livonia, Michigan.

Named for the beautiful wooded property on which it is located, Ladywood was dedicated to Our Lady under her title Our Lady of the Woods and opened its doors to 45 students on September 11, 1950. The first commencement was celebrated on June 7, 1953, with a graduating class of 12 young women. Having been continually accredited since 1951, Ladywood now educates young ladies from 40 communities, 5 counties and 50 zip codes.

Ladywood was chosen as an “Outstanding American High School” by U.S. News and World Report and is recognized by the American College Testing Education Division for exceeding national performance scores while matriculating 99 to 100 percent of her graduates to colleges and universities. The State of Michigan and the Wayne County Department of Environment have designated the Ladywood High School as an Official Michigan Green School.

Madam Speaker, for 60 years Ladywood High School has maintained a prominent presence in the Metropolitan Detroit area as a national leader for excellence in education by honoring the pledge made by the Felician Sisters not only to ensure academic distinction but to provide for the spiritual and personal formation of the young ladies entrusted to them. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the administration, faculty, staff and students of Ladywood High School and recognizing their years of loyal service to our youth, our community and our country.

IN RECOGNITION OF HELEN CRAM

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 2010

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Helen Cram and her substantial contributions to political and civic life in Prince William County.

Ms. Cram's political career began when she spent the fall of 1952 handing out "grip cards" for her father's successful candidacy for North Dakota State Secretary. The family's victory launched Ms. Cram into a political career that spanned over four decades and consisted of positions in the offices of local, state and federal elected officials.

After two sessions as a Page in the North Dakota House of Representatives and six years in the personal office of a Public Service Commissioner, Ms. Cram moved to Virginia. She joined the staff of the late U.S. Senator from North Dakota, Quentin Burdick, in 1962 and remained in his office for six years. She spent the rest of her time in the federal government working for U.S. Senator Harry F. Byrd, Jr. until she retired in 1982. Discovering that retirement life was not for her, Ms. Cram ended her retirement one month later when she went to work for Delegate David Brickley in the Virginia General Assembly. Ms. Cram served as Delegate Brickley's legislative assistant until 1998.

Throughout her time as a public servant Ms. Cram has remained active in Democratic politics. Ms. Cram became a member of the Prince William County Democratic Committee in 1970 and served seventeen years as secretary of that committee. She was Campaign Manager many times for David Brickley for Delegate; served as Campaign Manager for Chuck Colgan for Senate in 1988; was co-campaign manager with Charlie Gnadl for Prince William County for Senator Harry Byrd; managed five magisterial districts for Paul Ebert for Commonwealth's Attorney; she was the campaign treasurer for Leo Harrison and Lyle Cram when they each ran for Woodbridge District Board of County Supervisors, and served as campaign manager for the Prince William County Road Bond Committee in 1985. She also served for a short time as the aide to the late Coles Magisterial District Supervisor, G. Richard Pfitzner, when he was on the Prince William Board of County Supervisors.

Somehow Ms. Cram also found time to volunteer for several community organizations in Prince William County. She served on the Board of Directors for the American Red Cross; held every office of the Woodbridge Lit-

tle League Ladies Auxiliary; was District Director for the Little League Ladies Auxiliaries for District 9 (Prince William and part of Fairfax Counties); and was a volunteer for the Boy Scouts of America Troop 1357. Ms. Cram has been the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program coordinator at Potomac Library for thirty-one years. She currently serves as secretary to the Prince William County Board of Elections and has been on the Board nine years.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending Helen Cram; a truly dedicated community activist. I would like to extend my personal appreciation to Ms. Cram for her immeasurable impact on the Prince William community.

THE PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT OF 2010

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 13, 2010

Mr. GRAYSON. Madam Speaker, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 is a triumph for American consumers of health insurance and health care. When fully implemented, it will extend health care insurance to 32 million uninsured Americans, covering 95 percent of American citizens and legal residents. It will extend premium affordability tax credits to 20 million Americans and help 4 million small businesses provide health insurance for their workers. By the end of this year it will end some of the worst insurance company abuses such as post-claims underwriting or lifetime limits on coverage. When fully implemented it will ban even more, including health status underwriting and exclusions of pre-existing conditions. This legislation will "bend the curve" in the unsustainable growth in health care costs while improving the quality of American health care. It encourages wellness and prevention and will help Americans become among the best informed health insurance consumers in the world.

Such sweeping legislation cannot explicitly address every issue that will arise under its provisions. In the near term, the legislation must be implemented through regulations promulgated by the federal executive agencies—in particular Health and Human Services, Labor, and Treasury—and by the states. Ultimately, the courts may need to interpret some of the provisions of the statute.

It is important, therefore, to set down the intention of Congress as to the principles of construction that should be applied in implementing and interpreting the law. The first and foremost of these is captured in the title of the bill. This legislation should always be construed to protect patients and to make health insurance and health care more affordable for consumers. Whenever the bill is silent or ambiguous on a particular issue it should be construed by a federal or state agency or court to accomplish this goal.

Many of the provisions of this bill, including the premium tax credits and cost-sharing assistance, the individual and employer responsibility provisions, and the Medicare and Medicaid reforms and expansions, must be implemented by the federal agencies. In drafting regulations, the agencies must first and fore-

most attend to the interests of patients, consumers, and beneficiaries. Many other provisions will ultimately be implemented by the states. The general interpretive principle of the insurance reform legislation in relation to the states is found in section 1321(d), which states "Nothing in this title shall be construed to preempt any State law that does not prevent the application of the provisions of this title." In other words, state laws more protective of consumers are preserved; state laws less protective of consumers are preempted.

Several issues raised by the legislation illustrate the application of these principles. First, nowhere does section 2719, which prescribes internal and external review procedures that insurance plans must follow when consumers appeal coverage determinations, explicitly state that all state and federal judicial remedies remain available if an appeal is denied both internally and externally. Every state, however, provides for judicial review of insurance claims denials in the nongroup market and 29 U.S.C. sec. 1132 offers judicial review of group health claims. These remedies are not expressly displaced by the law, and it is the intention of Congress that they continue to be available to aggrieved consumers.

Second, grandfathering of insurance plans that pre-date the legislation is not forever. A principle announced repeatedly by the President throughout the debate was that "if you like the insurance coverage you have, you can keep it." Congress never intended, however, that if you had insurance coverage you did not like, you would be stuck with it forever. Section 1251 of the PPACA, therefore, should not be interpreted to mean that an insured who is enrolled in a group health plan will never be extended the consumer protections found in the legislation. If coverage under the plan changes significantly, for example through increased cost-sharing for members, the plan's grandfathered status should be lost and the full protections of the legislation apply.

Third, the ban on pre-existing condition exclusions for children under sec. 10103(e) does not merely mean that plans cannot exclude pre-existing conditions from coverage, but also that they cannot exclude children with pre-existing conditions from coverage. The law must be interpreted broadly to achieve its purposes, not narrowly to encourage evasion.

Fourth, the provisions of sec. 2714 of the Public Health Services Act added by sec. 1001 of the PPACA extending coverage to adult children up to age 26 should be interpreted to require the extension of family coverage to cover adult children, not to permit insurers to separately underwrite such children or to require them to pay the full cost of adult coverage.

Fifth, the provisions of sec. 1332 of the PPACA allowing state waivers for innovation are intended to provide maximum flexibility for the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Health and Human Services so long as the state plan is at least as comprehensive and affordable, and so long as it covers at least as many people as the law would provide otherwise.

Finally, the provisions of sec. 715 of ERISA added by 1562 of the PPACA should be understood to fully extend all of the protections of the PPACA that apply to group health plans to all employment-related health plans, including self-insured plans. The law should also be understood to intend that the full authority of