

Turner has always been committed to helping others and serving God and country both through the United States Corps of Chaplains and the American Legion and Disabled Veterans.

I'm proud to congratulate Chaplain Turner on this great achievement and hope he will continue his service to God, to the United States and helping people in need. Congratulations, Chaplain Turner.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 634, I was not present to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

HONORING HARMONY SENIOR DRUM CORPS'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Harmony Senior Drum Corps, a non-profit band group based in the Town of Boonton, New Jersey, which is celebrating its 125th anniversary this year.

The Harmony Senior Drum Corps traces its origins back to St. Mary's Flute and Drum Band, organized in 1886 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Boonton, New Jersey. Originally founded as an all-male group, one of the St. Mary's Flute and Drum Band's most memorable events was its participation in the parade to dedicate the New Jersey State Firemen's Home in 1900. During World War I, trumpets were added to the band and its name was changed to the Harmony Fife and Drum Corps when it started practicing in the Harmony Engine House in Boonton. After bells were added in the 1930's, the name was again changed, this time to the Harmony Fife, Drum and Trumpet Corps. It was not until 1965 that Harmony Senior Drum Corps became the group's official name.

Over the years, the group has participated in many grand events in Boonton. The Harmony Senior Drum Corps has welcomed home veterans from both World Wars and the Gulf War, played at the celebration of Boonton's Centennial and the United States' Bicentennial in 1976, and the passing of the Olympic Torch. Additionally, the Harmony Senior Drum Corps has participated in local parade competitions, earning its first marching trophy in 1961 at a competition in Denville, New Jersey.

The Harmony Senior Drum Corps has not restricted itself to local events. Their members have marched in New York City for the St. Patrick's Day, Salute to Israel and Puerto Rican Day parades. In 1976, the Corps played at Yankee Stadium during the World Series between the Cincinnati Reds and the New York Yankees.

In 1988, the Harmony Senior Drum Corps opened up membership to women in order to

increase their membership. Many generations of the same family play and have played in the group. Presently, 50 members between the ages of 10 and 70 march, performing with fifes, bells, trumpets, baritones, drums and cymbals, as well as a color guard, while wearing distinct black and white West Point style uniforms.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the members of the Harmony Senior Drum Corps as they celebrate 125 years of providing our community with wonderful music and performances.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, I was not present during the rollcall votes number 630–631, on June 25, 2011. I would have voted:

On rollcall vote No. 630 I would have voted "no."

On rollcall vote No. 631 would have voted "yes."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 635, I was not present to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

INTRODUCTION OF THE ACCESS TO BIRTH CONTROL ACT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, today I am reintroducing the Access to Birth Control, ABC, Act in the House with Senator FRANK LAUTENBERG leading the effort in the Senate.

Ninety-eight percent of American women use birth control over the course of their lifetime. This bill ensures that any woman who would like birth control and who has a legal prescription or is seeking over-the-counter emergency contraception, will be able to get it in a timely and convenient manner.

The ABC Act would make it illegal for a pharmacist to refuse to return a birth control prescription or for a pharmacist to intimidate, threaten or harass customers or intentionally breach or threaten to breach medical confidentiality.

By placing the burden of responsibility on the pharmacy, the ABC Act strikes a balance between the rights of individual pharmacists based on their beliefs and the right of women to receive medication. If the request product is not in stock, but the pharmacy stocks other forms of contraception, the bill mandates that the pharmacy help the woman obtain the medication without delay by the method of her preference (order, referral or a transferred prescription).

Very simply, this legislation ensures a woman's legal access to birth control.

Over the past several years, there have been reports of pharmacists refusing to fill prescriptions for birth control pills.

There have been reports in at least twenty-four states across the nation including: Arizona, Massachusetts, Washington and Missouri. These refusals are based on personal or religious beliefs, not on legitimate medical or professional concerns related to quality of patient care. In some cases, pharmacist have kept and refused to transfer a prescription, refused to sell over-the-counter emergency contraception, or given the customer false medical information about the requested birth control. Pharmacists have taken it upon themselves to decide whose prescription they will fill and which over-the-counter medication they will provide.

This bill is particularly timely as just last week, the Institute of Medicine, IOM, recommended that family-planning services, including the full range of FDA-approved contraceptive methods, be recognized as a preventive-health service that must be covered by insurance plans without additional costs.

This recommendation from the IOM marks an important first step toward near-universal contraceptive coverage in America, but if women are denied the actual contraceptives when they go to their pharmacist, having no-cost contraceptives is rendered meaningless. We must ensure that American women do not face obstacles when seeking doctor prescribed, legal medications.

The Access to Birth Control Act, ABC ACT, is an important step in protecting a woman's right to contraception. Birth control and emergency contraception are part of a woman's basic health care and pharmacists should not have the right to interfere.

IMPROVING CONSUMER PROTECTIONS FOR MEDIGAP INSURANCE

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Medigap Medical Loss Ratio Improvement Act. The legislation improves consumer protections in the Medigap marketplace by raising the minimum percentage of premium dollars that must go toward medical care. I'm joined by my colleagues HENRY WAXMAN, Ranking Democrat on the Energy and Commerce Committee, and FRANK PALLONE, Ranking Democrat on the Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee as original cosponsors of the legislation. Senator KERRY (D-MA) is introducing the companion bill in the Senate.

The medical loss ratio, MLR, is the percentage of premium dollars an insurance plan spends on the provision of medical care, rather than administrative costs, profits, executive compensation, or other expenses. It is an important point of information for consumers because it is a concrete way for people to measure the value of a health insurance product and to compare among other plans in the marketplace.

As part of the new health reform law, insurers in the private health insurance marketplace must now meet a minimum medical loss

ratio percentage of 80 percent in the individual market and 85 percent in the group marketplace. The law also requires all Medicare Advantage plans, private plans offered through Medicare, to meet an 85 percent MLR standard by 2014.

In 1990, Congress first passed legislation standardizing Medigap policies and instituting minimum MLR standards in reaction to evidence of widespread sale of duplicative policies with high overhead. Today, more than nine million Medicare beneficiaries purchase private supplemental Medigap policies to help cover cost sharing and deductibles in traditional Medicare.

The Medigap Medical Loss Ratio Improvement Act updates the MLR standards for Medigap insurers—increasing the percentages to levels put forth in health reform for other products. Specifically, it will raise the MLR from 65 percent to 80 percent in the individual market and from 75 percent to 85 percent in the group marketplace. To give insurers time to prepare for this change, it would not become effective until 2014.

It is endorsed by organizations representing millions of senior citizens and consumers of all ages, including: AARP, AFSCME, Alliance of Retired Americans, Center for Medicare Advocacy, Community Catalyst, Families USA, Health Care for America Now, Medicare Rights Center, National Council on Aging, and the National Senior Citizens Law Center.

In endorsing the bill, AARP highlights that, “AARP supports this change because it will provide greater transparency and accountability for expenditures made by health insurance issuers, and encourage them to become more efficient in their operations to help ensure that consumers receive fair value for their premium dollars.”

This bill should garner bipartisan support. At a February 10, 2011 hearing in the Ways and Means Committee, a Republican Member questioned CMS Actuary Rick Foster about this issue: “. . . Medigap policies that seniors purchase to supplement traditional Medicare are only required to meet a medical loss ratio of 65 percent . . . do you think that the MLR policy should be applied equitably across the line?” He answered that “. . . you could probably make a good case that if it makes sense in general then it would make sense for the broader spectrum, including Medigap policies.” The Member responded, “Well, I would think that most people would agree that if we are going to do something we should do it equally.”

I agree. That’s exactly what we’re doing with the Medigap Medical Loss Ratio Improvement Act today—we are extending a commonsense consumer protection to private Medigap plans. I encourage our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us to enact this sensible improvement to existing law for those who purchase private Medigap insurance.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 636, I was not present to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was honored to be one of the featured speakers at an important session of the 102nd Annual Convention of the NAACP, which is being held in Los Angeles, California. My participation in this important event necessitated my remaining in my congressional district on Monday, July 25, 2011. Consequently, I was unable to return in time for rollcall votes Nos. 630, through 636.

Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

1. On rollcall No. 630, I would have voted “no” (July 25)—(H. Res. 363, Providing for consideration of H.R. 2584, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes).

2. On rollcall No. 631, I would have voted “aye” (July 25)—(On Approving the Journal).

3. On rollcall No. 632, I would have voted “aye” (July 25)—(Moran Amendment to H.R. 2584, Interior and Environment Appropriations Act for FY 2012).

4. On rollcall No. 633, I would have voted “no” (July 25)—(Huelskamp Amendment to H.R. 2584, Interior and Environment Appropriations Act for FY 2012).

5. On rollcall No. 634, I would have voted “aye” (July 25)—(Cleaver Amendment to H.R. 2584, Interior and Environment Appropriations Act for FY 2012).

6. On rollcall No. 635, I would have voted “aye” (July 25)—(Richmond Amendment to H.R. 2584, Interior and Environment Appropriations Act for FY 2012).

7. On rollcall No. 636, I would have voted “aye” (July 25)—(Hochul Amendment to H.R. 2584, Interior and Environment Appropriations Act for FY 2012).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to explain my absence from votes cast on the afternoon of July 25, 2011. My voting percentage is 98 percent for the 112th Congress, and I rarely miss votes, but yesterday, I was absent due to a prior commitment scheduled before we knew the House would be in session on Monday.

On the votes I missed: on the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2584—Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012, had I been present, I would have voted “no”; and on the Journal vote, had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

TRIBUTE TO THE VERY REVEREND
KENNETH F. GADDY, C.Ss.R.

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to an outstanding faith and community leader from my congressional district in the U.S. Virgin Islands, The Very Reverend Kenneth F. Gaddy, C.Ss.R., a Redemptorist priest who has served the St. Croix community for 21 years.

On Sunday, July 31, 2011, the Holy Cross Catholic Church will honor Father Gaddy for his years of bountiful service to the Church and the parish before he leaves the Virgin Islands for a new assignment. Born to the late John and Beatrice Gaddy, Father Gaddy was the third of six children. He attended Catholic school for elementary and part of his secondary education. In 1977, Father Gaddy entered the Redemptorist Formation system, in Northeast, Pennsylvania. He went on to further his studies and in 1984, he graduated from St. Alphonsus College in Suffield, Connecticut, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy. Father Gaddy completed his theological studies at Washington Theological Union in 1988 and on May 14, 1988, he was ordained to the priesthood.

Father Gaddy’s first assignment was to St. Boniface Church, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In January of 1990, he was reassigned to St. Patrick’s Catholic Church on the island of Saint Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, and arrived in the Virgin Islands during a tremendously challenging time in our history—just months after Hurricane Hugo devastated the island of Saint Croix. He served as an Associate Pastor for six years, and then in August of 1996 he was appointed Pastor of St. Patrick’s Catholic Church. Father Gaddy served as Pastor for 9 years before he was appointed director of the Blessed Peter Donders Formation Residence in July of 2006.

Mr. Speaker, in July of 2008, Father Gaddy was appointed pastor of Holy Cross Catholic Church on Saint Croix, where he is currently serving. He credits two Redemptorists, The Rev. Jerome Moody and The Rev. Henrique Schulerbrandt, for encouraging and supporting him in his decision to pursue his studies to the priesthood. Several years later he was introduced to Rev. Carlyle Blake, another Redemptorist, whose friendship and mentorship continue to this day.

Father Gaddy believes firmly that we stand on the shoulders of those who precede us and it is our responsibility to keep their memory and contributions alive and to provide shoulders for those who come behind us to stand on. He also believes that we are all responsible for building upon what has been entrusted to us and that we are to leave our community better than as we inherited it.

The Saint Croix community will not soon forget the ministry of Father Gaddy, his impassioned sermons, his wise and down-to-earth demeanor, and most certainly we will not forget his infectious laughter and kind-hearted smile. He is a great listener who exudes sincerity and humbleness.

He has shared our ups and our downs, our trials and our triumphs, our grief and our joys and has become a much beloved and integral