

of time. Moreover, although there are long-term disability options for federal employees who become permanently disabled, federal employees do not qualify if they have not worked for at least 18 months. My bill does no more than put federal employees in the same position as their private sector counterparts, who have access to disability insurance at group rates. The bill will not allow participating employers to exclude persons based on pre-existing conditions. And, because of the federal government's purchasing power, the bill will provide all of these benefits at a more competitive rate than is available if the employees seek such insurance as an individual.

According to the Social Security Administration, studies indicate that a 20-year-old worker has a 30 percent chance of becoming disabled by retirement age. The majority of disabilities are not caused by major accidents, but by conditions or illnesses such as cancer or back injuries, according to the Council for Disability Awareness.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.

**LANDAU ENGENE MURPHY, JR.  
AMERICA'S GOT TALENT WINNER**

**HON. NICK J. RAHALL II**

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, America has voted. The Nation voted for a winning combination of humility, hard work, life-long dream, and finely tuned talent. Today, I join with my friends in Logan County and all throughout West Virginia in congratulating Landau Eugene Murphy, Jr., this year's winner of NBC Television's "America Got Talent."

Landau's journey is a true American success story. Coming from humble beginnings, he worked hard, never lost faith in his Lord, and always remained determined to pursue his dream.

I believe what Landau accomplished last night should stand as an example to every young person throughout this great Nation. He has shown them that they should always set their goals high and work until they get there, and indeed, if you should take some blows, just let the record show, you did it your way.

I send my very best to Landau, his lovely wife, Jennifer, and their family as they begin this new and exciting journey in their lives. I know that Landau remains as humble today as he was when he first took the stage at the Logan County Arts and Crafts Fair's annual talent show some years ago.

I would like to commend the Logan County Chamber of Commerce, the Hatfield and McCoy Convention and Visitors' Bureau, and Diana Barnette and all the fine folks at Fountainplace Cinema 8 in Logan for their support of our hometown hero. As we always have in West Virginia, we stand behind and support our own, and the work these organizations and individuals have done is phenomenal. Undoubtedly, their efforts were instrumental in Landau's victory.

Mr. Murphy accepted his victory with the hugs and "high fives" of his competitors, the hallmark of good sportsmanship. Throughout the weeks of competition he often spoke of his respect and compassion for, and friendship with, his opponents—a timely lesson for us all.

I hope my colleagues will congratulate all those whose talent carried them to the final weeks of a long competition. And, I thank America for recognizing a true talent in this fine son of West Virginia. Thankfully, we will be hearing a lot more from Landau Eugene Murphy, Jr., for many more years to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF GARY YATES

**HON. JACKIE SPEIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Gary L. Yates for providing two decades of leadership in health philanthropy through his work at the California Wellness Foundation.

After three years at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, Mr. Yates joined the Foundation as a senior program officer in 1992, was named the Interim President in 1994 and President and CEO in 1995.

Mr. Yates received his B.A. in Government from American University and his Masters in Counseling Psychology from the University of Northern Colorado. He also served in the United States Army from 1968-1970. He is a licensed marriage, family, child therapist and a clinical assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of Southern California Medical School where he trains doctors, psychologists, and social workers on how to work with adolescents. In brief, he is dedicated to improving health outcomes for those most in need.

Since joining the TCWF, Mr. Yates has worked tirelessly to create, lead and support initiatives to improve health and decrease violence throughout the state of California. In 1992, he led TCWF's first proactive grantmaking program, a 10-year, \$60 million Violence Prevention Initiative. His approach to grantmaking has ensured that funds reach the right people, places, and causes, such as environmental health, violence protection, teen pregnancy prevention and women's health.

Mr. Yates' commitment to philanthropy can only be described as inexhaustible and inspirational. He also serves as a member of the board of Independent Sector and is co-chair of Voices for Philanthropy, a project of the Philanthropy Roundtable. He has previously served as the treasurer of Hispanics in Philanthropy, vice-chair of the boards of the Council on Foundations and Independent Sector, and chair of the boards of Grantmakers in Health, the Foundation Consortium, and Southern California Grantmakers.

During his time at TCWF, Mr. Yates has received many prestigious awards and honors, and this fall he will be recognized by the Center for Community Health and Well-Being, the California Primary Care Association and the National Hispanic Health Foundation.

It has been a personal privilege to work with him on a myriad of issues over the years, especially women's health.

Mr. Yates and his wife Ann are the proud parents of five sons.

Mr. Speaker, it is right to honor Gary L. Yates for his tireless dedication to the people of California upon the occasion of his retirement on September 14, 2011, after 19 years as a leading health philanthropist.

TRIBUTE TO DR. EDWARD A. SHELDON

**HON. WILLIAM L. OWENS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life of Dr. Edward A. Sheldon, founder of Oswego State University in New York, as we celebrate the college's 150th anniversary.

A native of Perry Center, New York, Dr. Sheldon spent decades devoting his life to the New York education system by organizing and spearheading an educational system accessible to all children. Throughout the years, he served as a teacher, superintendent, and secretary of the board of education in Oswego, NY. In 1861 he founded the Oswego Primary Teachers' Training School, known today as Oswego State University. Serving as President until 1897, he worked to transform the subject matter and methods of formal education and to extend educational opportunities to all children.

Through his lifetime, Dr. Sheldon garnered national attention creating the Oswego method of object training. His time spent working to enhance the quality of education in Upstate New York provided a strong foundation for countless students and teachers.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life of Dr. Edward A. Sheldon and congratulate Oswego State University on their 150th year.

DISAPPROVAL RESOLUTION RE-LATING TO DEBT LIMIT INCREASE

SPEECH OF

**HON. GARY C. PETERS**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2011

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.J. Res. 77. This resolution is another pointless political gesture put forward by Republicans in their efforts to fight our President tooth and nail, regardless of the impact on American families and our economy.

This resolution has already failed in the Senate; it is going nowhere. It is beyond irresponsible to spend time catering to far-right Tea Party Members with doomed procedural technicalities while American families face a jobs crisis.

Early this year, we were seeing hundreds of thousands of jobs created each month and real economic recovery was taking root. Since then, Republicans have manufactured one crisis after another. Whether it is threatening to shut down the government, default on our debt, or cripple the FAA with furloughs, Republicans have shown an unbelievable willingness to harm our economy so they can score points with their Tea Party base.

Washington gave our country a pointless, dangerous debt limit showdown in July, and our nation's employers responded by creating zero new jobs in August. We need to move past this divisive, debt limit gamesmanship and take action to get our economy moving by passing the American Jobs Act now.

HONORING MAYOR JOHN HAMM III

**HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the dedicated community service of Madison, Illinois Mayor John Hamm III as he is recognized for his lifetime of community service by the Southwestern Illinois Chamber of Commerce of Madison County.

As the Executive Director of the Madison County Housing Authority, John has taken the Authority to a new level of activity, constructing hundreds of new residential units and communities in southwestern Madison County. He has overseen the redevelopment of numerous homes and properties and created new housing opportunities for the people of our area. He has helped break ground and redevelop new housing facilities for seniors and low to moderate income families, giving many families a place to call home.

Mayor Hamm has been a consistent, active participant in community service for Southwestern Illinois serving as a municipal representative on the Southwestern Illinois Metropolitan Area Planning Commission and East West Gateway Council of Governments.

Both he and his wife, Carol, have been longstanding community supporters of Madison's schools and are active with sports groups, booster clubs and many service organizations within the community.

In his longstanding roles, first as a City Council Member in 1987 and then as Mayor of the City of Madison beginning in 1997, Mayor Hamm has been a champion for his local community. He has undertaken aggressive steps to rid the community of over 100 derelict properties and has worked tirelessly to bring in new businesses, such as Abengoa Bio Energy, Mattingly Lumber and Gateway International Raceway. He has been successful in securing both state and federal grants and funding for a new fire station, parks and walking trails and was instrumental in securing the Chain of Rocks Bridge as a tourist destination.

As a Commissioner of the Tri City Regional Port District since 1997, Mayor Hamm has been an active leader in developing the Port District, working with my office to help in the transfer of the former U.S. Army Charles Melvin Price Support Center to the Port in 2000. During the last several years, over \$325 million in both public and private investment has been made at the Port with an annual economic impact of over \$200 million to the regional economy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in an expression of appreciation to Mayor John Hamm in recognition of his years of service as a community leader and to wish him and his family the very best in the future.

A TRIBUTE TO DOLORES REID BARKER

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and to honor Ms. Dolores Reid

Barker, a charismatic Brooklynite who carries the energy to inspire and motivate others.

Ms. Dolores Reid Barker is a native of Colon, Panama but was raised in the Costa Rican province of La Lola by her maternal grandparents. Ms. Barker received her primary and secondary education in Costa Rica before migrating to the United States to pursue her quest and rich interest in attaining advanced degrees. With dedicated and focused attention, Ms. Barker obtained her Bachelor of Arts Degree from Brooklyn College, a Masters Degree in Special Education from Long Island University, and a second Masters in Educational Administration and Supervision.

Through her academic achievements, Ms. Barker developed a relentless focus on the student-teacher relationship as a prerequisite for sustained student success. It was this emphasis that drove Ms. Barker to assume the first of several positions in the academic environment as a bilingual teacher, eventually becoming staff developer/resource specialist and assistant principal. It is of most importance to Ms. Barker that she clearly communicates her vision of high achievement and teacher accountability in order to build a positive rapport with the parents of children. Ms. Barker currently holds the position of principal of one of New York City's elementary schools, PS 95 Queens, where she raised the schools' evaluation from mediocrity to high achievement.

Within her community Ms. Barker is very active with her Seventh Day Adventist church and several organizations. The organizations Ms. Barker works with include the Concerned Women of Brooklyn Inc., the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Phi Delta Kappa, The Interfaith Medical Auxiliary and Assistant Coordinator of the New York State Geography Bee.

She has also been the recipient of many awards for her ardent advocacy for teaching, learning, and leadership. The latest two were the Certificate of Excellence which was presented to her by the Community District Education Council, and Educator of the Week which was featured on Univision, Channel 41 New York.

A piece of inspiration that motivates Ms. Barker is found in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Ms. Dolores Reid Barker for her contribution to the education of Brooklyn students and the community.

COMMEMORATING THE NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 50th Anniversary this month of the National Reconnaissance Office. The National Reconnaissance Office was secretly created in 1961 in response to the Soviet launch of Sputnik with the purpose of overseeing "all satellite and overflight reconnaissance projects whether overt or covert." This information was Declassified to the public in 1992. Today the NRO is in charge of designing, building, launching, and maintaining

the United States of America's intelligence satellites. When the United States needs eyes and ears in critical places where no human can reach—be it over the most rugged terrain or the most hostile territory—we turn to the National Reconnaissance Office.

We are proud to applaud the National Reconnaissance Office for recently completing one of the most aggressive launch campaigns since its inception by launching six complex satellite systems in only seven months. With fewer people and less infrastructure than in years past, this great accomplishment is a testament to the diligent National Reconnaissance Office program teams and the essential collaborative launch efforts with the United States Air Force and the talented workforce they draw from across the Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community. Whether creating the latest innovations in satellite technology, contracting with the most cost-efficient industrial supplier, conducting rigorous launch schedules, or providing the highest-quality products to our customers, these successful launches prove the National Reconnaissance Office's never-ending commitment to protect our Nation and its citizens.

As one of the 16 Intelligence Community agencies, the National Reconnaissance Office is a hybrid organization consisting of some 3,000 personnel that is jointly staffed by members of the Armed Services, the Central Intelligence Agency and Department of Defense civilians. Headquartered in Chantilly, Virginia, the National Reconnaissance Office launches from Cape Canaveral, FL and Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, while maintaining ground station operations in Virginia, Colorado, New Mexico, the United Kingdom, and Australia. This unique composition and placement of the National Reconnaissance Office workforce allows for launching and operating the most technically-capable systems to continued operations of legacy satellites in order for the United States to remain the premier space reconnaissance organization in the world.

Together with other Defense Department satellites, National Reconnaissance Office systems play a crucial role in providing: global communications, precision navigation, early warning of missile launches and potential military aggression, signals intelligence, and near real-time imagery to United States forces in support of the war on terrorism and other contingency operations. Additionally, National Reconnaissance Office satellites have played an ever increasing role in supporting civil customers, assess crop production, map habitats of endangered species, track oil spills, and study wetlands.

Through continued vigilance from above, the National Reconnaissance Office provides America's policymakers, intelligence analysts, warfighters and homeland security specialists the critical information they need to keep America safe, secure, and free. For these many achievements, I join my colleagues in congratulating the men and women who support the National Reconnaissance Office on 50 years of outstanding service to our nation and may they continue on this path to reach even greater milestones in space reconnaissance for years to come.