

Pocahontas and commend them on their upcoming 65th wedding anniversary.

Mr. and Mrs. Christiansen were married on June 16th, 1946 in Pomeroy, IA and have since helped bring three children, ten grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren into this world.

Prior to their wedding, LeRoy was a proud Iowa farmer before he was asked to put his career on hold and defend his country in the Second World War. LeRoy served his country honorably as an Army Air Corp nose gunner in Italy before being discharged with honors and returning to Iowa.

LeRoy and Louise were born, educated and have now retired in Iowa out of love for a state that has given them so many joys and blessings.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to represent LeRoy and Louise in the United States Congress. Mr. and Mrs. Christiansen are a true testament to Iowa's reputation of service and commitment. I know my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating them and I wish them continued happiness in the years ahead.

RECOGNIZING THE 36TH ANNUAL CAPITAL PRIDE CELEBRATION

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the 36th annual Capital Pride, a celebration of the national capital area's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) communities and their families and friends.

In 1975, Deacon MacCubbin, owner of the Lambda Rising Bookstore in Dupont Circle, launched the first Capital Pride. It began as a block party on 20th Street, between R and S Streets, NW. By 1980, the festival had outgrown being a block party and moved to Francis Junior High School in 1981, with the Pride Parade becoming an annual part of the festivities. As Capital Pride continued to grow, it moved to Freedom Plaza in 1990 and then onto Pennsylvania Avenue in 1997. Today, Capital Pride consists of more than 10 days of events, including Trans Pride and Latino Pride, organized by the Capital Pride Planning Committee and dozens of local community partners.

Capital Pride's 2011 theme, "Celebration and Opportunity, Paving the Way," acknowledges the many successes of the GLBT community and the work that still needs to be done to ensure equality.

This year, Capital Pride culminates with what has been declared D.C.'s best parade, the Capital Pride Parade, on June 11, and "The Main Event," a street fair on Pennsylvania Avenue in the shadow of the U.S. Capitol, on June 12. Capital Pride's producer, the Capital Pride Alliance, Inc., predicts an attendance of 250,000, making Capital Pride one of the largest GLBT festivals in the United States.

I have marched in Pride parades since coming to Congress to emphasize universal human rights and the importance of enacting federal legislation to secure those rights for the GLBT community. Congress has much

work to do. We must pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, the Respect for Marriage Act, the Safe Schools Improvement Act, and the Uniting American Families Act.

I ask the House to join me in recognizing the 36th annual Capital Pride and to welcome its attendees.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION, RISK REDUCTION, AND AWARENESS ACT OF 2011

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction, and Awareness Act of 2011, which will help provide accurate, evidence-based information to pregnant and breast-feeding women about medications, chemical exposures, foodborne illness, and other exposures associated with birth defects or health risks to a breastfed infant.

This bill would establish a grant program to revitalize the national network of pregnancy risk information services, more than half of which have closed over the last decade due to lack of funding. Over 70,000 women seek information from these essential services each year. It would also establish a national information campaign to help increase public awareness among health providers and at-risk populations.

The legislation has been endorsed by the Allergy and Asthma Network, American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, March of Dimes Foundation, Mothers of Asthmatics, Organization of Teratology Information Specialists, Spina Bifida Association, and the Zero to Three National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families. I hereby submit for the record letters of support from these organizations.

There is nothing more important than protecting our children, and this legislation will help expectant and breast-feeding mothers to obtain clear, accurate information about the potential risks of medications, illnesses, and other exposures during pregnancy and breastfeeding, helping them to both avoid risks and improve healthy behaviors like taking folic acid. This legislation will help mothers and health care professionals access critical information to help ensure their babies are healthy, and I urge my colleagues to support our efforts.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ALLERGY,
ASTHMA, & IMMUNOLOGY,
Washington, DC,
April 11, 2011.

Hon. ROSA DeLAURO,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MS. DELAURO: On behalf of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, I write to express strong support for the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction, and Awareness Act. This legislation will fund the national network of pregnancy risk information services that are currently severely underfunded. These services counsel pregnant and breast-feeding women on exposures to medications, chemicals, infections,

and other risks to healthy pregnancy and healthy infants.

A pregnant or breast-feeding woman lives in fear of any exposure that might pose a risk to her pregnancy or her baby. This is because of the paucity of information on the impact of exposures to medications, chemicals, infections and illnesses during pregnancy and nursing. Some exposures can be avoided, but for women with chronic diseases such as asthma, epilepsy, hypertension, or depression, continued use of medication may be essential to the health of both the woman and her infant. Asthma affects about 8% of pregnant women—over 300,000 women per year. Some women simply discontinue their asthma medications during pregnancy out of fear of a potential birth defect. However, uncontrolled asthma may pose a greater risk of complicating the pregnancy. Our organization has initiated a major study of asthma drugs in pregnancy in collaboration with the nation's pregnancy risk information services. This study simply could not be done without the resources available through these services. Unfortunately, more than half of the pregnancy risk information services in the country have closed over the past decade, and those that remain have sustained severe funding cuts. The legislation you are introducing will increase support for these important programs and assure that the vitally important counseling and research services they provide can be reinvigorated.

The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology is the largest professional medical specialty organization in the United States representing allergists, asthma specialists, clinical immunologists, allied health professionals, and others dedicated to improving the treatment of allergic diseases through research and education. We thank you for your leadership in support of prevention and research related to birth defects and are pleased to offer the Academy's support for your legislation.

Sincerely,

DENNIS K. LEDFORD, M.D.,
President, American Academy of
Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology.

SPINA BIFIDA ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, May 5, 2011.

Hon. ROSA DeLAURO,
House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office
Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE DELAURO: On behalf of the Spina Bifida Association (SBA), the only national voluntary health organization working on behalf of the estimated 166,000 individuals who live with all forms of Spina Bifida and their families, I am writing to express our support to you and the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction and Awareness Act. This legislation will provide much-needed support to pregnancy risk information services, which play a crucial role in educating women on how to reduce the risk of preventable birth defects, including Spina Bifida.

One of the primary goals of SBA is to increase awareness of the importance of folic acid consumption among the 65 million women in the United States of child-bearing age. The risk of Spina Bifida and other serious birth defects can be reduced by up to 70%, if women of childbearing age consume 400 micrograms (400 mcg) of folic acid (a B-vitamin) every day. Grants funded under the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction and Awareness Act will help ensure that women who are considering becoming pregnant have access to information on the importance of folic acid supplementation, as well as other key steps they can take to ensure a healthy pregnancy.

SBA thanks you for recognizing the importance of pregnancy risk information services. If we can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me at 202-944-3285, Ext. 14.

Sincerely,

CINDY BROWNSTEIN,
President and Chief Executive
Officer, Spina Bifida Association.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS,
April 20, 2011.

Hon. ROSA DELAURO,
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE DELAURO: on behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a non-profit professional organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults, I would like to share our support for the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction, and Awareness Act.

Each year, about one in every 33 babies in our nation is born with a birth defect. Birth defects can be caused by genetic factors, environmental exposures, or a combination of the two. For the vast majority of birth defects, however, the cause remains unknown. Research continues to reveal important new information about the causes and prevention of birth defects.

The Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction, and Awareness Act seeks to provide a resource for pregnant women who have questions about whether certain medications, infections, or chemical or environmental exposures might cause or increase the risk of a birth defect, or pose a risk to a breastfeeding baby. This bill would support the provision of pregnancy and breastfeeding information services to women and health care providers seeking information about known or suspected risks. Breastfeeding mothers will receive information about how potential risks should be weighed against the significant benefits of breastfeeding. These services will address an important need as our understanding of birth defects and their prevention continues to evolve.

The AAP appreciates your commitment to preventing birth defects and educating the public about potential risks. We are pleased to support the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction, and Awareness Act, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to improve the health of all our nation's children.

Sincerely,

O. MARION BURTON, MD FAAP,
President.

OTIS,
April 13, 2011.

Hon. ROSA DELAURO,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MS. DELAURO: on behalf of the Organization of Teratology Information Specialists, I write to express strong support for the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction, and Awareness Act. Our organization is made up of physicians, genetic counselors, nurses, researchers, and educators interested in the study and prevention of birth defects, and we fully support the goals of your legislation.

Many of our members work in pregnancy risk information services across the country. These programs provide accurate evidence-based, clinical information to patients and health care professionals about exposures during pregnancy or breast-feeding to medications, chemicals, infections, and illnesses and whether there is a risk of birth defects

or harm to an infant. Pregnant or breastfeeding women with chronic diseases, such as asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, or depression are counseled by these services about how to properly treat their disease and minimize the risk of birth defects. Pregnancy risk information services provided invaluable assistance to women and providers during the H1N1 immunization effort as both pregnant women and providers sought information as to whether the vaccine was safe during pregnancy.

At one time, there were over 30 such services in the United States. Cuts in state budgets have forced more than half of these to close, and the remaining 13 services are operating under significantly reduced budgets. Decreases in staffing, hours of operation, and community outreach efforts have compromised patient and health care provider access to information needed to assure healthy pregnancy and risk-free breastfeeding. The bill you are introducing would reverse this trend. As an organization committed to the prevention of birth defects, we wholeheartedly endorse your legislation and thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

LORI WOLF, M.S., C.G.C.,
President.

THE AMERICAN CONGRESS OF
OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNECOLOGISTS,
Syracuse, NY, April 15, 2011.

Hon. ROSA DELAURO,
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN DELAURO, on behalf of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), representing 54,000 physicians and partners in women's health, thank you for introducing the Birth Defects, Prevention, Risk Reduction, and Awareness Act of 2011. Your bill will strengthen much-needed research on birth defects and breast-feeding, and help educate women on ways to reduce risks to their babies and have healthy pregnancies.

There is an alarming gap in research on exposures to chemicals, medicines, and everyday behaviors and their link to birth defects, both during pregnancy and breast-feeding. This bill takes important steps to address the gaps, calling for research on maternal exposures that may adversely affect a pregnancy or cause harm to a breast-feeding infant. Equally as important, providing information to women and taking steps to increase awareness about pregnancy and breast-feeding will help ensure women have the information they need to make healthy choices during pregnancy and afterwards.

Again, thank you for introducing this bill to help pregnant and breast-feeding women. We look forward to working with you on this important legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact ACOG's Department of Government Affairs if we can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

RICHARD N. WALDMAN, MD, FACOG
President.

MARCH OF DIMES FOUNDATION,
Washington, DC, April 11, 2011.

Hon. ROSA DELAURO,
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE DELAURO: on behalf of more than 3 million volunteers and 1,200 staff of the March of Dimes Foundation, I am writing to express support for the "Birth De-

fects Prevention, Risk Reduction and Awareness Act of 2011." As currently drafted, this bill authorizes funding to conduct a national media campaign, enhance surveillance and research on exposures that may lead to adverse birth outcomes such as birth defects or prematurity. It also authorizes funding to develop best practice guidelines to improve infant health.

Each year, an estimated 120,000 infants are born with major structural birth defects. One in five infant deaths is due to birth defects, making them the leading cause of infant mortality and a major cause of childhood and adult disability. It is critically important that the public—especially women of childbearing age—and health care professionals have access to clinical and evidence based information about potential risks of medications, illnesses, and other exposures during pregnancy and breast-feeding.

Readily accessible and accurate information holds the potential to decrease the incidence of birth defects and improve infant health. Unfortunately, studies show that up to half of pregnant women are not counseled by their health care providers about the potential teratogenic effects of prescription drugs that they are taking.

Thank you for your leadership on this very important issue, Senator Hagan, we look forward to working with you on this and other issues central to the health and wellbeing of children in communities across the nation and around the world.

Sincerely,

DR. MARINA L. WEISS,
Senior Vice President, Public Policy
and Government Affairs.

ZERO TO THREE,[®]

Washington, DC, May 20, 2011.

Hon. ROSA DELAURO,
2413 Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE DELAURO: on behalf of ZERO TO THREE: National Center on Infants, Toddlers, and Families, I am writing to express our support for the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction, and Awareness Act. ZERO TO THREE is a national non-profit organization whose mission is to promote the health and development of our nation's youngest children. We translate scientific research and knowledge about the unique needs of infants and toddlers for parents, early childhood practitioners, and policymakers.

In the United States, approximately one in every eight babies is born preterm; one in every 12 is born with low birth weight; and one in every 33 is born with a birth defect. Exposure to environmental toxins while in the womb contributes to all three of these statistics. Babies' development is particularly vulnerable during the prenatal period, when cells are rapidly differentiating, organs are forming, and the brain is undergoing a crucial phase of maturation. Environmental toxins are hazardous to these processes, especially because of the underdevelopment of fetal immune systems.

Prenatal and early exposures yield grave results. Birth defects are the leading cause of infant mortality, and babies born preterm are more than 15 times as likely to die in their first year of life. Low birth weight babies are more likely to require neonatal intensive care for problems like respiratory distress, bleeding in the brain, and dangerous heart and intestinal problems. Later in life, babies exposed to environmental toxins are more likely to develop childhood cancer, asthma and obesity, and infertility. Their exposure places them at heightened risk for an array of physical and developmental disorders that diminish their capacity for

healthy development, school success, and productive contribution to society and the workforce. In addition, treatment of diseases and disorders caused by exposure raises health care costs.

This Act takes an important step towards decreasing early exposure to environmental toxins by establishing a federal grant program to fund Pregnancy Risk Information Services (PRIS) throughout the country. PRIS provide pregnant and breastfeeding women and their physicians with evidence-based information about exposure to medications, chemicals, illicit drugs, alcohol, infections, and illnesses that may pose a risk to the healthy development of a fetus or breastfeeding baby. They also fill critical knowledge gaps by recruiting women for surveillance and research projects that study the effects of toxins on babies' development. Mothers are hungry for medically-grounded advice to guide their actions while pregnant and breastfeeding. This bill would provide them with access to the information they need to make healthy, responsible choices for their children.

On behalf of ZERO TO THREE and the four million babies born each year in the United States, thank you for your steadfast work to defend children's health and development. We are pleased to support the Birth Defects Prevention, Risk Reduction, and Awareness Act and look forward to continuing to work together to improve the lives of infants and toddlers.

Sincerely,

MATTHEW E. MELMED, JD,
Executive Director.

A TRIBUTE TO BRANDON SCHRAUTH

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a very special teacher from Waukegan, IA. His name is Brandon Schrauth and he was recently selected to receive the 2010 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

This program recognizes our nation's most outstanding teachers for their contribution to the teaching and learning of math and science. For his exemplary achievement, Brandon has received both a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation as well as a signed certificate from President Obama.

President Obama named only 85 teachers across the country to be worthy of this prestigious award saying that its recipients "demonstrate uncommon skill and devotion in the classroom, nurturing the young minds of tomorrow's science and math leaders."

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to represent Brandon and his students in the United States Congress. Brandon is a true testament to Iowa's reputation of a strong work ethic and world class education. I know my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating Brandon and I wish him the best of luck in the future.

HONORING THE CHILDREN OF THE TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PRO- GRAM FOR SURVIVORS

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor America's greatest resource—our children and in particular those of the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, our Gold Star children, who are the loved ones of our fallen heroes. This Memorial Day and every day, I ask all Americans to keep a special place in their hearts for these wonderful and brave children. As with each coming year, we see in each child's face the image of their parents and we are continually reminded of their heroism and selflessness and that freedom certainly does not come without a price. May these children of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice in the defense of our great nation always know that while their loved ones are up guarding Heaven's gates, their spirit will continue to live on inside of each of them. I ask that the poem Albert Caswell penned in their honor, *The Best Part of Them*, be placed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

THE BEST PART OF THEM

My child, I know you heard the news today. . . .
I'm going so far away. . . .
I'm so sorry I can't be here to stay. . . .
But, heaven for me could not wait. . . .
But, remember you carry, Me In You in your heart each day. . . .
My Little boys and little girls, it's for you I now so pray. . . .
Teenagers and new born's who have so lost your best friends have they. . . .
Your Daddy and Mommy, aren't coming home. . . . as it's up to heaven they have flown. . . .
And you will never see them again. . . .
As you have all just lost your best friends!
As up towards Heaven they have flown . . . to Heaven sent. . . .
As Angels in The Army of Our Lord, to defend. . . .
And as you lay your precious heads down to sleep. . . .
I pray to the Lord, the strength that he will give to you to keep. . . .
But remember this, so very deep. . . .
Inside of you, Is The Best Part of Me, your Mothers and Fathers hearts to so keep!
For The Best Part of Them, Is Part of You. . . . as inside of your fine hearts, they so beat. . . .
And I know that you will never hear them say your name again. . . .
All in their most special ways, as you have but all but lost your best friends. . . .
I'm so sorry that in such pain you must now so live. . . .
And I know it's so unfair, that little soldiers you became. . . .
My little girls and boys, as when all of the tears began. . . .
Oh children, I know how bad that you so wish to hear that voice. . . .
I know it's so unfair, and for you had no choice. . . .
As you but wish for just that one last long hug. . . .
All from your greatest Heroes, your greatest of all loves. . . .
Take heart now my child, for they are but with our Lord high up above. . . .

The ones who all so taught you the very meaning of love. . . .
Who in the middle of the night, when you were scared. . . . would hold you tight!
Yea, I know it makes you cry. . . . it makes me cry too. . . .
Whenever, I think of them. . . . and I think of you. . . .
But, they died. . . . but, for The Greater Good. . . .
All for what is right and what is true. . . .
All for Freedom, they so gave That Last Full Measure all for us and you!
Moments, are all we have upon this earth. . . .
Just seconds, to but show our Lord God all in our worth. . . .
And though they will not be here on Christmas or Hanukkah mourns. . . .
With all of their smiles and hugs, so very warm.
And they will not be able to tuck you in at night. . . .
And watch you all grow up to be their hearts delight!
And walk you down that aisle, with smiles so very bright. . . .
But, remember this my child each morning as you awake. . . .
I pray to you. . . . that this to all of your souls to so take. . . .
That the greatest day of their short lives, was but that one when you arrived!
And The Greatest Wish, all in their hearts. . . . that they so prayed for and so cried. . . .
Was that you would all so grow up to have but the greatest of all lives. . . .
So when you wake in the middle of the night, all in your tears of fright. . . .
Missing all of your loved ones, that which you now so wish to hold onto tight. . . .
Remember this, your Mothers. . . . your Fathers, are but Angels now in flight. . . .
And this morning when you awoke, could you but not feel their arms around you so close. . . .
As now they watch over you every moment, and hour. . . .
Listen for them on the wind, for you will hear them now. . . .
And yes they will be with you as you walk down that aisle. . . .
And see you graduate, as up in Heaven they wear their smiles. . . .
Take heart, because part of them is now part of you!
For The Best Part of Them, all in your fine hearts beats inside of you. . . .
So now you must find the same such courage, as once they had so too!
To march on, as we watch you all grow up. . . . as we see your parents faces all in you. . . .
So, ever remember this my child. . . .
The Best Part of Them, is now part of you. . . .
As their fine hearts so beat so all inside of you so true!
So now you know what you must do!
Lift up your heads, and make all of their wishes so come true!
Find The Strength, all with what their fine hearts so meant that which beat so all inside of you!
And one day up in Heaven, you'll will once again all be together so too!
Because, The Best Part of Them. . . . Is what is inside of You!
Amen. . . .