

Through the years as a community servant, Mayor Jones has served as Chairman of Diversified March of Dimes, Chairman and Member of the Board of Directors of Coahoma Opportunities, Inc., President of Third District Teachers Association and North Delta Uniserv-MAE, and Representative of the Board Scouts of America. He is also affiliated with NAACP; Tri-County Workforce Alliance Board of Directors, Mississippi Delta Council for Farm Workers, Inc., local, state and national education associations, the Mississippi Conference of Black Mayors, the National Conference of Black Mayors, the Mississippi Municipal League, and the Mississippi Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials.

Despite his many achievements, affiliations and recognition, Mayor Jones' focus remains the town of Coahoma. He is currently working on a drainage and street improvement project with federal and state support. He believes that the largest room in the world is the room of improvement and is continuously seeking ways and funds to improve the quality of life for his citizens in all areas—educationally, economically and socially.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mayor W.J. Jones for his dedication to serving others.

ACCURACY IN MEDICARE PHYSICIAN PAYMENT ACT OF 2013

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Accuracy in Medicare Physician Payment Act of 2013. This bill will give the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) important tools and resources to continue alleviating our dire shortage of primary care physicians. As Congress tries to come together around the challenges of how to repeal and replace the broken Sustainable Growth Rate formula, I want to make sure that we do not neglect the Medicare physician fee schedule and the impact it has on our physician workforce.

It is no mystery that relatively depressed salaries are driving new doctors away from primary-care fields like family medicine and pediatrics and into more lucrative specialties and subspecialties like radiology and orthopedic surgery. I don't begrudge anyone for making that choice; when I graduated from medical school 50 years ago I could not have fathomed being loaded down with six figures of medical school debt. And to be sure, we need talented specialists. But we have a stubbornly small proportion of primary care doctors—just over 30 percent, when most experts agree that 50 percent is the “sweet spot” in terms of maximizing quality and minimizing cost.

I am proud that Congress gave primary care a shot in the arm in the Affordable Care Act, under which Medicaid pays higher Medicare rates for primary care through 2015, and Medicare makes quarterly incentive payments to primary care physicians through 2017. The ACA also expanded the National Health Service Corps, which eases the steep cost of medical education for doctors and allied health practitioners willing to practice in an under-

served area after graduation. These are meaningful steps, but to make more enduring progress in this area, I believe that Medicare must repair structural inaccuracies in the Medicare physician fee schedule that have eroded the value of primary care. Simply put, Medicare contributes to this imbalance by underpaying for the critical yet undervalued job of managing complex patients with multiple chronic conditions and keeping them out of the emergency room and hospital.

A major obstacle to reform is Medicare's continued reliance on a committee of mostly specialist physicians to help set payment rates for the 7,400 services on the Medicare physician fee schedule. Since 1991, Medicare has outsourced its work of appraising the value of these services to the AMA's Relative Value Scale Update Committee (RUC)—a 31-member panel of physicians who decide how services should be valued and updated. Only a handful of the 31 committee members perform primary care. The RUC meets in private and provides limited release of the minutes of its proceedings. In formulating its recommendations, the RUC also relies heavily on anecdotal and self-serving surveys, rather than forensic evidence.

CMS has begun to update misvalued codes in the fee schedule, but it needs more muscle and resources to do the job. This bill would establish a panel of independent experts within CMS that would identify the distortions in the fee schedule and develop evidence to justify more accurate updates. Medicare could continue to request work from the RUC, but the expert panel would both initiate such requests and review RUC's work product. The panel members would not have a direct interest in the fee schedule, and would include beneficiary representatives. It would be subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, which requires advisory bodies to hold open meetings and publish the minutes of such meetings.

In addition to payment accuracy and fairness, this is also about reining in a conflict of interest. After looking at this for several years I believe that we give the physician specialty societies, through the RUC, an undue influence on their own payments. In no other area—whether it be hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, or any other setting—does Medicare ask the providers to play such an active role in setting their own reimbursement amounts. Medicare certainly needs clinical expertise to evaluate the resources necessary to perform physician services but should not look to an outside organization whose members directly benefit from the fee schedule to apportion some \$70 billion in annual public spending, without some checks and balances. No matter how well-intentioned, such a system contains structural biases that need safeguards to prevent abuse.

Medicare is not only one of America's most important social insurance programs and a bulwark of the middle class, it also establishes economic incentives that ripple through all of health care and contribute to our shortage of primary care physicians. As we continue to pursue a permanent doc fix, let's also talk about how we will use Medicare to incentivize the appropriate mix of physicians in the workforce to serve beneficiaries and the public health.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained in my district and missed the votes on Tuesday, June 25, 2013 and Wednesday, June 26, 2013.

Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on rollcall No. 287, H.R. 2383—To designate the new Interstate Route 70 bridge over the Mississippi River connecting St. Louis, Missouri, and southwestern Illinois as the “Stan Musial Veterans Memorial Bridge”;

“Yea” on rollcall No. 288, H.R. 1092—To designate the air route traffic control center located in Nashua, New Hampshire, as the “Patricia Clark Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center”;

“No” on rollcall No. 289, Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 1613, H.R. 2231, and H.R. 2410—Democrats are urged to vote no on the Previous Question so that Mr. HASTINGS of Florida can offer his amendment to the Rule, which allows for Mr. COURTNEY of Connecticut's bill, H.R. 1595—Student Loan Relief Act of 2013, to be considered under an open Rule. H.R. 1595 would amend the Higher Education Act of 1965, extending the freeze on subsidized student loan interest rates for two years, which would prevent rates from doubling from 3.4% to 6.8% on July 1. Immediate action is necessary to protect college students and families, given the short time remaining before rates double. Republicans should not allow the House to go into its 8th full week of recess this year without addressing this critical issue with a bipartisan solution that can become law; and

“No” on rollcall No. 290, H. Res. 274—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 1613—Outer Continental Shelf Transboundary Hydrocarbon Agreements Authorization Act, H.R. 2231—Offshore Energy and Jobs Act, and H.R. 2410—Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2014.

HONORING AURELIO HURTADO OF ST. HELENA, CALIFORNIA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Aurelio Hurtado of St. Helena, California, on the occasion of his retirement as the Director of the Farmworker Services Program for California Human Development, after 45 years of advocacy work.

Mr. Hurtado left his small town of Jerez, Mexico in 1955 to work in the agricultural fields of Texas and New Mexico. When he moved to Northern California to work in the vineyards of St. Helena, Mr. Hurtado fell in love with the region and decided to make it his home. It was a conference with farmworker advocate Cesar Chavez that pushed Mr. Hurtado to dedicate his life to improving educational, social, and economic aspects of the Napa Valley community.

In 1967, Mr. Hurtado was one of the founders of the North Bay Human Development Corporation, currently known as California Human Development Corporation, whose core services include job training, affordable housing, criminal justice services, community services and training, and community integration for individuals with disabilities. In 1968, he became the Director of the On the Job Training and Adult Work Experience Programs where he served migrant and seasonal farmworker families in Napa, Sonoma, and Solano Counties. In 1982, he joined the Farmworker Services Division as a Deputy Director, advocating on behalf of Northern California farmworkers' rights.

Mr. Hurtado is an integral member of our community and has worked diligently toward its improvement. He formed and was involved in several community organizations including Organización Latinoamericana de Liberación Económica of Napa County, Credit Union "El Porvenir" of Napa County, Community Health Clinic Ole and Bronce Development Corporation. He has also worked with the Comité Mexicano de Beneficencia, Legal Aid of Napa Valley, the Napa Valley Migrant Farmworker Housing Committee, and the Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, among others.

Mr. Hurtado received his degrees in Accounting and Business Administration in Mexico. He has shared the majority of his life with his wife, Mrs. Rogelia M. Hurtado.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we acknowledge Mr. Hurtado for his extraordinary work as a lifelong community organizer who works to bring equity to the lives of Latinos throughout the Napa Valley.

HONORING ELAINE BAKER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable Civil Rights leader Dr. Elaine Baker. Dr. Baker is a resident of Mound Bayou, Mississippi.

She is the only child to the late Joseph and Louise Marjorie Baker. She was born on June 30, 1949 in the historical independent black community of Mound Bayou, Mississippi, which was founded in 1887 by former slaves led by Isaiah Montgomery. Growing up in this community she was nurtured by a community of proud, loving and generous elders and peers and teachers.

She was influenced by a socio-cultural environment in Mound Bayou that had great expectations and surrounding communities that communicated messages of dual citizenship for people who looked like her. For example, the separate waiting room in the doctor's office in Merigold in stark contrast to the openness of Friendship Clinic in Mound Bayou. The "colored only" water fountains in Cleveland spoke a deafening sound of discrimination. And the "colored only" bathrooms in Clarksdale, which reinforced that something was not right.

The violent death of Emmett Till, as memorialized in the Jet magazine photo story remains indelibly etched in the forefront of her reality that danger could be lurking anywhere for people who looked like her. The news stories

about bombings and lynchings and murders and arrests that Jet, Ebony and other Afro-American news media carried either in print or through audio media brought home the chilling messages of "less than" and "more than" solely, it seemed, based on skin color. These incidents and family discussions let her know that she could not sit back and not become an advocate for change.

The importance of education was always at the forefront of discussions in her home. Her grandmother, with an elementary education reminded her to get an education. She told her with an education it will matter how you look or what you have or don't have, you'll know." Her mother, a 1944 graduate of Bolivar County Training School, was an avid reader and teacher. Both of these women set the reading example for her—whether it was the Bible, various news media, or other options including the catalogs. From Mound Bayou to Tougaloo College the meaning of civil rights took on very significant meanings. Those meanings led her to Brown University where she was a semester exchange student from Tougaloo to Atlanta University now known as the Whitney M. Young School of Social Work to the University of Georgia. There she was exposed to socio-economic and racial divides that urged her into action and she became part of change.

Her love of people and a desire to understand human behavior in the social environment underpinned her selected academic majors: Sociology at Tougaloo College where she was a B.A., Cum Laude graduate, earned a Master of Social Work and Public Administration Ph.D., with emphasis in Organization Development, Health Resources Administration and General Public Administration. Her involvement in community-based organizations was transformative in focus and diverse in the individuals engaged.

She knows life is the gift that keeps on giving and memories of civil engagement include Fannie Lou Hamer, Unita Blackwell, Marian Wright Edelman, and many others. She believes that what she has been gifted which is not hers to keep. She is truly an advocate for change.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Elaine Baker for her dedication to civil rights.

HONORING REGINALD MAYO, PH.D. ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with my heartfelt thanks and appreciation that I rise today to recognize an outstanding member of our community and my good friend, Dr. Reginald Mayo, Superintendent of Schools as he celebrates his retirement from the New Haven Public School system. In a career that has spanned 46 years, Reggie has dedicated a lifetime to education, quietly touching the lives of thousands by providing our young people with a strong foundation on which to build their future success.

Reggie Mayo has devoted most of his professional career to the New Haven Public

School system. He began as a science teacher at Troup Middle School in 1967 and rose through the ranks serving as Assistant Principal of Troup and then Principal of Jackie Robinson Middle School. He was promoted to K-8 Director of Schools and later Executive Director of School Operations until his appointment as Superintendent in 1992. During his tenure, Reggie earned a distinguished reputation for his commitment and vision.

As superintendent, Reggie has steadily guided the District to set new standards in education. One of his earliest accomplishments was making New Haven the first school district in Connecticut to effectively end the practice of social promotion. As the State was rocked by the school desegregation case *Sheff v. O'Neill*, Reggie quietly and effectively built the largest interdistrict magnet program in Connecticut—with 1,300 suburban students enrolled it is a model program of urban-suburban exchange. Partnering with the city's mayor, John DeStefano, Reggie undertook a master plan which included the renovation or reconstruction of every school—every school—in the district. And in what will likely come to be known as his crowning achievement as superintendent, in 2010 Reggie, in cooperation with the Board of Education, teachers unions, and the city administration, launched what has become a nationally recognized school reform plan. This outstanding initiative, collaboratively built by administrators and educators, involves evaluating schools and teachers as well as intervening and implementing improvement plans in poor-performing schools.

Over the course of the last two decades, Reggie Mayo, along with Mayor John DeStefano, has transformed the educational environment in New Haven. Schools have been rebuilt, outfitted with the latest in technology and resources, curriculum has been rewritten, graduation rates have risen dramatically while drop-out rates dropped significantly, and real education reform has been launched. His is a remarkable legacy that will continue to inspire learning and nurture creativity for many years to come.

I would be remiss if I did not extend a personal note of thanks to Reggie for his many years of friendship and support. During my tenure in Congress and before, I have had many opportunities to work with him and am always inspired by his unwavering energy and commitment. His presence in the New Haven Public School system will most certainly be missed, however, I have no doubt that he will continue to serve our community and enrich the lives of others.

For his invaluable service to our city—but most importantly our children—I am proud to stand today and join the many family, friends, and colleagues who have gathered in extending my deepest thanks and sincere congratulations to Dr. Reginald Mayo. His vision, leadership, and contributions have changed the face of education in New Haven and made all the difference in the lives of our young people. We owe him a great debt of gratitude for the indelible mark that he has left on our community. I wish him, his wife, Patsy; their children, Reggie, Jr., Shawn, and Lisa, and his grandchildren, Reginald III, Ryland, Riece, and Shawn Jr., all the best for many more years of health and happiness.