

the Black Lung Benefits Act. Compounding this problem were furloughs resulting from sequestration and the 16-day shutdown of the federal government during calendar year 2013. Due to the imbalance between resources and caseloads, it currently takes 429 days to assign a case to an administrative law judge, and claims remain unresolved for an average of 42 months prior to a decision, according to Department of Labor data. These delays directly and severely impact the lives of workers throughout the United States, placing an undue financial and emotional burden on the affected individuals and their families.

To resolve this issue, the legislation directs the Department of Labor to develop a plan to eliminate the backlog and eliminate delays.

Ninth, continued studies of the Mine Safety and Health Administration's recently adopted rules are needed to prevent future cases of black lung disease. Black lung disease has been the underlying or contributing cause of death of more than 76,000 miners since 1968. After decades of decline, the incidence of coal miners with black lung disease is on the rise. According to NIOSH, miners are developing advanced cases of the disease at younger ages. In response, the Mine Safety and Health Administration in the Department of Labor has taken important steps to combat the disease, including the promulgation of a rule in 2014 that reduces the allowed concentration of coal dust and eliminates weaknesses in the current dust sampling system.

To ensure that these reforms are sufficient to stem the scourge of black lung disease, this legislation requires continuing retrospective studies.

In total, the Black Lung Benefits Improvement Act of 2014 will restore a measure of justice to thousands of coal miners who have long toiled to provide the energy that powers our nation's homes, farms, and factories.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF AMERICAN SAMOA'S COMMEMORATIVE QUARTER

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 20, 2014

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to include, for historical purposes, information about American Samoa's Commemorative Quarter.

[Press Release, Mar. 25, 2004]

HOUSE PASSES BILL TO PROVIDE AMERICAN SAMOA WITH A COMMEMORATIVE QUARTER

Congressman Faleomavaega announced today that by a vote of 411 to 14 the House overwhelmingly passed H.R. 2993, a bill to provide for a circulating quarter dollar coin program to commemorate American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

In general, this legislation would amend the popular 50 States Commemorative Coin Program Act to include 6 new designs emblematic of the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands. Designs on the reverse side of each quarter dollar issued during 2009 will be selected by the Secretary of Treasury in consultation with the chief executive officers of these areas, Congressman Faleomavaega said.

All five delegates are and were original co-sponsors of this bi-partisan measure. This measure was first introduced in the 106th Congress and passed overwhelmingly in the House by a vote of 377-6. Unfortunately, the 106th Congress ended before the Senate was able to consider our bill. During the 107th Congress, identical legislation (H.R. 4005) passed the House and was received in the Senate in October of 2002. Once again, the Senate was unable to consider this matter before the 107th Congress adjourned.

Now, we have introduced H.R. 2993 and we are hopeful that the House and Senate will pass this legislation before the 108th Congress adjourns. At this time, I want to thank Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton for her leadership and I also want to thank the other Delegates who have also worked tirelessly to ensure that this legislation is considered, Congressman Faleomavaega said.

It is only fitting for Congress to acknowledge the Territories relationship with the United States. Speaking on behalf of American Samoa, we have a long and proud history of supporting the United States. The traditional leaders of the islands of Tutuila and Aunuu ceded our islands to the United States in 1900. Four years later, the King of Manua and his chiefs ceded the Manua Islands.

In the early part of the century, the port village of Pago Pago was used as a coaling station for U.S. naval ships. During WWII, it was used as a support base for U.S. soldiers. To this day, American Samoa serves as a refueling point for U.S. naval ships and military aircraft.

American Samoa also has a per capita enlistment rate in the U.S. military which is as high as any State or U.S. Territory. Our sons and daughters have served in record numbers in every U.S. military engagement from WWII to present operations in Iraq. We have stood by the United States in good times and bad and I believe this relationship should be acknowledged with the issuance of a commemorative coin.

H.R. 2993 affords us an opportunity to recognize the special contributions that American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Northern Marianas and the District of Columbia have made to the history of our Nation. I thank my colleagues for voting in favor of this legislation and I urge the Senate to also support our cause, the Congressman concluded.

[Press Release, Oct. 4, 2005]

QUARTER DOLLAR BILL COMMEMORATING AMERICAN SAMOA AND OTHER TERRITORIES REINTRODUCED

Congressman Faleomavaega announced today that the Territorial Delegates have joined with Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton to reintroduce a bill that will grant circulating quarter dollars to commemorate American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the Northern Mariana Islands.

Essentially, this legislation will amend the popular 50 States Commemorative Coin Program Act to include six new designs representative of the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the Northern Mariana Islands. The coins will be issued in 2009 and their respective designs will be issued by the Secretary of Treasury in consultation with the chief executive officers of these areas, Congressman Faleomavaega said.

All five of the delegates are and were original co-sponsors to this bi-partisan measure. The measure was originally introduced in the 106th, 107th and 108th Congresses and easily passed through the House on each occasion. But, in each instance, the Senate was

unable to take up the matter before Congress adjourned.

Pleased by the support we have seen for this legislation by the House, we have introduced H.R. 3885 and are hopeful that the House and Senate will pass this legislation before the 109th Congress adjourns, Faleomavaega said. H.R. 3885 is an appropriate way for Congress to acknowledge the historic relationship between the Territories and the United States. American Samoa has a long record of supporting the United States, specifically in relation to military service. American Samoa has an enlistment rate which is as high per capita to that of any other State of U.S. Territory. Our sons and daughters have served proudly in every U.S. military engagement from WWII to the current operations in Iraq. Our territory has also served the U.S. military as a fueling station for naval ships and military aircraft and in WWII it served as a support base for U.S. soldiers.

At this time, I would like to thank my colleagues for their commitment to this effort. I especially want to thank Congresswoman Norton for her leadership. Together, we remain hopeful that Congress will take this opportunity to recognize the contributions that the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the Northern Marianas have made to our Nation and, together, we urge Congress to support our cause, Congressman Faleomavaega concluded.

[Press Release, Jul. 27, 2009]

FALEOMAVAEGA ANNOUNCES RELEASE OF AMERICAN SAMOA QUARTER

Congressman Faleomavaega announced today that American Samoa's commemorative quarter has been released today by the U.S. Mint to the Federal Reserve banks.

"This quarter has been 9 years in the making and came about as a result of federal legislation the Congressional Delegates sponsored and cosponsored since 2000," Faleomavaega said.

"Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton of the District of Columbia championed the cause, and Congressman Jose Serrano of New York included our last bill in the 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act."

"After cosponsoring H.R. 5010, H.R. 4005, H.R. 2993, H.R. 3883 and H.R. 392 from the 106th Congress to the 110th, Congress finally passed our legislation into law, and my colleagues and I who represent the Territories and the District of Columbia are pleased by the outcome."

"As part of the legislation, we wanted to make sure our local Governors could also participate in this historic process so we made sure our legislation was modeled after the 50 State Quarters Program which included a provision to allow our local governments to design our quarters. I especially commend Governor Togiola and his administration for the work they did in designing American Samoa's quarter."

"While the U.S. Mint and my office had scheduled an unveiling ceremony in Washington this morning to coincide with today's release of American Samoa's quarter, Governor Togiola has requested to be part of this Congressional ceremony and, as a courtesy to him, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the Secretary of Samoan Affairs, and the First Lady who are traveling with the Governor, I have agreed to postpone the Congressional ceremony until Wednesday of this week since Governor Togiola had to cancel the local ceremony he had arranged with the U.S. Mint due to his decision to come to Washington DC this week. The Governor's event with the U.S. Mint was scheduled to be held in American

Samoa on July 29 but, according to the U.S. Mint, the Governor has now rescheduled American Samoa's local ceremony for sometime in September."

"Since the coin was officially released today and because we want the people of American Samoa to be able to celebrate and share in this important moment, the U.S. Mint and my office will issue another statement with photos after we unveil the quarter in Washington this Wednesday," Faleomavaega concluded.

HONORING JUDGE MONICA
DRINANE

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 20, 2014

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and admiration that I stand before you today to celebrate the Honorable Monica

Drinane, and her many years of selfless and compassionate public service.

Judge Drinane has been an exemplary contributor to the Bronx community, and has served as a mentor, leader to countless professionals, and fierce advocate for children and families across the New York City. Her career in legal services and community service has been a testament to the importance of selfless devotion.

While Monica Drinane's accomplishments over the course of her legal career speak to the distinguished nature of her work, what is clearest about her time as a public servant is her relentless commitment to the people of New York.

The Honorable Monica Drinane's last ten years working in Bronx Family Court, where she has been supervising judge since 2007, the six years she spent with the Legal Aid Society as the Attorney-In-Charge of the Juvenile Rights Division, and the countless other juvenile rights positions she has held speak to her unwavering commitment to some of our com-

munity's most vulnerable individuals. Monica Drinane has consistently distinguished herself as advocate in our community who speaks for those who may not always be heard, and who works to ensure that as a society we work to protect our youth and families.

Today, Monica Drinane continues to serve on the board of the NYPD Reengineering Initiative, School to Prison Pipeline, and the Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children. As she prepares for retirement, I wish to express sincere gratitude to the Honorable Monica Drinane for all of her work in The Bronx and throughout New York City, and to thank her for leaving our community a better place.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring the Honorable Monica Drinane for her remarkable dedication to public service and longstanding commitment to improving the quality of life for countless families in New York City.