the 5th district of Connecticut which I represent.

The 11th day of the 11th month originally was known as Armistice Day, commemorating the signing of the Armistice ending World War I. The 1958 law changed one word, Armistice to Veterans' day, and created a day for our Nation to honor all it's veterans. Also on Veterans' Day in 1958, two unidentified soldiers, one killed in Korea and one killed in World War II were brought to Arlington Cemetery and interred at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Although the name of this day has changed, the central purpose has remained consistent, the 11th day of the 11th month remains a day to honor those who have served their country on the battle fields of Europe, Korea, South East Asia, in the Persian Gulf, and in many other locations around the world. But this is not only a day to remember those who did not return. This is also a day to reaffirm our commitment to the men and women who served and returned, and to the sons and daughters, wives and husbands of those who were left behind, whether for a while or forever.

We must commit ourselves to provide our veterans with full access to the best medical care available; we must ensure that the survivors of American veterans always have adequate provision for their needs; and we must commit ourselves to bringing home those soldiers who have not yet returned from the battlefield.

Mr. Speaker, we can never forget the sacrifices our veterans have made so that we may live in peace today. And this, Mr. Speaker, is what President Eisenhower was referring to when he called for Americans everywhere to rededicate themselves to the cause of peace on this, the 11th day of the 11th month. We need to rededicate ourselves to the peace which these brave Americans have fought to secure and defend.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 5th congressional district, the State of Connecticut, and Americans everywhere, I thank the veterans for their service, dedication and loyalty to our country.

PRESERVING PATIENT ACCESS TO METERED DOSE INHALERS

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, November 8, 1997

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, when most of us think about the Food and Drug Administration [FDA], we envision an agency that works diligently to expand the universe of safe and effective medications. So when I discovered that the FDA was actually proposing to reduce the number of proven medicines available to treat asthma and cystic fibrosis patients, I knew Congress had to act on behalf of patients. As a legislator representing thousands of asthma patients, and as a father of two daughters with asthma, I am appalled that FDA might ban proven medicines patients need to survive.

As a result of these efforts by the FDA, today I am introducing legislation that will preserve access to metered dose inhalers [MDIs] for those patients suffering from respiratory conditions—particularly children suffering from asthma and cystic fibrosis. This bill will ensure that those who rely upon MDI's to breathe, will not be denied access to their lifeline by an overzealous FDA. Joining me in this effort is my good friend Florida, Representative CLIFF STEARNS. Together, Mr. STEARNS—who is the author of H.R. 2221—and I have worked together in an effort to change the FDA's misguided policy.

On March 6, 1997, the FDA initiated the first stage of a plan to phase-out the use of chlorofluorocarbons [CFC's] metered-dose inhalers [MDI's], which are used by asthma and cystic fibrosis patients to breathe. This action was taken ostensibly to protect the ozone layer, despite the fact that less than 1 percent of all ozone-depleting substances in the atmosphere are caused by metered-dose inhalers.

In fact, the amount of CFC's that the EPA allows to be released from automobile air conditioners over 1 year is about the same as 14 years of metered-dose inhaler emissions. If you combined all sources of CFC's allowed by the EPA in 1 year, it would equal 64 years of MDI emissions. And yet the only CFC products targeted for elimination this year are inhalers.

It is also interesting to note that while the FDA and EPA are rushing to eliminate CFC inhalers, they continue to allow the use of a variety of CFC products, including bear-repellent pepper sprays, document preservation sprays, and certain fire extinguishers. This is clearly a case of misplaced priorities—how can historical document sprays be considered more essential than products that protect our children's lives? And while American children and senior citizens will have their treatment regimens disrupted by the FDA's plan, nations like China and Indonesia will be pumping tons of CFC's into the atmosphere from hair sprays and air conditioners until the year 2010.

Not surprisingly, the FDA's plan has generated a firestorm of opposition from patients, respiratory therapists, and physicians: nearly 10,000 letters in opposition have been received to date by the FDA. A coalition of stakeholder organizations reviewed the FDA proposal in May and concluded that the FDA's approach banning therapeutic classes was flawed and must be re-evaluated. The patient and provider organizations also stated that the FDA plan ''has the potential to disrupt therapeutic regimens * * * and limit physician treatment options.''

It is important to institute a transition strategy that will eventually eliminate the use of CFC's. However, the FDA's proposal is deeply flawed and should be scrapped in favor of a plan that puts patients—not international bureaucrats—first.

To ensure that the interests of patients are upheld throughout the formation of our country's MDI transition strategy, this legislation will temporarily suspend the FDA's proposed framework until a new proposal can be crafted. In addition, this bill would require the FDA to consult with patients, physicians, manufacturers of MDI's and other stakeholders prior to issuing any subsequent proposal. In addition, my legislation requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to certify to Congress that any alternatives to existing MDI's will be available to all populations of users of such inhalers, are comparable in terms of safety and effectiveness, therapeutic indications, dosage strength, cost, and retail availability.

Mr. Speaker, this past week we held a press conference in an effort to educate the public and media about the dangers of the FDA's proposal. Participating in this press conference was Tommy Farese, who is 9 years old, and lives in Spring Lake, NJ, and has had asthma since the age of 2. One of the asthma inhalers Tommy uses to breathe—Proventil—would be eliminated under the FDA plan in favor of a non-CFC version that has not been approved by the FDA for use by children. Unless the FDA's proposal is changed, Tommy could lose access to the medicine he needs to breathe and live. Why should Tommy, and 5 million children like him have to face this dilemma?

In my view, any plan to remove safe and effective medications from the marketplace needs to place the interests of children like Tommy Farese first and foremost. Sadly, the FDA plan fails in this regard. Indeed, the FDA plan presumes that CFC-free inhalers serve all patient subpopulations—such as children and the elderly—equally well, despite the fact that children have special needs and many drug therapies are not interchangeable.

Therefore, I call upon the FDA to stop their proposed ban of asthma inhalers. If the FDA insists on moving forward with their antipatient plan, I call upon my colleagues to support and pass the Smith-Stearns bill to allow asthma patients like Tommy Farese retain access to their medicine.

HONORING PIETRO PARRAVANO, ''HIGHLINER OF THE YEAR''

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, November 8, 1997

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Pietro Parravano, who has recently been named the ''Highliner of the Year,'' the Nation's most respected fishing award. Pietro Parravano has devoted his career to the creation of sustainable fisheries and to the betterment of the lives of fisher men and women. He is a dedicated public servant, currently serving on the San Mateo County Harbor Commission, as a member of the Local Fisheries Impact Program, on the California Seafood Council, and as president of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman's Associations. Pietro Parravano has been a goodwill ambassador for the fishing fleet, and will soon travel to New Delhi, India to represent the United States at the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers.

Pietro Parravano is an exceptional man, and I ask that we honor him in the House of Representatives on the eve of this most auspicious occasion.

COMMUNITY RECREATION AND CONSERVATION ENDOWMENT ACT

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, November 8, 1997

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, the land and water conservation fund [LWCF] was established in 1964 to increase recreational opportunities. It does this by using money, collected

mainly from oil and gas leases, to purchase Federal lands and to give matching grants to State and local governments for the development of parks and open spaces. While this fund continues to be used for Federal land purchases, very little money has been given to States to assist their efforts in preserving natural areas.

That is why I have introduced the Community Recreation and Conservation Endowment Act of 1997 today. This bill will provide funding for grants to State and local governments to develop, repair, and create new parks and preserve open spaces.

This bill will create a $1.6 billion permanent endowment to provide LWCF matching grants to local governments. Interest from that account will help provide funding for parks, campgrounds, trails, and recreation facilities for millions of Americans.

Where does this money come from? On June 19, 1997, the Supreme Court ruled that the Federal Government retains title to lands underlying tidal waters off Alaska's North Slope. As a result, the Government will receive $1.6 billion in escrowed oil and gas lease revenues.

When the land and water conservation fund was established the Federal Government promised to assist State and local governments with preserving natural areas. This legislation will make sure that the Federal Government follows through on that promise. In addition, this bill will ensure that each State receives its fair share of these funds by providing a more balanced distribution of this money between the States.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort which will help preserve natural areas all across this country.

TRIBUTE TO EDDIE ROBINSON

HON. JOHN COOKSEY

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, November 8, 1997

Mr. COOKSEY. Mr. Speaker, we all use the term ''One of a Kind'' but there are actually few men who are truly one of a kind. But there is a ''One of a Kind Man'' down in Louisiana and he's in my district. His name is Eddie Robinson. Why is he one of a kind? Well, for starters, he has had more than 100 of his players drafted by the National Football League. His school's stadium is named in his honor. No other football coach has ever coached for 54 seasons at the same college. And only one other man ever coached college football for that many years—period. Nobody else has won 17 Southwestern Athletic Conference championships. Nobody else has won so many ''Coach of the Year'' awards that they named the national trophy in his honor. In 1942, his Grambling State team held all nine of its opponents scoreless. It was only the second time that had ever been done and it has never been accomplished again. And nobody else has ever won 405 college football games. But the main reason I am here to praise Eddie Robinson today is that not only is he a great football coach but he is a good man. He has always appealed to the best in his players and his fans. He is an example of so many of the good things that we hold dear—loyalty, family, hard work, God, and country. So I want to pay tribute right now to a truly great American and a man who is truly one of a kind—Coach Eddie Robinson of Grambling State University.

BUDGET SURPLUSES BELONG TO WORKING AMERICANS

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, November 8, 1997

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, by the end of this fiscal year, the Federal Government could run its first budget surplus in nearly three decades. This is certainly good news. For the past 30 years, deficit spending caused interest rates to be higher than they would otherwise have been, which in turn suppressed economic growth and reduced the living standards of American families. If not managed correctly, however, I am concerned that short-term budget surpluses could actually undermine the progress that Congress has made in recent years in controlling the growth of Government spending and reducing Government interference in the economy.

With Government revenues still growing faster than the rate of economic growth, and without the economic and political consequences of having to raise taxes or expand the Federal debt to pay for new spending, continued efforts to restrain the growth of Government in the face of a budget surplus will likely crumble. Already, there is pressure to spend unrealized surpluses on Washington-run programs that are no accountable for results. That's exactly what happened in the late-1960's and 1970's, when inflation-driven growth created a surge in tax revenues, which increased the Government's appetite for new spending, which in turn led to the deficits of the 1980's and early 1990's.

To deal with this potential problem, two of our Republican colleagues have proposed setting up trust funds to apply projected budget surpluses to debt reduction and tax cuts. These are certainly important priorities. According to a recent Gallop poll, 41 percent of Americans want Government surpluses to go to reducing the national debt, while 42 percent prefer tax cuts. But both proposals still require taxpayers to send their hard-earned money to a Washington bureaucracy that doesn't need it, and the distribution of those funds would be based on political incentives rather than economic incentives.

Today, my colleague from Louisiana Representative WILLIAM JEFFERSON, and I have introduced the first bipartisan bill which attempts to address the concerns about budgetary choices that Congress may make in an era of budget surplus. H.R. 2933, the Working Americans Gainful Employment [WAGE] Act, creates a permanent mechanism to impose consequences on Congress for any effort to spend a Federal surplus. It requires the Secretary of the Treasury to reduce the Social Security payroll tax rate prior to each calendar year by an amount equal to the Federal budget surplus for the fiscal year ending during the preceding calendar year. It defines ''federal budget surplus'' as the amount by which total Federal revenues exceed total Federal budget outlays—unified budget. It also stipulates that any reductions in Social Security payroll tax rates do not affect revenues that would otherwise be deposited into the trust fund.

The WAGE Act will provide desperately needed relief from a regressive tax on employment. Federal payroll taxes, paid in equal parts by employers and employees, are currently assessed at a rate of 15.3 percent of payroll beginning at the first dollar of an employee's earnings. These taxes, while necessary to finance Social Security and Medicare hospital benefits, impose a tremendous financial burden on working Americans, particularly low- and moderate-income workers. Counting the employer portion of these taxes, which are indirectly borne by employees in the form of lower wages and benefits, approximately 75 percent of American workers pay more in Federal payroll taxes than in Federal income taxes.

The WAGE Act will also promote economic growth through tax rate cuts. Although the payroll tax rate reductions would not be permanent—unless the budget surpluses are permanent—businesses will know in advance what the rate will be for the coming year, and will plan investment and hiring decisions accordingly. Since payroll taxes paid by employers result in reduced employee compensation, any long-term reduction will be funneled back into higher wages and additional jobs. A payroll tax rate reduction will also encourage more small business start-ups because such firms must pay payroll taxes even if a profit is not made.

Payroll tax rate reductions would come from after-the-fact surpluses, not estimated surpluses. The WAGE Act, therefore, would not undermine future efforts to allocate projected budget surpluses to other important priorities, such as tax reform or entitlement reform. If Congress enacts legislation allocating future estimated surplus for other priorities, there is likely to be little if any after-the-fact surplus to apply to payroll tax rate reductions. This is the key incentive that is missing from those proposals which seek to wall off future surpluses for reducing taxes of the Federal debt. The WAGE Act creates a benchmark by which other proposals to allocate future surpluses will be measured. If Congress attempts to apply projected surpluses to new spending or to tax cut efforts, those efforts would come at the expense of a payroll tax cut for working Americans.

And for those who are concerned that payroll tax cuts could undermine revenues flowing into the Social Security trust fund, the WAGE Act explicitly states that deposits into the trust fund will continue to be based on the current statutory rate of 12.4 percent of wages. In other words, the Social Security and Medicare trust funds will be totally unaffected by this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, dedicating future budget surpluses to Federal payroll tax cuts will lock in fiscal restraint while providing dividends to low- and middle-income workers who pay the bulk of those taxes. Our legislation accomplishes both of these objectives in a bipartisan way, and I urge my colleagues to join us as cosponsors of this bill.