

The University of Guam collaborates in the Sea Grant Program through the University of Hawaii. However, the people of Guam look forward to a separate Sea Grant status. The Marine Laboratory in the University of Guam has evolved into an important marine research center serving not only Guam, but the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau. Guam has the support of the Office of Insular Affairs in the Department of Interior in this issue.

Clearly the National Sea Grant Program is essential not only to our understanding and utilization of our marine resources, but for our economy, our environment and our students. I urge my colleagues to support its reauthorization.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House, today, to express my support for S. 927, a bill to reauthorize the National Sea Grant College Program through FY 2003.

Established by Congress in 1966, the National Sea Grant College Program has fostered the wise use, conservation, and management of marine and coastal resources through practical research, graduate student education, and public service.

I am proud that the University of Delaware has been a part of Sea Grant since 1976 when it became the 9th institution to join. In particular, the University of Delaware's program conducts research in environmental studies, fisheries, marine biotechnology, marine policy, seafood science, and coastal engineering.

Graduates from its program have gone on to make impressive contributions at the National Academy of Sciences, the National Marine Fisheries Service, Boston University School of Medicine, the U.S. State Department, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, and a host of cutting-edge corporations.

The National Sea Grant College Program is much more than a research institution. Its staff reaches out to business owners, schoolteachers, and government agencies to provide them with objective information and assistance in addressing coastal problems and developing technology that benefits all of us.

For example, the National Sea Grant College Program conducted important research on mosquito-eating fish that help curb disease-carrying mosquito populations naturally. They also developed technology both to recycle crab shells into bandages and animal feed and to harvest pollution-free energy from ocean waves.

One of the most important services the National Sea Grant College Program provides is assistance in protecting beaches, roads, buildings and wildlife along our fragile coastlines. The sea Grant Program's research is responsible for developing a novel sand bypass system that protects coastlines from beach erosion.

Unfortunately, the Clinton Administration has not followed through on the investment this country made in the National Sea Grant College Program. In Delaware, the Administration has commissioned study after study that shows the tremendous need to construct the coastal protection technologies developed by the National Sea Grant College Program, but it refuses to honor its commitment to pay its share of the construction costs. As a result, in the last two weeks, Delaware has suffered tre-

mendous damage in the wake of violent nor'easters.

Mr. Speaker, every coastal state can boast the achievements of its Sea Grant College Program and every state benefits from its work. The Senate passed this legislation by unanimous consent and the House passed similar legislation, H.R. 437, last June, by a vote of 422-3. Therefore, please join me in reauthorizing this worthy program.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support S. 927, and I am very pleased to see that we are considering it today. We began the process of reauthorizing the National Sea Grant College Program more than three years ago, and I hope we can now conclude it quickly.

Sea Grant was established in 1966 in order to improve our Nation's marine resource conservation efforts, to manage those resources more effectively, and to enhance their proper use. The program is patterned after the highly successful Land Grant College Program, which is familiar to many of our non-coastal members.

For over 30 years, Sea Grant has successfully achieved its goals through a unique combination of research grants, marine advisory services, and education. This year, Mr. Ron Dearborn, who does an excellent job as Director of the Alaska Sea Grant College Program, is serving as President of the Sea Grant Association. Alaska's Sea Grant program has improved our understanding of commercial fish stocks, the factors affecting the size and health of those stocks, and the best economic uses for fishery resources. Using this information, we have developed effective management regimes, and we continue to create more jobs while minimizing long-term impacts to our fisheries.

Alaska Sea Grant also supports a comprehensive Marine Advisory Service, which has provided industry training programs on topics ranging from marine safety and seafood technology to business management for fishermen and shoreside support facilities. Through proper training, we ensure that our industries, businesses, and individuals who depend on productive fisheries can continue to do their jobs effectively.

Sea Grant is a perfect example of the type of program that we should support. The program produces tangible results that help solve local and regional problems and, most importantly, it maximizes immediate and long-range returns by matching Federal investments with State and private funds.

The Resources and Science Committees were unable to reach agreement on reauthorizing legislation in the last Congress. In this Congress, H.R. 437, which was introduced by my colleague, Jim Saxton, and a number of other Members last year, and upon which S. 927 is based, passed the House by a vote of 422 to 3.

S. 927 is similar to H.R. 437, it enjoys widespread support, and I am confident that by voting for it now we can finally reauthorize this important program. Mr. Speaker, I urge an aye vote on S. 927.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NEY). The question is on the motion of-

ferred by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 927, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 927, the Senate bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY AND COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Republican Conference, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 354) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

S. RES. 354

Resolved, That the following Members be, and they are hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

Committee on the Judiciary: Mr. Rogan of California.

Committee on National Security: Ms. Granger of Texas.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE RONALD V. DELLUMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS of Illinois) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, last week many Members took the floor to pay tribute to Representative Ron Dellums. My schedule was such that I did not get an opportunity to do so at that time but I decided that I would come on this day so as not to miss the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, to every man there is a way, a ways and a way, the high souls take the highway, and the low souls take the low. While on the misty flats all the rest drift to and fro. To every

man there is a way, a ways and a way, and each man decideth each way his soul shall go.

Such has been the life, career and work of the Representative Ron Dellums, who has served his family, community, country and, yes, the world with elegance and distinction. He has demonstrated courage and commitment and has been loyal to those causes which he deemed to be just. Ron has been an ambassador of democracy and a serious promoter of peace, recognizing and realizing the difficulty of its attainment.

One of my colleagues recently said of Ron Dellums that he has made a difference. I agree with that assessment and go a step further. I say not only has Ron made a difference but he is different. Ron marches to the beat of a different drummer. He is a thoroughbred, a long-distance runner, tough and tenacious. He is certainly one of the best. He is in a class by himself.

When describing Ron, some people like to refer to his stature. The young fellow on the block where I live says, "He is tall like pine, black like crow, talk more noise than WVON radio." Ron reminds me of the words of Sir Issac Watts when he said, "Were I so tall as to reach from poll to poll or grasp the ocean with my span; I must be measured by my soul, for the mind is the standard of the man."

Ron Dellums. What a mind, what a man. A creative, piercing, probing, incisive, thought-provoking, inspiring, charismatic, careful, considerate and deliberative mind. The mind to stand up when others sit down. The mind to act when others refuse to act. The mind to stand even when you stand alone, battered, bruised and scorned, but still standing. Standing on principle, standing tall and standing for the people.

And so, Ron, as you leave to look after the needs of your family and pursue other endeavors, take with you the words of this Irish proverb, "May the roads rise up to meet you, may the wind always be at your back, may the sun shine warmly upon your face, and until we meet again, may the good Lord hold you in the hollow of his hand."

A Luta Continua!

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FOLEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IN SUPPORT OF MEDICARE VENIPUNCTURE SENIORS PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, first let me say that I would like to commend my colleague, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), for

his leadership on the issue of Medicare coverage for venipuncture.

Since Christmas, I have received hundreds of letters and numerous phone calls at both my home and office on home care and the health of our elderly. Most of these people calling and writing are scared. They are afraid for themselves and for their loved ones. Why are they afraid? Because the recently passed Balanced Budget Act will change their lives in a way that could be devastating.

This change in coverage under Medicare for a service known as venipuncture or, more simply, the drawing of blood, was made without even a score from the Congressional Budget Office. No hearings were held; no specific clinical examples were used. We are being told that this will not have a strong impact on the lives of those who receive this service because they can qualify in some other way for venipuncture services.

But what if they cannot? What if even a handful cannot get the services they need anymore? People could die. People could actually die if we are not sure about the impact of this change which became effective last week. In the court system in this country the jury must have evidence that can leave no reasonable doubt of guilt to make a decision. How can we sentence our seniors to this harsh change if we do not have assurance that they will be protected from harm?

For this reason I have introduced H.R. 3137, the Medicare Venipuncture Seniors Protection Act, which will delay the implementation of this legislation for 18 months, giving us more time to study the impact of this change in coverage on our elderly and frail. This bill will also request specific information from Health and Human Services on the hardships of those in rural areas and what they will endure due to the effect of this new law.

I fear that those who recommended this change were thinking more of places like New York City than rural parts of Alabama, West Virginia and Texas, where people may not be physically able to get to a doctor's office or to have their blood drawn. This small 29-word provision that was inserted into the Balanced Budget Act rather hastily did not take into account the situation of States like Tennessee, for instance, where under their State law lab technicians by law cannot leave the health care facility, leaving any homebound person truly in need of venipuncture with very limited options.

We are all in favor of cutting out waste, fraud and abuse, but let us not throw the baby out with the bathwater by punishing the elderly and the frail who have come to depend on these services. Waste, fraud and abuse in a Medicare system that has just been saved from the brink of bankruptcy cannot be tolerated, but a truly homebound elderly Medicare recipient should not be punished for the fraud their health care provider is engaged in.

I ask my colleagues to join with me in fighting to protect our seniors.

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the representative of Mississippi 2nd Congressional District in support of H.R. 2912, the Medicare Venipuncture Fairness Act of 1997. This bill will delay the implementation of the Venipuncture provision in the Balanced Budget Act 1997, Section 4615. The service is greatly needed for elderly people who utilize home health services solely for venipuncture. Patients on Coumadin, a blood thinning agent, need repetitive blood sampling and monitoring to determine if their treatment is effective. The loss of this venipuncture service for patients on certain medications such as Coumadin could result in life threatening episodes.

The Mississippi Association for Home Care estimates that eliminating the venipuncture provision will affect Ten to Twelve thousand patients in Mississippi alone. Punishing the frail and elderly recipients who depend upon home health services is not the intent of this change, but will be the ultimate effect.

According to the Health Care Financing Agency (HCFA), the venipuncture provision was placed into law under the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (BBA) in order to fight fraud and abuse of the Medicare system. Mr. Speaker, I am committed to ending fraud and abuse. However, I do not support fighting fraud and abuse to the detriment of the Nation's elderly. I am also greatly concerned about this provision due to the fact that: There were no hearings on the inclusion of this provision in the Balanced Budget Act, there was no Congressional Budget Office estimate given on the venipuncture provision, and the provision was based on anecdotal evidence and there were no specific clinical examples used as a justification for the provision.

Therefore, I am in full support of H.R. 2912, which calls for the Secretary of Health and Human Services to delay the implementation of Section 4615 of the Balanced Budget Act for 18 months from the date of the enactment. This delay will also allow further study on the impact of the provision on the homebound frail and elderly.

As I close, I would like to once again express my support for H.R. 2912 and thank Representative RAHALL and Representative ADERHOLT for their work in bringing this legislation forth to protect the interests of venipuncture patients. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject matter of my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alabama?

There was no objection.

HR 2912 MEDICARE VENIPUNCTURE FAIRNESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) is recognized for 5 minutes.