tobacco's effects on minority populations and the best means to reduce tobacco use in the future; and 3. Transition assistance for small, community-based events and activities which can no longer be sponsored by the tobacco industry.

Without these provisions, guaranteeing reductions in youth smoking among all sectors of the American population will be impossible. Moreover, many of the bills introduced in Congress mandate a substantial increase in tobacco prices that will result in a regressive tax increase on low-income minorities if national tobacco legislation does not include efforts to reduce tobacco use among both minority youth and adult smokers.

The Minority Community Tobacco Reduction Act will ensure that new cessation, prevention, research, or education programs, administered by federal agencies or state health departments (which will be funded through federal block grants), are supported in the minority community based on the minority group's percentage of the smoking population. In addition to funding these initiatives at an adequate level, the legislation assures this historic opportunity to prevent tobacco from further harming the minority community is not squandered. By providing the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Minority Health with a role in coordinating the minority tobacco activities of the Public Health Service and approving state applications for block grant funds, a sufficient degree of accountability and organization will be established to produce genuine results.

The minority caucuses' legislation also makes $1 billion of the funds made available by national tobacco legislation for conducting badly needed biomedical, child health, and tobacco-related research at minority education institutions across the nation. Finally, the Minority Community Tobacco Reduction Act funds treatment of tobacco-related diseases at community health centers and provides transition assistance to small, community-based events, activities and publications sponsored by the tobacco industry in the past but may no longer receive advertising dollars as a result of bans included in national tobacco legislation.

Despite last week's defeat of tobacco legislation introduced by Senator JOHN MCCAIN, it is imperative that Congress continue to work toward enacting comprehensive national tobacco legislation that President Clinton will be willing to sign. The bill introduced by members of the minority caucuses today offers substantial policy initiatives that any genuinely comprehensive national tobacco legislation must include.

Minority populations have suffered from disproportionately higher rates of tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases as a direct result of the tobacco industry's targeting. The Surgeon General's report released last month entitled ''Tobacco Use Among U.S. Racial/Ethnic Minority Groups'' found that Native Americans and African Americans have the highest smoking rates of any ethnic group. Hispanic youth have smoking rates which have almost overtaken those of white youth, and many Asian American/Pacific Islander sub-populations display frighteningly high rates of tobacco use. Minority populations also consistently display the highest rates of tobacco-related diseases, particularly lung cancer.

According to a report recently released by the Centers for Disease Control, these trends of tobacco use in the minority community are likely to worsen. The report found that smoking rates among African American and Hispanic high school students increased by 80 percent and 34 percent, perspectively, from 1991 through 1997.

While the legislation introduced today by the members of the minority caucuses is a standalone bill, its provisions are designed to be included in more comprehensive national tobacco legislation.

The Members of Congress who support the Minority Community Tobacco Reduction Act look forward to working with the Republican and Democratic leadership as well as President Clinton to enact national tobacco legislation this year that will take positive steps toward fighting tobacco use in every American household.

The Minority Community Tobacco Reduction Act is the culmination of almost a year of historic cooperation between the minority caucuses. I am proud of the final product, and would like to thank the dozens if not hundreds of people who have participated in its development. In particular, I would like to thank the following congressional staffers who have spent countless hours working on this bill: Adam Gluck, Alysia Davis, Angela Vincent, Ann Jacobs, Bobby Vassar, Brenda Pillors, Charles Dujon, Charles Stephenson, Claudia Pharis, Curt Clinton, Danny Cromer, Darlene Taylor, David Sutphen, David Wildes, Deborah Spielberg, Edward Jackson, Esther Aguilera, Emilie Milne, Fred Turner, Fredette West, Howard Moon, James Williams, Jennifer Leach, Jessica Diaz, John Schelble, Jon Alexander, Joyce Brayboy, Heather Hale, Kate Emanuel, Keith Stern, Ken Keck, Kenya Reid, Kerry McKenney, Kim Alton, Kim Richan, Kimberly McAfee, Kimberly Teehee, Kirra Jarratt, LaTario Powell, Larry Dillard, Leah Allen, Liz Powell, Lucy Hand, Marcus Mason, Marie McGlone, Marsha Mccraven, Minnie Langham, Oneki Dafe, Paul Cunningham, Richard Boykin, Ronnie Simmons, Rory Verrett, Samara Ryder, Sean Peterson, Sheila Harvey, Sherry Newton, Susan Rosenblum, Tammy Boyd, Tambi McCollum, Terri Schroeder, Todd Gee, Tom McDaniels, Tony Vance, Ufo Eric-Atuanya, Walter Vinson, and Yelberton Watkins.

I would also like to thank Peter Goodloe from the House Legislative Counsel's office for his assistance in drafting our seemingly endless modifications. Without his expertise, this legislation would never have been prepared in time for introduction today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 1998

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, on June 24, I inadvertently voted ''no'' on roll call 261. It was my intention to vote ''yes''.

INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF SCHOOL-TO-WORK PROGRAMS

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 1998

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, one of the nation's experts on education, D.L. Cuddy has written an important article I would like to bring to my colleagues' attention.

THE NEW TRANSATLANTIC AGENDA

(By D.L. Cuddy)

In the U.S. Congress, Rep. Henry Hyde has been warning people about school-to-work (STW) education initiatives, and Senator John Ashcroft has amended the Workforce Investment Partnership Act now being discussed to prohibit its funding of STW. At the state level, N.C. Rep. Don Davis is chairing a House Select Committee for Federal Education Grants, which has been investigating STW grants among others, and invited Richmond Times-Dispatch op-ed editor Robert Holland to address the Select Committee on this subject.

While the implications of STW at the state and national levels have been widely debated, not much has been written about the international connections. On May 18, the White House released a statement at the conclusion of the U.S.-European Summit in London, indicating that ''through the New Transatlantic Agenda (NTA), created in 1995, the United States and the European Union have focused on addressing the challenges and opportunities of global integration.''

One part of this ''global integration'' in 1995 was the agreement between the U.S. and the European Community establishing a cooperation program in higher education and vocational education and training. The agreement, signed December 21 of that year, called for ''improving the quality of human resource development . . . Transatlantic student mobility, . . . and thus portability of academic credits.'' In this regard, a Joint Committee would reach decisions by consensus.

As part of the NTA, the U.S. and European Union then convened a major conference, ''Bridging the Atlantic: People-to-People Links,'' on May 5–6, 1997 calling for ''thematic networks for curriculum development,'' and further stating that in an information-based global economy, ''governments too are obliged to adapt their economic, training and social welfare programs.'' The conference final report noted that in the U.S., ACHIEVE has been one of the organizations at the forefront of defining key issues in this regard and developing strategies to address them. ACHIEVE has been measuring and reporting each state's annual progress in establishing Internationally competitive standards, and business leaders involved have indicated their commitment to consider the quality of each state's standards when making business location or expansion decisions.

The ''Partners in a Global Economy Working Group'' of the conference discussed ''what redesigning of curricula is required . . . (i.e. what career skills are needed), . . . portability of skill certificates, . . . and institutionalizing cross-national learning/training activities.''

Most people debating STW in the U.S. are familiar with the role of Marc Tucker, president of the National Center on Education and the Economy. He's also on the National Skill Standards Board (NSSB), and on its website under international links, one finds ''Smartcards Project Forum,'' under which

one reads: ''The Tavistock Institute and the European Commission are working on a feasibility study to research the affect of using Smart Cards in competence accreditation. The study will be carried out in the USA and parts of Europe.'' The project involves assessing and validating students' skills, with information placed on personal skills Smartcards, which ''become real passports to employment.''

If without a passport one cannot enter a country, does this mean that without a skills passport one may not be able to get a job in the future?

In October 1997, the Tavistock Institute (and Manchester University) completed the final report for the European Commission, and described in a report summary were the relevancy of Goals 2000, SCANS (U.S. Department of Labor ''Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills'') typology with its ''profound implications for the curriculum and training changes that this will require,'' valid skills standards and portable credentials ''benchmarked to international standards such as those promulgated by the International Standards Organization (ISO).''

The report summary went on to say that ''there is increasing attention being focused on developing global skill standards and accreditation agreements,'' and there will be ''partnerships between government, industry, and representatives of worker organizations . . . (and) a high degree of integration . . . embedding skills within the broader context of economic and social activity, and specifically within the areas of secondary education, work-based learning and local and regional economic development. . . . The NSSB, Goals 2000, STW Program are all combining to act as a catalyst to promote the formation of partnerships to develop skills standards. In this regard, a system like O*Net can be seen as the 'glue' that holds everything together.''

O*Net is a new occupational database system sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, and is being piloted in Texas, South Carolina, California, New York and Minnesota. It includes information such as ''Worker Characteristics'' (abilities, interests and work styles) and ''Worker Requirements'' (e.g., basic skills, knowledge and education).

INTRODUCTION OF THE CRIMINAL WELFARE PREVENTION ACT, PART III

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 1998

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the introduction of ''The Criminal Welfare Prevention Act, Part III''—the third in a series of legislative initiatives I have sponsored to help cut off fraudulent federal benefits to prisoners in state and local jails.

Because of the original ''Criminal Welfare Prevention Act''—legislation I introduced during the 104th Congress which was enacted as part of welfare reform in 1996—an effective new incentive system is now in place that enables the Social Security Administration (SSA) to detect and cut off fraudulent Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security (OASDI) benefits that would otherwise be issued to prisoners. That provision established monetary incentives for state and local law enforcement authorities to enter into voluntary data-sharing contracts with SSA. Now, participating local authorities can elect to provide the Social Security numbers of their inmates to the Social Security Administration. If SSA identifies any ''matches''—instances where inmates are fraudulently collecting SSI benefits—SSA now cuts off those benefits and the participating local authority receives a cash payment of as much as $400. Participation in these data-sharing contracts is strictly voluntary; they do not involve any unfunded federal mandates. According to a recent estimate by SSA's Inspector General, this initiative could help save taxpayers as much as $3.46 billion through the year 2001.

Mr. Speaker, on June 4th of this year, the House passed my follow-up legislation, ''The Criminal Welfare Prevention Act, Part II.'' This proposal would encourage even more sheriffs to become involved in fraud-prevention by extending the $400 incentive payments to intercepted Social Security (OASDI) checks as well. This provision—included as Section 7 of ''The Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Act''—is now awaiting action in the Senate.

Despite this important progress, Mr. Speaker, our work is still not complete. In addition to establishing the new system of monetary incentives, the original Criminal Welfare Prevention Act also authorized the SSA to share the agency's augmented prisoner database with other federal agencies so that similar inmate fraud could be prevented in other federal and federally-assisted benefit programs. In April of this year, President Clinton issued an executive memorandum directing the SSA to act on its newly-granted authority and to make its database available by November 1st. This action, if faithfully executed, could potentially uncover a tremendous number of fraudulent benefit checks that would otherwise be issued to prisoners by the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Labor, Veterans' Affairs, and others. In fact, according to Administration estimates, this could save taxpayers an additional $500 million over five years.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the President for joining this important fight against fraud in our nation's federal programs. However, because fraud prevention has not historically been a top priority at the SSA, I believe that Congress should nonetheless move to codify this administrative action into law.

The Criminal Welfare Prevention Act, Part III is quite straightforward. It would simply require the SSA to share its prisoner database with other federal departments and agencies to help prevent the continued payment of other fraudulent benefits (i.e., food stamps, veterans' benefits, education aid, etc.) to prisoners. I would urge all of my colleagues—on both sides of the aisle—to cosponsor this important legislation and to remind criminals that crime isn't supposed to pay.

INTRODUCTION OF REMEDIAL ANCSA SETTLEMENT TRUST LEGISLATION

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 1998

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce legislation which will enable Alaska Native Settlement Trusts to achieve the goals envisioned for them by the Congress in the original authorizing legislation: to encourage Alaska Native Corporation to use their own assets to provide segregated, protected funds to ''promote the health, education, and welfare of . . . (Settlement Trust) beneficiaries and preserve the heritage and culture of Natives.'' Settlement trusts have been impeded from achieving the laudatory goals originally envisaged because of deficiencies in the original legislation and impediments arising from certain IRS interpretations as well as inflexibility in current tax administration with regard to the trust.

In recent years I have written to the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee informing him that what has started as a simple proposition, promoted by Congress in the Settlement Trust legislation—to provide aid from a protected source to Alaska Natives who often have very little in other available assets to sustain them and in particular in their retirement years—had become a complex and bewildering situation which frustrated the use of the settlement trust provisions in law. This result stems from an IRS interpretation calling for the immediate taxation to potential beneficiaries when these trusts are established by Alaska Native corporations which have earnings and profits, as opposed to taxation when the money is actually received by the beneficiaries. Put simply, in the case of some beneficiaries, particularly the elderly, who have to prepay taxes in order to receive their benefits and, if they die prematurely, they will not even receive the amount of their prepaid taxes back. Needless to say, this is a substantial impediment to setting up and continuing such beneficial trusts.

But those Native corporations having favorable tax situations which enable them to make contributions to trusts which are not immediately taxable to their beneficiaries face other impediments. The IRS has taken the position that there is no authority to withhold tax from beneficiary payments, which prevents a simple way for a Native to pay his or her tax. The IRS requires that trust reporting to beneficiaries be accomplished via the complex so-called ''K-1'' form as opposed to the simple 1099 form, so familiar to most of us. As you can imagine, the requirement to use the former, particularly in rural areas in the state of Alaska where accountants may not be readily available, presents major reporting problems. We believe the IRS internally has been supportive of such a change but has advised in the past that it would need to be accomplished by statute.

Finally, the original authorizing legislation failed to provide a mechanism to encourage sustaining the longevity of these trusts dedicated to the goals enumerated. Such trusts are currently treated as regular trusts and penalized for accumulating income with an assessment of the highest marginal tax rate. Accordingly, from the standpoint of a settlement trust, it currently makes good tax sense to distribute all income to the beneficiaries rather than leaving it to be taxed at the current trust tax rate. This, however,does not make good social sense and encourages the opposite result one would envision for these entities, whose goal is to sustain the funds on a long-term basis in order to fulfill the objective envisioned for Settlement Trusts.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, Congressman MILLER and Congressman HAYWORTH, and I