

day decision period, the application is deemed granted.

Resale Authority. On February 8, 1999, BOCs would be authorized to resell the InterLATA services of unaffiliated companies.

Amendments to Track A/Track B. The Track A/Track B requirement would be eliminated effective February 8, 1999. In addition, the legislation removes the requirement that a Track A company provide telephone exchange service exclusively or predominantly over its own facilities. It also provides that Track B is satisfied if the BOC's statement of generally available terms and conditions ("SGAT") has been approved by the state public service commission or if the state public service commission has permitted such SGAT to take effect.

FCC Consultation with State PSC. The legislation directs the FCC to affirm the evaluation of the state public service commission concerning BOC compliance with Track A/Track B and the competitive checklist unless the FCC determines by clear and convincing evidence that the state evaluation is clearly erroneous.

Public Interest Determination. Effective February 8, 1999, the public interest requirement of Section 271 is deemed to be satisfied upon a finding that the BOC has satisfied the competitive checklist.

Incidental InterLATA Services. The legislation would expand the definition of "incidental InterLATA services" to include data communications and international telecommunications and information services.

Section 271 Approvals and Denials. Decisions approving or denying Section 271 applications must include a written determination of whether the BOC has complied with the statutory standard for InterLATA relief.

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#### THE MEDICARE MEDICAL NUTRITION THERAPY ACT

**HON. JOHN E. ENSIGN**

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Saturday, October 10, 1998*

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. Speaker, it is rare for any legislation in the House of Representatives to obtain the support of a majority of its Members. In fact, fewer than 1 percent of all bills introduced in the 105th Congress have reached this status. I would like to announce with pride that a bill I sponsored, H.R. 1375, the Medical Nutrition Therapy Act, has achieved this remarkable level of support.

Over 220 of our colleagues support this measure because they recognize that the absence of coverage for nutrition therapy services is a glaring omission in current Medicare policy. Medical science makes clear that properly nourished patients are better able to resist disease and recover from illnesses than those who are malnourished. We also know that elderly Americans are at a higher risk of malnutrition than others in society due to the naturally occurring aging process.

Despite this knowledge, Medicare does not cover nutrition assessment and counseling services by registered dietitians—what is commonly known in the health care field as medical nutrition therapy (MNT). As a result, the elderly either pay for this service out of their own pockets, or go without. This is not a choice that those on fixed incomes should have to make. Medical nutrition therapy is medically necessary care and ought to be a covered benefit.

I am convinced that this bill is an important part of the solution to saving Medicare. It will help us cut costs without sacrificing the quality of patient care. Empirical evidence shows that MNT is effective for patients with diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and other costly diseases that are prominent among the elderly. It lowers treatment costs by reducing and shortening the length of hospital stays, preventing health care complications and decreasing the need for medications. Yet still, we do not provide senior coverage for this care.

It should be noted that support for medical nutrition therapy is not confined to Congress. Major patient advocacy groups including the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the National Kidney Foundation, the American Diabetes Association, and the National Osteoporosis Foundation also support coverage for MNT. These groups understand that appropriate nutrition therapy saves money and lives.

Any measure that achieves such an impressive level of political support is deserving of serious deliberation in this body. While I regret that this bill will not be taken up in the remaining days of this Congress, I urge the leadership of both parties to make this bill a top priority next year. While the Balanced Budget Act helped strengthen the Medicare program in the short term, additional reforms will be necessary to prepare the program for the coming retirement of the Baby Boom generation. Congress will be remiss if it overlooks medical nutrition therapy as part of those long-term reforms.

In closing, I want to thank the American Diabetic Association and the Nevada Diabetic Association for their fine work in helping me educate Members of Congress about this important measure. The dedicated health and nutrition professionals represented by those groups can be proud of how far this bill had advanced in the 105th Congress and confident that we will ultimately succeed in these efforts.

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#### TRIBUTE TO NATIONAL PARK SUPERINTENDENT EDWARD WOOD

**HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD**

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Saturday, October 10, 1998*

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to extend sincere thanks to the outgoing Superintendent of the War in the Pacific National Park on Guam, Edward W. Wood, Jr., for his dedicated service. A 25-year veteran of the National Park Service, Mr. Wood has served with distinction, especially during his tenure as Superintendent of the War in the Pacific National Park and the American Memorial Park for the past seven years of his career.

As many of my colleagues know, the War in the Pacific National Park commemorates the bravery and sacrifice of those veterans who participated in the campaigns of the Pacific theater during World War II and preserves the natural, scenic, and historic values of our beautiful island. This park commemorates something especially close to all our hearts, the sacrifice of the American soldiers to liberate our islands and the loyalty that the people of Guam demonstrated during this critical time in our island's history. In this sense, Mr.

Wood's commitment to ensuring that the park met its mission is deeply appreciated by all of us.

As my colleagues may remember, one of the initial pieces of legislation I introduced when I first arrived to this institution, in the 103d Congress, was a bill to enhance the War in the Pacific National Park by appropriating funds and authorizing approval for an overlook at Asan Bay and a Memorial Wall of Names, to honor all those who suffered during the time of enemy occupation. This effort would not have turned successful without the support and collaboration of Mr. Wood.

It is fitting, that we on Guam pay tribute to his service and accomplishments during his time as Superintendent of the only national park on our island. He has contributed significantly to the development of both the War in the Pacific National Historic Park and the American Memorial Park on the island of Saipan. Most recently, in 1997, he shared the National Park Foundation's National Partnership Leadership Award with the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for their combined efforts to develop American Memorial Park, which specifically honors the Americans and Marines who gave their lives during the Marianas campaign of World War II, arguably the most significant battle of the Pacific operation.

In addition, Mr. Wood has also been recognized and has received several Special Achievement Awards for his work in diversity recruitment, operational excellence, community involvement, and assistance to other government agencies.

Mr. Wood, Si Yu'os Ma'ase for your dedication to the people of Guam and to the War in the Pacific National Park. Good luck in your future endeavors. Your service brings honor to the National Park Service.

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#### HONORING FATHER MATEO SHEEDY

**HON. ZOE LOFGREN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Saturday, October 10, 1998*

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a true humanitarian and an outstanding member of my hometown community of San Jose, California.

Father Mateo Sheedy has selflessly served our community, providing assistance to those most in need of a helping hand. Particularly, Father Sheedy has championed the cause of recent immigrants. He has worked tirelessly to ensure that farm workers—those who feed America—are treated with dignity and respect. In concert with churches and the United Farm Workers he has succeeded in ensuring that farm laborers' working conditions are safe, and that their wages fair. His work with ESL classes and citizenship courses have helped countless immigrants attain United States citizenship.

Father Sheedy has been embraced by the local Mexican-American community and has been instrumental in solving some of the problems plaguing our neighborhoods. His inclusive style has brought together rival gangs—allowing families to live in safe, nurturing neighborhoods. His innovative gun return program has been very successful.