

Across our country, our citizens have voiced loud and clear that Congress must enact the constitutional amendment that restores that right to protect the flag. 82% of Americans support it, 49 states have passed resolutions calling for it, 310 House Members responded in the 105th Congress to pass it, and 61 Senators cosponsored the Senate bill that came just a few votes shy of restoring the power to protect the flag that has been denied for the past nine years.

The 106th Congress must follow through and make the Flag Protection Amendment a reality.

PROTECT CALIFORNIA'S COASTLINE WITH A MORATORIUM ON OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to extend the moratorium on oil and gas development in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) off the coast of California. This legislation is similar to H.R. 133 from the 105th Congress.

Californians strongly favor continuing this moratorium. The State of California has enacted a permanent ban on all new offshore oil development in state coastal waters. In addition, former Governor Pete Wilson, Governor Gray Davis, and state and local community leaders up and down California's coast have endorsed the continuation of this moratorium.

I believe that the environmental sensitivities along the entire California coastline make the region an inappropriate place to drill for oil using current technology. A 1989 National Academy of Sciences (NAS) study confirmed that new exploration and drilling on existing leases and on undeveloped leases in the same area would be detrimental to the environment. Cultivation of oil and gas off the coast of California could have a negative impact on California's \$27 billion a year tourism and fishing industries.

This legislation focuses on the entire state of California, and would prohibit the sale of new offshore leases in the Southern California, Central California, and Northern California planning areas through the year 2009. New exploration and drilling on existing active leases and on undeveloped leases in the same areas would be prohibited until the environmental concerns raised by the 1989 National Academy of Sciences study are addressed, resolved and approved by an independent scientific peer review. This measure ensures that there will be no drilling or exploration along the California coast unless the most knowledgeable scientists inform us that it is absolutely safe to do so.

I am proud to be working to protect the beaches, tourism, and the will of the people of California. I ask my colleagues to join me in co-sponsoring this legislation.

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE SCANLAN

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues in Congress to join me in paying tribute to an outstanding individual, Judge James "Jim" Scanlan. Judge Scanlan recently retired after serving Harris County residents for 21 years on the Probate Court No. 3 bench.

Judge Scanlan, a native of Dallas, landed in Houston after he got out of the Coast Guard in Galveston and could not afford to make it all the way back to Dallas. He worked as an elevator repairman while he earned a bachelor's degree and a law degree at the University of Houston. He decided to run for the Probate Court No. 3 while he was working for the Probate Court No. 2. Judge Scanlan won that first election and has not faced any opposition since.

While the majority of Jim's time was spent hearing cases on wills, guardianships, and estates, Judge Scanlan also spent two days a week for the last twenty one years hearing cases dealing with people with psychiatric problems. He recalled many humorous situations, such as the time there were two people scheduled on the docket—both claiming to be Jesus Christ. But his guiding principle and reason for his success is that he treats everyone gently and with respect.

There have been so many changes in the way society deals with mental illness since Judge Scanlan first started hearing cases. While he marvels at the improvements in medicine, he is most proud of the "miracle that happened" when Harris County replaced the old psychiatric hospital with the Harris County Psychiatric Hospital. That change signaled a real sense of responsibility that people with mental illness need and deserve quality medical care.

Judge Scanlan's decision to retire is definitely a blow to the Harris County community. His 21 years of dedicated service will leave a legacy for future judges. Those people who have found themselves before Judge Scanlan are very fortunate to have benefited from his dedication and understanding of the law.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking Judge Scanlan for his service to Harris County. Those of us who know Judge Scanlan are truly grateful for his leadership and wish him well in all his future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL TO EXTEND THE AVIATION WAR RISK INSURANCE PROGRAM

HON. BUD SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, the War Risk Insurance Program has operated successfully for over 45 years. Last year, the program was extended to March 31, 1999. This bill would reauthorize the program for another four and a half years.

Airline insurance is essential to any airline operation. However, commercial insurance

companies will often not insure flights to high risk areas, such as countries at war or on the verge of war.

In many cases, flights into these dangerous situations are required to further the United States' foreign policy or national security policy. For example, in Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, commercial airlines were needed to ferry troops and equipment to the Middle East. Commercial airlines would not have flown these flights without the insurance provided through the War Risk Program.

I intend to act promptly on this bill so as to guarantee that the War Risk Insurance Program does not expire.

INTRODUCTION OF DECLARATION OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGE ACT

HON. BOB STUMP

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, today I am reintroducing my Declaration of Official Language Act, a bill I introduced in the last Congress. This legislation establishes English as the official language of government, requires that naturalization ceremonies be conducted solely in English, repeals the federal bilingual education requirements and repeals bilingual voting requirements.

My own State of Arizona is a crossroads for people of all sorts of backgrounds. I am reminded every day that America, like Arizona, has been enriched by the contributions of people from all over the world. This unified nation of immigrants has been made possible because we have a common national tongue—the English language. We only need to look to the nation to our north, Canada, to realize that a common language is not to be taken for granted.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, I would argue that we have not only taken this great gift for granted, but that our government has actively worked to undermine it. Voting ballots, welfare applications and all types of official government documents are now issued in languages other than English.

Recently, USA Today reported that eight immigrants have filed suit in Miami against English requirement for U.S. citizenship. A federal judge may now be able to strike down our long-standing requirement that prospective new citizens must demonstrate a minimum command of the English language. Elderly immigrants are already exempt from this fairly basic standard. This suit was brought because U.S. citizenship is required for full access to certain federal benefits. The attorney who filed the complaint will no doubt argue that since so many government services are already provided in languages other than English, an English requirement for citizenship is unnecessary.

I am not surprised that this case has been filed, only that it was not filed many years earlier. U.S. citizenship was something that immigrants took justifiable pride in earning. They carried their English workbooks with them everywhere. The Clinton Administration's 1995–96 Citizenship USA program effectively waived English requirements in an attempt to naturalize many more voters for the presidential ticket.

Today's immigrants have merely adapted the same disparaging stance toward English that many in our government adopted in the 1960's and 1970's. It is now a serious question whether the children of immigrants should be taught English in America's public schools. California voters were forced to pass an initiative last year in an attempt to force taxpayer-funded public schools to teach immigrant children English.

My Declaration of Official Language Act will restore the place of English in our nation's government and public school system. The legislation I am proposing is not only the right thing to do, it is also the popular thing to do. Opinion poll after opinion poll consistently finds that Americans want English to be America's official language. In fact, most Americans mistakenly believe that official English is already part of the national statutes and are surprised to learn that it is not.

The choice this nation confronts is crystal clear. We can reaffirm our national language or we can continue down the road upon which Canada has preceded us. We can be a one-language country or a Balkanized ruin. I urge my colleagues to support the Declaration of Official Language Act and invite their cosponsorship.

TRIBUTE TO THE HERNDON, VA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an organization that has helped fuel the economy of Northern Virginia for the past forty years. On January 20, 1999 the Herndon Chamber of Commerce will celebrate its 40th anniversary serving the needs and interests of the businesses of Herndon, VA. The Herndon Chamber of Commerce was founded by Town Attorney Marshall A. Martin, and was officially incorporated on January 20, 1959 with three members. As they approach their 40th anniversary, the Chamber will have been presided over by twenty-four presidents and its membership has grown to over 650 businesses.

Being the instrument of Herndon's commercial interests the Chamber is irrevocably linked to the Town and people they serve. In its early years, the Herndon Chamber was essential in raising money for the first Christmas decorations for downtown and led the fight to keep the W&OD Railroad in operation. Since its humble beginnings the Chamber has been quintessential in spearheading the combined fund-raising efforts for the new golf course and Community Center, helped found the Herndon Historical Society, and led the effort to preserve the Depot, a treasured Herndon landmark.

Over the last decade the Chamber has taken even greater steps to strengthen its relationship with the Herndon community. Most notably, the Chamber has formed a business partnership with Herndon High, developed a nationally recognized, award-winning recycling program at the High School with SAGA, and stages an annual Ethics Seminar for the junior class and the Herndon Middle School. The Chamber has recently lent its support to

Vecinos Unidos—a group dedicated to tutoring Hispanic children in and around Herndon. They also host a Friday Night Live! Series that provides the community with an opportunity to come together and socialize during the summer, while highlighting the downtown area.

The Chamber's résumé of economic development initiatives is extensive. They include a joint project with the Town of Herndon to produce both print and CD versions of The Herndon Advantage as a business relocation marketing tool. In recognition of the telecommunications revolution being led by Northern Virginia, the Herndon Chamber recently participated in the World Congress on Information Technology as an affiliate sponsor. The Chamber was one of the very first in the country to establish and maintain a comprehensive and interactive home page and the second Chamber of Commerce in the State of Virginia to offer a free home page to its members.

From a legislative perspective, the Herndon Chamber has taken an aggressive leadership role to find and present transportation solutions to both the Virginia General Assembly and the U.S. Congress. It has also been supportive of BPOL and zoning ordinance amendments for the growing force of home-based businesses.

Ultimately, and most importantly, the Herndon Chamber of Commerce provides its members with a wide variety of networking opportunities all designed to promote and further the commercial interests of the Town of Herndon. For their four-decades long commitment to the businesses and community of Herndon, VA, it gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the work of the Herndon Chamber of Commerce on the eve of their 40th anniversary.

INTRODUCTION OF THE
SWEEPSTAKES PROTECTION ACT

HON. JAMES E. ROGAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Sweepstakes Protection Act, legislation I introduced today aimed at encouraging accuracy in advertising mail pieces.

Many of my constituents, especially seniors, regularly receive offers for products in the mail that include tantalizing promises of money and other grand prizes. I have in my office literally dozens of such offers received by just one resident of the 27th District. Some of these offers are legitimate, but too many are not.

The envelopes entice recipients with such promises as: "designated entry for cash settlement," "immediate response required, \$3,450,000.00 cash payment pending;" and "you have won." While these promises are shouted in big, bold letters, the real details are hidden in fine print on the bottom of the last page. Expecting to win a prize, trusting consumers respond to offers of products that they do not need by sending money they cannot afford.

The Sweepstakes Protection Act will compel businesses that rely on such offers to identify their advertisements as a game of chance or sweepstakes on the mailing envelope. It will also require mailers to put a clear, legible disclaimer prominently on the first page of their literature.

By implementing these consumer protections, the Postmaster General will have authority to go after those who previously tried to portray marketing schemes as prize offerings.

Mr. Speaker, as we work on issues vital to all Americans, it is crucial that this House pursue policies that protect our senior citizens. Too many of our seniors have been exploited by fraudulent promises of prosperity that have depleted their savings.

With the Sweepstakes Protection Act, we take a step toward limiting the ability of opportunists to misrepresent their products and prey on the unsuspecting. For the sake of our seniors, I urge the House to support the Sweepstakes Protection Act.

DEFEND THE RIGHT TO LIFE

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a constitutional amendment for the protection of the right to life. Tragically, this most basic human right has been disregarded, set aside, abused, spurned, and sometimes altogether forgotten. Even more tragically, the United States Government has been a willing partner in this affair, and the sad consequence is the sacrifice of something far more important than just principle.

One of the things that sets America apart from the rest of world is the fact that in this country, everyone is equal before the law. Regardless of race, religion, or background, each person has fundamental rights that are guaranteed by the law. However, we too often overlook the rights of perhaps the most vulnerable among us—the unborn. When abortion is legal and available on demand, then where are the rights of the unborn? When abortion is sanctioned and sometimes paid for by the government, then how do we measure the degree to which life has been cheapened? When an innocent life is taken before its time, then how can one say that this is justice in America?

My amendment would establish beyond a doubt the fundamental right to life. Congress has an obligation to do what it has failed to do for so long, fully protect the unborn. I urge this body to move forward with this legislation to put an end to a most terrible injustice.

INTRODUCTION OF THE
NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD
CONSERVATION ACT

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce today the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act.

This important conservation measure is modeled after the highly successful programs that Congress created to assist African and Asian elephants, rhinoceroses, and tigers.

Based on the success of the African Elephant Conservation Act, I am confident that this small investment of Federal funds will provide the lifeline that neotropical migratory birds need to survive in the wild.