especially evident in Bosnia, Azerbaijan, and Ukraine. The recent arrest of Vladimir Gusinsky, head of Media Most and an outspoken critic of Russian President Putin, has raised our concern about Russia's approach to an agenda of free media.

A key OSCE commitment allows for the development and protection of freedom of expression, permitting independent pluralistic media. Three years ago, the OSCE States were concerned enough about the problems in this area that they mandated the creation of the position of Representative on Freedom of the Media. The 25th Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act marks an appropriate occasion to review the past relations between the OSCE governments and the media, and to review the current situation of free media in the region.

Last year, 11 journalists were killed in the region, with a number of the deaths accompanied by suspicious circumstances. In addition to those killed while reporting the news, many others were arrested under suspicious circumstances and without due process. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty reporter Andrei Babitsky's story is a frightening example of just how badly the situation for reporters has deteriorated in Russia. While covering and reporting on the war in Chechnya, Babitsky was arrested by Russian troops for ''participating in an armed formation,'' and yet later was traded to Chechen rebels in an exchange, thus being placed in grave danger. Babitsky was later retrieved by Russian forces and subsequently charged with using false papers.

While Babitsky was fortunate to have survived and received international exposure, most other journalists are not so lucky in Russia. In Vladimir Putin's first ''state of the union'' speech, he said that he supported a free Russian press, but was angered that media owners could influence the content. That is, while Putin openly declares support for a free media, he chills the media in his next utterance. Likewise, Gusinsky's arrest has heightened our concern as we see the tightening of the noose on the throat of a free press in Russia.

Actions by governments in Southeastern Europe are also a cause for concern. Turkey and the Balkan States present serious impediments towards promoting and allowing free media. Serbia continually threatens, harasses, and fines all media that do not follow the official line. Milosevic has seen to the gradual demise of any independent Serbian media, not the least through fines totaling $2.1 million last year. Turkish authorities continue to block free media in key areas, with either the Kurdish issue or criticism of the military most likely to land journalists in jail.

Mr. Speaker, I could continue. Such developments are rife throughout the Caucasus and Central Asia. It is not enough for OSCE States to ardently promote the idea of free speech and media. Collective accountability must be used, along with public diplomacy, if the OSCE is to consist of States that rise to the standard envisioned at Helsinki 25 years ago regarding free speech and media.

RECOGNIZING THE NYSP PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN—EAU CLAIRE

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize a fantastic program that benefits young people throughout the nation, and to pay special tribute to the chapter in my congressional district.

Earlier this month, I had the pleasure to spend some time at the National Youth Sports Program (NYSP) on the University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire campus. This is the twentieth year that an NYSP summer camp has operated in the Chippewa Valley region of western Wisconsin, at which disadvantaged youth take part in athletic, math and science activities for five weeks. The sports component of the program emphasizes instruction, competition, physical fitness and lifetime sports. The classroom programs cover nutrition, drug and alcohol awareness, higher education preparation and career discussions in addition to the science and math curriculum.

Of the 180 or so NYSP programs that operate nationwide each summer, the University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire camp has been recognized as one of the top five programs seven times. It has also been rated as the top program twice in the last decade.

NYSP is an excellent example of how federal partnerships with communities can work for the betterment of America's young people. Funds for NYSP are provided through the Department of Health and Human Services and are administered through the NCAA. In my home state, additional funds for food services are provided through the Department of Agriculture.

NYSP provides the kids who participate in the camps with wonderful opportunities they would not otherwise have to learn, play, and form new friendships in friendly, safe and supportive environments. This year at UW—Eau Claire, 589 young people participated in NYSP.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate all of the many staff and volunteers who run the NYSP program at UW—Eau Claire. In particular, I wish to recognize Lisa McIntyre, Bill Harms, Jeff Lutz, Tom Platt and Tony Hudson, whose dedication to the program is very admirable, and who make sure I am kept up-to-date about the progress and success of NYSP each year.

I offer a special word of congratulations and thanks to Diane Gibertson, who has been the Activities Director of NYSP in Eau Claire. Diane is retiring this year, and was instrumental in establishing NYSP in the Chippewa Valley twenty years ago. Diane's tireless efforts over the years on behalf of youth in our community serves as a shining example for all of us—young and old—to follow our dreams, and to take time to help make the dreams of our children come true.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the residents of western Wisconsin, I congratulate and thank all those who have made the NYSP program an amazing success. Our children, and our communities, are certainly the better for their efforts.

THE TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACT

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing a bill with Mr. MORAN, Mr. COX, Mr. TAUZIN, Mr. TOM DAVIS, Mr. DRIER, Mr. ADAM SMITH, Mr. SALMON and Mrs. TAUCHER to address the severe worker shortage in technology related industries. The Technology Education and Training Act provides a $1,500 tax credit for information technology training expenses.

This tax credit is necessary to address the serious shortage in the United States of trained technology professionals. This shortage has a dramatic effect on the U.S. economy. According to the CompTIA Workforce Study, as a result of unfilled IT positions, the U.S. economy loses $105.5 billion in spending that would otherwise go to salaries and training. This reduces household income by $37.2 billion and prevents the creation of 1. 6 million jobs. Currently, an estimated 268,740 (10%) of IT service and support positions are unfilled. This results in $4.5 billion per year in lost worker productivity. An ITAA study released April 11, 2000 predicts a shortage of 843,328 for the 1.6 million new IT workers needed in 2000.

The tax credit we establish in this bill would be available to both individuals and businesses for training and educational expenses for individuals being trained in technology related industries. The allowable credit would be $1,500. For small businesses, or businesses and individuals in enterprise zones, empowerment zones, and other qualified areas, the credit would equal $2,000. The training program must result in certification.

This bill encourages a private-public sector partnership which allows the private sector to determine who, what, where and how to train workers. It also helps to fill the IT worker pipeline with thousands of new and retrained IT skilled workers which would otherwise leave thousands of jobs in cities across America unfilled.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of The Technology Education and Training Act.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A GLOBAL SCHOOL LUNCH AND GLOBAL WIC PROGRAM

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I was very excited to read the July 23, 2000 statement by President Clinton at the G–8 Summit in Okinawa, Japan, announcing a $300 million initial start-up program in support of a universal school and pre-school feeding program for the over 300 million hungry children of the world. On July 27th, the Senate Agriculture Committee held a hearing on this issue and invited former Senators George McGovern and Bob Dole, the two chief proponents of this initiative, Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman, Senator RICHARD DURBIN, myself, and several others to testify.