

fields, from strong leadership, clear visions for the future, and a strong sense of mission to the high quality of teaching, up-to-date curricula, and a commitment to share their knowledge with other area schools. This year, the Blue Ribbon Schools Award was only given to 264 elementary schools nationwide. The Central Primary School in Bloomfield, New Mexico, was also presented with the Blue Ribbon Schools Award this year.

Mesa Elementary School promotes the philosophy that children are intelligent in numerous ways and incorporate this belief into the daily functions of the school. Principal Jan Cox has done an incredible job of translating this notion of applied learning into the mission of the school by bringing together the staff, students, parents, and the community of Clovis to provide an environment conducive to excellence.

Student participation is one of the areas in which Mesa Elementary has shown to be one of the best in the country, and it has become a defining characteristic of the school. When it opened in 1991, Mesa Elementary students were involved from the start, selecting the school colors, mascot, and composing both the school song and pledge.

Today, one student from each grade serves on the Student Advisory Council, which aids Principal Cox in various aspects of administrative processes at Mesa Elementary. Students help select the daily cafeteria menu by serving on the Nutrition Advisory Council. Kindergarten through sixth grade students run businesses in the Mesa Elementary Mall, supplying students with products, from school supplies to refreshments. The Mesa Tech Lab, a computer resource center for the school, utilizes students who are proficient with computers as lab "techies" to help other students learn the programs.

One of the most influential learning tools that Mesa Elementary provides for its students is the Students Who Are Tutors (SWAT) team, a group of student mentors. The SWAT team was created under the Reading Renaissance Program (RRP), a nationwide literacy program aimed at improving students' critical thinking skills and their performance on standardized tests. In this program, students from higher grades assist students from lower grades who are not yet independent readers. Mesa Elementary was a model school for the RRP, and this past year the school made a presentation at the first ever RRP Conference in Nashville, Tennessee.

Mesa Elementary has won numerous awards for excellence over the past six years, including the Redbook Magazine Award for Excellence in 1995, the Reading Renaissance Model School and Library Awards in 1998, and the President's Physical Fitness Award in 1996, 1997 and 2000.

Through their determination to achieve quality educational standards and provide influential learning environments, the staff, students, and parents of Mesa Elementary School have exemplified what it takes to be true leaders in education for elementary schools across the country. I wish to commend Mesa Elementary School upon receiving the prestigious Blue Ribbon Schools Award, and I know that it will be one of the leaders in providing quality education for New Mexican students for years to come.

AL SHUR: LABOR LEADER OF THE YEAR

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 21, 2001

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Al Shur, as he is honored by the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council, AFL-CIO as Labor Leader of the Year.

As the Business Manager of IBEW Local 569, Al Shur has proven his longstanding commitment to worker justice. Also a member of the Executive Boards of the Labor Council and the State Federation of Labor, Al has been instrumental in championing the causes of labor.

Under his leadership, IBEW partnered with the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) to train high skilled workers through their apprenticeship program. Al's well-known advertising program, developed along with NECA, has raised the visibility and importance of unions in creating good family-supporting jobs.

In addition, Al's guidance assisted in securing the Project Labor Agreement for the downtown ballpark. "Al knows the true meaning of unity," says Secretary-Treasurer Jerry Butkiewicz. "He continuously works to support other locals and to promote the labor movement."

My congratulations go to Al Shur for these significant contributions. His dedication and commitment speak volumes about who Al is. I believe him to be highly deserving of the recognition as the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council, AFL-CIO, Labor Leader of the Year.

WELCOME PRESIDENT CHEN

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 21, 2001

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, Taiwan marked its president's first anniversary in office on May 20, 2001. President Chen Shui-bian, a Taiwan-born statesman, should be commended for his leadership and vision for his country.

President Chen has protected the tradition of political liberty for the 23 million citizens of Taiwan. His strong support for an educated population strives to ensure a society based on freedom and opportunity. I applaud his openness to democracy and the free exchange of ideas with other nations and cultures.

With the continued encouragement and assistance from the West, Taiwan can continue to be a beacon of hope for freedom in Asia.

On the occasion of President Chen's first anniversary in office, I wish President Chen Godspeed and good fortune as he transits through New York en route to Central America later this month.

HONORING A FALLEN HERO,
FIREFIGHTER STEPHEN FURY, JR.

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 21, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, in July of 1976 a 900 acre wild fire ripped through the Battlement Creek area of Western Colorado. During the blaze, four brave forest service firefighters from different parts of the country were killed while trying to knock out one of the deadliest forest fires in recent memory. On July 21st of 2001, these four men will be honored at the opening of a memorial to be dedicated in their memory. I ask that Congress take a moment to honor these four men for giving their lives in the line of duty.

The four-day blaze which claimed the lives of three hotshot firefighters and one pilot was started by lightning, and took nearly 300 firefighters to douse the blaze. Twenty-three year old Stephen Fury, Jr. was born in Boise, Idaho where he graduated from Boise High School in 1971. He then went on to receive his English degree from the University of Idaho. During the summer of 1976, Stephen got an assignment with the Mormon Lake Hotshots out of the Coconino National Forest in Arizona.

On the morning of July 17, 1976, the crew was assigned to build a section of fire line to protect Federal lands belonging to the BLM. The hotshots were working on a section of fire line on the upper east side of the fire. Without warning, the fire took off and overran Stephen and two other crewmembers. The fourth member of the crew survived.

Mr. Speaker, four men gave their lives protecting Federal land during the Battlement Creek fire in July of 1976. Stephen Fury and his crew will be honored by the citizens of the Battlement Creek area for their courage and bravery. I would ask that Congress honor them and thank them for their work.

Stephen's family should be proud of what he accomplished in his life and what he did for the people of Battlement Creek.

A SALUTE TO MAIMONIDES HEBREW DAY SCHOOL ON ITS 21ST ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL R. McNULTY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 21, 2001

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 21st Anniversary of the Maimonides Hebrew Day School in my congressional district in Albany, New York.

For more than two decades, Maimonides has provided the Jewish community in the Capital Region with traditional Jewish and secular education of the highest caliber.

All students participate in field experiences and extra curricular activities, building bridges between children and adults throughout the community.

I proudly extend my highest regard to School President Yisroel Bindell, the School's Rosh Yeshiva, the esteemed Rabbi Israel Rubin, and all of the administrators, staff, teachers and students, and offer them my best wishes for continued success.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE
CRITICAL NEED GME PROTEC-
TION ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 21, 2001

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with several of my Congressional colleagues to introduce "The Medicare Critical Need GME Protection Act of 2001." This legislation seeks to protect our nation against the growing depletion of health care professionals fully trained to treat costly and deadly illnesses.

Under current law, the Medicare program provides reimbursement to hospitals for the direct costs of graduate medical education training. That reimbursement is designed to cover the direct training costs of residents in their initial residency training period. If a resident decides to proceed with further training in a specialty or subspecialty, however, a hospital's reimbursement is cut to half, 50 percent, for that additional training.

The rationale for this policy is strong. In general, we have an oversupply of specialty physicians in our country and a real need to increase the number of primary care providers. By reducing the reimbursement for specialty training, the Medicare program has promoted needed increases in primary care training rather than specialty positions.

I agree with this policy. However, as is often the case, there are always exceptions to the rule. We do not want to hinder training of particular specialties or subspecialties if there is strong evidence that there is a serious shortage of those particular physicians. That is why I am introducing The Medicare Critical Need GME Protection Act.

Child and adolescent psychiatry is a clear example of how certain subspecialties face critical professional shortages. The 2001 report of the Surgeon General's Conference on Children's Mental Health states that almost one in ten children suffer from mental illnesses severe enough to impair development, yet fewer than one in five get treatment. One huge barrier is the clear dearth of child and adolescent psychiatrists.

Today there are roughly 7000 fully trained child and adolescent psychiatrists in the entire United States with only 300 additional psychiatrists completing specialty training each year. These numbers fall far short of what is needed to meet prevalence rates that identify nearly 15 million children and adolescents in need of mental health treatment. That means that many vulnerable young people will suffer needlessly, unable to access the help they desperately need.

To provide another example of a current subspecialty facing serious professional shortages, we can look at nephrology. Between 1986-1995, the number of patients with End Stage Renal disease, ESRD, more than doubled, with over a quarter of a million people now on dialysis. Yet current data indicate that only 51.8 percent of today's nephrologists will still be in practice in the year 2010.

Most primary care physicians are not trained to treat the complex multi-symptom medical problems typically seen in ESRD and are unfamiliar with specific medications and technology prescribed for such patients. The decreasing supply of nephrologists, coupled with

an expanding population of renal patients, puts the health of our nation at risk.

The Medicare Critical Need GME Protection Act provides a tool to help combat such shortages of qualified professionals. The bill would simply provide the Secretary of Health and Human Services with the flexibility to continue full funding for a specialty or subspecialty training program if there is evidence that the program has a current shortage, or faces an imminent shortage, or health care professionals to meet the needs of our health care system.

The Secretary would grant this exception only for a limited number of years and would have complete control of the exception process. Programs would present evidence of the shortage and the Secretary could agree or disagree with the analysis. Nothing in this bill would require the Secretary to take any action whatsoever.

The bill also includes protections for budget neutrality. If the Secretary approves a specialty or subspecialty training program for full funding under this bill, the Secretary must adjust direct GME payments to ensure that no additional funds are spent.

Again, The Medical Critical Need GME Protection Act does nothing more than provide limited flexibility to the Secretary of Health and Human Services to ensure that we are training the health care professionals that meet our nation's needs.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in support of this important legislation. By giving the Secretary the flexibility to allocate funds to attract and train professionals in certain 'at risk' fields of medicine, we will significantly improve patient care and lower long-term health care costs.

AWARD FOR SOUTH TEXAS
SCHOOLS

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 21, 2001

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to three schools in South Texas which are beating the odds in today's public education system by harnessing the strength and awareness of the student population.

At a time when our resources are terribly over-burdened, the following South Texas schools are being recognized by the "Set A Good Example" competition sponsored by the Concerned Businessmen of America: Landrum Elementary in San Benito (2nd place nationally), Harlingen High School (2nd place nationally), and Rio Hondo Elementary (top ten honors).

These awards, launched in 1982, recognize schools which have student-oriented programs to influence their peers in a positive way by emphasizing the simple human moral values such as honesty, trustworthiness, responsibility, competence and fairness.

The Concerned Businessmen of America is a not-for-profit charitable educational organization which offers successful business strategies and programs to combat social ills and problems that face young people.

At a time when parents and community leaders are watching our young people with new eyes, wondering what is going on inside

their minds and what motivates them, this recognition is concrete proof that the South Texas community is paying attention to our young people.

Educators, counselors, parents, business people, and most importantly, students themselves, are working together to ward off the problems that have plagued other schools and other young people. The winning ingredient here is the active involvement of the students; the best messenger for young people is other young people.

We have enormous challenges before us in education and with regard to the public policy in our public schools. There will never be one single answer to preparing young people to withstand the complex social issues that our children encounter each day. But the best way to prepare our children to deal with the society in which we live is to teach them, from very early on, simple moral guidelines to apply to their lives. The "Set a Good Example" program follows up as encouragement and reinforcement to these lessons.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Landrum Elementary in San Benito, Harlingen High School, and Rio Hondo Elementary for their efforts to be part of a solution, which is the first step to solving the problem. I thank the young people in these schools for leading the way to better grades and healthier attitudes.

HONORING A FALLEN HERO,
FIREFIGHTER SCOTT L. NELSON

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 21, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, in July of 1976 a 900 acre wild fire ripped through the Battlement Creek area of Western Colorado. During the blaze, four brave forest service firefighters from different parts of the country were killed while trying to knock out one of the deadliest forest fires in recent memory. On July 21st of 2001, these four men will be honored at the opening of a memorial to be dedicated in their memory. I ask that Congress take a moment to honor these four men for giving their lives in the line of duty.

The four-day blaze which claimed the lives of three hotshot firefighters and one pilot was started by lightning, and took nearly 300 fire fighters to douse the blaze. Twenty-five year old Scott L. Nelson was born in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. Scott was a rookie firefighter on the Mormon Hotshots. He completed his basic training during May of 1976. During the summer of 1976, Scott got an assignment with the Mormon Lake Hotshots out of the Coconino National Forest in Arizona.

On the Morning of July 17, 1976, the crew was assigned to build a section of fire line to protect Federal lands belonging to the BLM. The hotshots were working on a section of fire line on the upper east side of the fire. With out warning, the fire took off and overran Scott and two other crewmembers. The fourth member of the crew survived.

Mr. Speaker, four men gave their lives protecting Federal land during the Battlement Creek fire in July of 1976. Scott L. Nelson and his crew will be honored by the citizens of the Battlement Creek area for their courage and