

I would note that interest accrues to the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund at a rate of, for example, \$103 million last fiscal year. Meanwhile, there is a \$1.8 billion unappropriated balance in the Fund. CARE 21 in no way adversely affects the abandoned mine reclamation program. The principal remains intact for that effort, and is fueled by annual reclamation fees assessed on every ton of mined coal which finances the program.

As such, one of the key features of CARE 21 is that the general taxpayer is not being called upon to pay for retired coal miner health care, but rather, the coal industry itself would provide for this coverage through the interest which accrues to the fees it pays into the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund.

Mr. Speaker, I noted earlier there is a historical commitment to providing health care for retired coal miners. This is a unique situation in that what would normally be a matter solely for the private sector is not in this instance. The genesis for this situation dates back to 1946 in an agreement between then-UMW President John L. Lewis and the Federal Government to resolve a long-running labor dispute. At the time, President Truman had ordered the Interior Secretary to take possession of all bituminous coal mines in the country in an effort to break a United Mine Workers of America strike. Eventually, Lewis and Secretary Julius Krug reached an agreement that included an industry-wide, miner controlled health plan.

In fact, the 1992 Coal Act itself was formulated partly on the basis of recommendations from the Coal Commission, established by former Labor Secretary Libby Dole, which in 1990 recommended a statutory obligation to help finance the UMWA's Health Benefit Funds.

Mr. Speaker, the people covered by this health care program spent their careers producing the energy which powered this Nation to greatness. We must not forsake them. We must not cast them adrift in their later years, robbed of the health care they so desperately need.

THE RETIREMENT OF RIO RANCHO
MAYOR JOHN JENNINGS

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 27, 2002

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, we all know of those local elected leaders from our states who, because of their tenure in office, accomplishments, dedication, and hard work, seem to define the term 'public servant.' These are the ones who do not seek headlines, but whose satisfaction comes from doing good things for their communities. I know of no other leader who fits this definition and style of public service more aptly than Rio Rancho Mayor John Jennings. Mayor Jennings will be leaving his post in March, after an exciting term in the history of this special city. He deserves immense credit for the success and growth of New Mexico's fastest-growing city.

Mayor Jennings came to office in 1998 from a career in banking, serving Sunwest Bank for 23 years. He also served as a president of the Rio Rancho Chamber of Commerce. He used

this experience to begin the demanding task of governing.

Mayor Jennings has served at a time of amazing expansion for the City of Vision. Building a city that can sustain such rapid growth has required patience, careful planning and effort, but those who live there feel they have finally created a community with its own identity, one that will continue to grow and thrive. Mayor Jennings has done a remarkable job in this regard.

A number of challenging issues face the City of Vision. Whether it be water, planning, revenue, or any issue that looms before our nation's mayors, John has capably acted on behalf of his city to address them. His leadership has been effective, and he leaves the city better than he found it.

As the U.S. Representative for the Third Congressional District, I hear from a number of the elected officials that I represent. However, Mayor Jennings has always made sure that I was aware of the matters that affected our dual constituents.

Mayor Jennings leaves office with a number of important accomplishments that will aid Rio Rancho for years to come. He fought to attract new industry to the city, which is critical to expanding the city's tax base. He worked on a number of transportation and infrastructure issues. He was also a major voice in the Vision 2020 Integrated Comprehensive Plan, which is a blueprint for dealing with growth-associated problems. In addition, Rio Rancho is the second safest city in New Mexico and has one of the best school systems.

However, I believe that the true legacy of Mayor Jennings is the emphasis he placed on the quality of life in Rio Rancho. He told a reporter once that he wanted children in Rio Rancho to have the same things he had growing up in Roswell: good libraries, free schooling, a safe environment. Therefore, many of his priorities were not surprising: adding park space and open space, correcting infrastructure deficiencies, such as adding sewer lines, repairing and upgrading roads, and adding to libraries; and maintaining the Department of Public Safety at its current level to keep its excellent safety record. Without a doubt, he has succeeded in many of these initiatives.

Mayor Jennings is from a family in New Mexico devoted to public service. From Rio Rancho to Roswell, the Jennings family has left a legacy of making government work for our citizens. His brother Tom is a former mayor of Roswell, and his brother Tim serves in the New Mexico State Senate. I am pleased that John has chosen to follow his family in this endeavor and he has done a remarkable job. More important than all of that is the indelible mark he continues to make on our minds as a man of true integrity, character, and kindness, a true gentleman who never speaks ill of a soul and one whose friendship is of the highest quality and value.

I hope that Mayor Jennings leaves his post with fond memories of his mayoral tenure and a sense of accomplishment for his efforts. Knowing John, upon his retirement, he is going to pursue endeavors that will be interesting and challenging; and no matter what he undertakes, I am sure that he will enjoy great success.

On behalf of Rio Rancho, the state of New Mexico, and this nation, I ask that my colleagues join me in thanking Mayor John Jennings for his service.

HONORING THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA WATER ASSOCIATION'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DOUG OSE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 27, 2002

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, today, the Northern California Water Association is celebrating its tenth anniversary. Since 1992, NCWA has provided a strong regional voice on California water policy for Northern California's water suppliers, farmers, and landowners.

NCWA is a prominent and well-respected organization in Northern California water issues. The organization represents 70 agricultural water suppliers and individual farmers who rely upon the waters of the American, Feather, Sacramento, and Yuba Rivers, smaller tributaries and groundwater to irrigate over 870,000 acres of Northern California farmland, extending from the Coast Range to the Sierra Nevada foothills, and from Redding to Sacramento.

For the past 10 years, NCWA has been a leader in protecting Northern California water rights, developing the Sacramento Valley Water Management Agreement, promoting the construction of new surface water storage in Northern California including Sites Reservoir, protecting Northern California groundwater resources, developing and implementing constructive solutions to Bay-Delta water supply and environmental problems, and developing and constructing fish passage improvements including fish screens and siphons.

It has been my great honor and pleasure to represent this region and to work closely with NCWA to protect the region's water supplies. Again, I would like to congratulate NCWA as the organization celebrates 10 years representing Northern California water interests.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 27, 2002

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, in the first week of February, I remained in Florida all week to attend to my wife, Emilie, who had to undergo surgery. I am pleased to report that she is doing well, and thank my colleagues for their expressions of kindness and support for her. While away from Washington on personal family medical leave, I was not present to record my vote on Roll Call Votes #6 through #14. I ask unanimous consent that the Congressional Record reflect, in the appropriate place, that had I been present, I would have voted "Yea" in each instance, for recorded votes number 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14.

IN HONOR OF JOSEPH A.
WUTKOWSKI

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 27, 2002

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Joseph A. Wutkowski, the youngest