

year, the Morgan County Press began in 1911 and the Stover Milling Company started in 1917. All of these businesses are still in operation and many are being run by the same family that founded them. Today there are 63 businesses licensed in the city of Stover.

The city government and citizens are planning various activities to commemorate this milestone. The Centennial Fair will be held June 19–21, 2003, the city is publishing a commemorative centennial book to highlight the city's history, and on November 13, 2003, the United States Postal Service will celebrate with a special cancellation at the Stover Post Office.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend my congratulations to the citizens of Stover, Missouri, for this outstanding accomplishment. I know all Members of Congress will join me in paying tribute to a great American city.

PROMOTING SELF-RELIANCE FOR
THE WORLD'S POOREST PEOPLE
ACT OF 2002

HON. TIM ROEMER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 11, 2002

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce, along with the distinguished gentleman from New York, AMO HOUGHTON, the "Promoting Self-Reliance for the World's Poorest People Act of 2002." This important legislation directs our limited foreign aid dollars to a proven and effective form of international development—microenterprise.

Microenterprise, the lending of very small loans to the world's poorest people that serve to start and expand small business, typically in amounts as low as \$100, is founded upon the principle of promoting opportunity and free enterprise for individuals who are subjected to abject poverty and harsh economic conditions. Furthermore, microenterprise is a foreign aid issue that garners wide bipartisan support. Over thirty Members already support this legislation. This is truly an issue where Republicans and Democrats can agree.

In a recent address at the United Nations' Financing for Development Conference in Monterrey, Mexico, President Bush called for a renewed commitment to promoting opportunity and free enterprise as tools necessary to alleviate global poverty. The President stated, "Nations' most vital natural resources are found in the minds and skills and enterprise of their citizens. The greatness of a society is achieved by unleashing the greatness of its people. The poor of the world need resources to meet their needs, and like all people, they deserve institutions that encourage their dreams."

Now more than ever, Congress must rigorously support U.S. foreign aid programs that foster hope and opportunity to counter the fear and desperation that is exploited by terrorists among the masses of unemployed and impoverished people around the world. Because the war on terrorism will not be won by satellites and soldiers alone, our arsenal must also include humanitarian assistance that promotes freedom and opportunity for the world's poorest people. Microenterprise programs undeniably fulfill this role in the developing world.

Mr. Speaker, take for example the story of Violet Mutoto of Uganda. Violet, a mother of

four young children, lives and works out of her small house in the tiny hamlet of Mooni. Her mud dwelling contains no plumbing, yet she pays roughly eighteen dollars a month in rent. Out of the front of her home, Violet operates a rudimentary store. Since receiving her first loan of \$43 from the international development organization, Freedom from Hunger, Violet has been able to pay her rent and expand her stock of supplies in her store. Now she sells cooking oils, cheese, salt, sugar, malaria pills, and other items. The diversified stock of supplies has increased her business and has afforded her the opportunity to send her older children to school. After repaying her first loan, Violet was able to take out second and third loans to begin accumulating a savings account.

The Roemer/Houghton bipartisan legislation modestly increases funding for Microenterprise programs from \$155 million to \$200 million annually in the Foreign Operations budget. This four-year funding level would also ensure that our investment to the world's small business owners is well spent. Specifically, our bill calls for targeting at least half of all microenterprise resources to the world's poorest people. Our legislation defines the world's poorest people as those people in the poorest fifty percent of a country in relation to that country's official national poverty line and/or as those people who are living on the equivalent of less than one United States' dollar per day.

The Roemer/Houghton bipartisan legislation also calls for greater accountability measures that will ensure effective poverty-targeting assistance. With the implementation of poverty assessment measurements, Congress and microenterprise donors can be sure that poverty targeted funding is meeting its intended goal of reaching the world's poorest people.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I strongly encourage my colleagues to review and cosponsor the "Promoting Self-Reliance for the World's Poorest People Act of 2002." Congress must develop and support foreign aid programs that equip the world's poorest people with the tools to empower themselves. Microenterprise programs such as Freedom from Hunger provide these vital empowerment tools in the form of tiny microcredit loans. As the story of Violet Mutoto demonstrates, by devoting greater resources to effective humanitarian programs like micro enterprise, U.S. foreign aid can provide hope and empowerment to the world's poorest people and demonstrate that the United States is committed to spreading the rewards that can grow in a free-enterprise system.

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NA-
TIONAL COMMITTEE FOR EM-
PLOYER SUPPORT OF THE
GUARD AND RESERVE

HON. NORMAN D. DICKS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 11, 2002

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)—its 4,200 volunteers and Department of Defense (DOD) staff—in celebrating 30 years of service to this Nation.

The National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) was

established in 1972, the year the United States ended the Selective Service System and established an all-volunteer military force. DOD realized that support from employers and communities would be instrumental in maintaining Reserve component membership. ESGR was created to obtain employer and community support for the National Guard and Reserve and to promote the role of Reserve forces in the national defense.

ESGR has lived up to the task and accomplished much more. Since 1972, with the help of the Advertising Council, Inc., ESGR has benefited from nearly \$1 billion in pro bono advertising reaching the six million employers with one or more employees in the United States.

Employers have, in turn, signed ESGR Statements of Support, publicly committing to support the National Guard and Reserve. The former Chairman of the Board and CEO of General Motors, Mr. James H. Roche signed the first Statement of Support in the Office of the Secretary of Defense on December 13, 1972. The next day, President Richard Nixon signed a Statement of Support covering all Federal civilian employees. Since the inception of this program, Presidents Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush, Clinton and President George W. Bush have all signed Statements of Support, along with hundreds of thousands of employers, including Dell Computer Corporation, Xerox, the Society for Human Resource Management and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. To date, over 300,000 employers have signed statements of support. Additionally, the strategic alliance formed in 1998 between ESGR and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce resulted in more than 1,200 chambers of commerce nationwide signing a Statement of Support for the Guard and Reserve.

ESGR offers Ombudsman services designed to provide information to employers and Reservists regarding their rights and responsibilities under the law, and to resolve conflicts through informal mediation. These services operate in cooperation with the Department of Labor. ESGR volunteers in 54 U.S. states and territories contribute thousands of hours of effort representing millions of dollars of volunteer service in support of ESGR programs, its services, and the men and women of our nation's Reserve forces.

Mr. Speaker, the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is smart government in action. The small ESGR staff in Arlington, VA, under the direction of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, provides guidance and support to a network of 4,200 volunteer business, civic, and community leaders.

ESGR educates employers on their rights and obligations under the law and recognize employers who actively support employee participation in the Guard and Reserve. ESGR also educates members of the National Guard and Reserve in regards to their rights and responsibilities to the value of their employers support. Committees can be found in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam.

With the end of the cold war, the Reserve components have been called with increasing frequency. During the Gulf War in 1990–1991, more than 250,000 Reserve component members were called to active duty to support military operations in the Persian Gulf. Since the start of Operation Noble Eagle and Enduring