

The bill will do three things, each of which is absolutely necessary to continue to attract and retain the very best and brightest to our federal law enforcement agencies. First, the bill will eliminate certain existing limits on the amount of overtime pay federal law enforcement agents can receive. Second, the bill will bring up-to-date outmoded increases in the pay received by agents who work in certain high-cost metropolitan areas. Third, the bill directs the Office of Personnel Management, which oversees pay and benefit issues for federal employees, to study and, if warranted, implement a separate pay structure for federal law enforcement officers who are now evaluated, promoted, and paid under the same system as all other federal employees.

The first two provisions are essentially technical adjustments aimed at fairly compensating federal agents for the overtime they put in (and they have put in A LOT of it since 9/11) as well as the higher cost of living in the nation's larger metropolitan areas, like New York, San Francisco, and here in Washington, D.C. where the price of real estate has risen so sharply in recent years that many federal agents cannot afford to purchase even a modest home.

The third provision will address the longstanding need for an examination and ultimate implementation of a separate pay and promotion system for federal law enforcement. The individuals who devote their lives to front-line enforcement of the laws of the United States and the protection of our national security should be functioning under a personnel system tailored to the demands of their work, which is fundamentally different than that done by civil servants in other agencies.

Mr. Speaker, now is the right time for Congress to take action in this area. Just last week, OPM Director Kay Coles James outlined the Bush Administration's initiatives for improving the antiquated system of pay and promotion for all federal employees. OPM reported that the antiquated General Schedule ("GS") that sets forth pay and promotion levels does not adequately compete with pay levels in the private sector, nor does it encourage individual accomplishment and innovation or grant individual agencies with the flexibility they need to address their particular human capital needs. I support this effort to reform and modernize our federal civil service pay system for all federal employees, in whatever agency they serve.

However, nowhere are these criticisms of the GS system more pronounced than among our federal law enforcement agencies. As Congress continues to hold hearings and review a wide array of reforms to the GS system, I believe we should take the interim steps called for in the Federal Law Enforcement Pay Equity and Reform Act to ensure that we do not lose an unacceptable number of quality law enforcement officers.

A law enforcement pay system is not a new idea. The last three administrations have supported the concept. In fact, in 1993, the OPM released a study and report to Congress which found that the GS system created largely for white collar civil servants simply does not fit the role, mission, or demands of modern federal law enforcement agencies. It found that the GS system does not adequately allow for promotion and advancement based on the individual training, scope of work, danger level, or personal ambition and innovation of federal agents.

Nor does it adequately compensate mid-and upper-level management within the agencies. The so-called "pay compression" at these agencies, the report found, sees many agents hit a pay ceiling mid-way through their careers. Thus, just at the time when these agents become the most experienced, seasoned, and valuable to the U.S., they are left with very little financial incentive to continue advancing in their careers.

Mr. Speaker, in no way am I suggesting that these agents do what they do solely, or even largely, for the money. If money were all that motivated them, they would have chosen a different career from the outset. Far from it, most of the federal agents I know do what they do and put their lives on the line because they have a burning desire to serve their country and to protect Americans from crime. But they must also make ends meet and provide for their families, and for many agents, that is becoming harder and harder to do.

Mr. Speaker, at no time before have these inadequacies of the GS system for law enforcement officers been more pronounced than today. We are facing a "perfect storm" of personnel demands at these agencies: as the demands on these agents skyrocket, the private sector is aggressively seeking to recruit those agents.

Mr. Speaker, since 9/11, agents are working tremendous amounts of overtime. I have met and spoken with many federal law enforcement agents and agencies, and in particular with the FBI and its members' association, the FBI Agents Association. They have told me that it is not uncommon for an average FBI agent, for example, to today be working 60 to 80-hour work weeks, or even more. Now long hours at the FBI is nothing new. As a former FBI agent myself, I can tell you that marathon sessions of investigation, surveillance, research, and apprehension go with the territory. Agents know this, and they accept it. More importantly, their spouses and children must accept it as part of the job.

But today, a significant number of the nation's FBI agents have been assigned to anti-terrorism-related jobs. Not only are these agents working day and night to identify and apprehend terrorists, but the other agents at the FBI are pulling double-duty as they maintain crime-fighting efforts in the many other jurisdictional areas. At the same time, private sector companies are aggressively recruiting security experts as they, too, seek to address terrorist and other threats. Corporations across America are offering big salaries and big signing bonuses to anyone who has demonstrable experience in terrorism and security. Invariably, they recruit from the ranks of our national law enforcement agents to fill that need.

If America is to win, and I mean WIN the war against terrorism and crime, then we simply must be able to recruit and retain intelligent, talented, and highly motivated men and women. The FBI or any other agency you look at is no better and no worse than the people who work there. I believe that we have the very best people and the very best national law enforcement agencies to be found anywhere in the world. But if we want to maintain that exceptional level of quality in the face of new threats and new challenges to our national security, we must pay these people what they're worth and we must provide the flexibility to promote them on criteria more than simply how long they have worked in

their particular job. This legislation goes a long way toward accomplishing these goals, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

IN CELEBRATION OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF TAIWANESE AMERICANS DURING TAIWANESE AMERICAN HERITAGE WEEK

**HON. JOHN SHIMKUS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 16, 2002*

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the achievements of Taiwanese Americans during Taiwanese American Heritage Week, which will be held from May 11th to May 18th of this year. This Heritage Week serves as a vehicle to promote the image and welfare of Taiwanese Americans to society, as well as to enhance a mutual understanding and consolidation among different generations of Taiwanese Americans. During this special week, we are able to embrace America's diversity and celebrate the spirit of community that binds us together as one nation.

Two weekends ago, I had the pleasure of attending a Taiwanese American Heritage day at the St. Louis Zoo. During this event, I teamed more about the outstanding contributions that Taiwanese Americans have made to our nation and to the world. I was truly impressed to meet so many Taiwanese Americans that were passionate about preserving the value of democracy, freedom, and the rule of law for their mother country while building stronger ties with their new homeland.

With all that Taiwanese Americans have accomplished, there can be no complete satisfaction until Taiwan's status and global contributions are respected and appreciated by the international community. I hope that the various Heritage Week celebrations around the nation will help further the positive contributions of Taiwanese Americans as they continue to make great strides in bringing together the best of the East and West. Mr. Speaker, together we can make the Taiwanese American Heritage Week a valuable and enduring means for celebration.

RECOGNIZING STEPHEN T. FERGUSON ON HIS APPOINTMENT TO THE U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY

**HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 16, 2002*

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize my constituent, Stephen T. Ferguson of Elyria, Ohio, who recently accepted his appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

Steve will soon graduate from Keystone High School. During his high school career, he has maintained a high grade point average, and is a member of the National Honor Society. He is an accomplished athlete, earning a varsity letter in football. And, he has clearly demonstrated his leadership ability, serving as class president and vice president, as president of the National Honor Society and as captain of the football team.