

this summer. We need your input on how the Department can better utilize the Workforce Investment Boards and One-Stops to make sure we meet the needs of both public and private providers, as well as job seekers.

The paraprofessional long-term care workforce—from nursing assistants to home health and home care aides to personal care workers and attendants—is the cornerstone of America's long-term care system. They provide hands-on care, supervision, and emotional support to millions of Americans with chronic illnesses and disabilities.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, or BLS, the number of home health and personal care aides is nearly equal to the number of nursing assistants, roughly 750,000.

As you know, with an aging population and other industry challenges, the future availability of frontline direct care workers does not look promising. In fact, BLS estimates that by 2006, personal and home care assistance will be the fourth-fastest growing occupation with a growth rate of 84.7%.

Between 1998 and 2008, America needs around 750,000 more personal care and home health care workers. Unfortunately, many of these positions will go unfilled, unless we take action.

The solution is not simply one of supply. The more fundamental, long-term challenge is how to develop a committed, stable pool of workers who are willing, able, and skilled to provide quality care. I am committed to addressing both the short and the long-term challenges, so we can design quality systems of care for people with disabilities.

The Department is making significant progress, but we still need your input on issues concerning earnings opportunities, employment status, and labor supply of personal assistants and other community workers.

Here are some actions that are either planned or are currently underway at the Department:

The Office of Disability Employment Policy, or ODEP, led by Dr. Roy Grizzard, is working to identify options and to develop an inter-agency/inter-department plan that will increase the availability and quality of personal assistants and identify other options for education, training, and career advancement for these workers and other direct care staff.

More specifically, the Department of Labor and HHS are taking a detailed look at the challenges to the industry, as well as providing recommendations on how to address the worker and skill shortage.

ODEP and its partners will convene a listening session for people with disabilities. A similar listening session will be held for service providers and other direct care staff and community service workers. Your organization, ANCOR, certainly will be a part of these sessions.

ODEP and ETA are working to increase access to personal assistance supports through the One-Stop Centers.

And ODEP is expected to establish an on-line registry, similar to America's Job Bank, where local or community-based organizations, like yours, can help locate more workers.

The Administration is listening to ANCOR, and we still have a lot left to do. I know we will continue to work together to provide stable community infrastructure for the future of individuals with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities. Much of that relies on a quality, highly-trained direct support workforce, and we are committed to making it happen.

Thanks again for inviting me to be here today. I look forward to working with ANCOR and its members to expand your sup-

ports and services in the years to come. When government, associations, business, and individuals work together, we can build a more welcoming and promising future for all Americans.

THE TV CONSUMER CHOICE ACT OF 2002

HON. F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 16, 2002

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that will nullify the Federal Communication Commission's mandate that will force all televisions to have a digital TV receiver by 2007. The TV Consumer Choice Act of 2002 will give consumers the ability to choose whether or not they want a TV that includes an expensive—and often unnecessary—digital TV tuner.

While digital TV may present new and exciting options to viewers, these tuners should not be forced upon hundreds of millions of Americans, many of whom do not want or need this expensive device. Digital TV tuners are only used to receive over-the-air signals. For those households who choose alternate services, such as cable or satellite, the device is completely worthless. According to the Consumer Electronics Association, the tuner mandate will increase the cost of the average TV by \$250 for a device that less than 13% of consumers will use. This is unacceptable.

My legislation will ensure that individual consumers—not the federal government—decide which TV options are best for them. I am hopeful my colleagues will support this legislation and the House will act on this proposal expeditiously.

OFFICERS OF THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS

HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 16, 2002

Mr. KING. Mr. Speaker, today to request that the following speeches given by Officers of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) be inserted into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. The first speech is the welcoming remarks by John E. McInerney, the President of the District of Columbia State Board of the AOH. The second is a tribute to the work of the Congressional Ad Hoc Committee for Irish Affairs by Ned McGinley, the new National President of the AOH.

A TRIBUTE TO THE PEACEMAKERS

(By John Edward McInerney)

Ladies and gentlemen of the Congress, Mr. Ambassador, fellow Hibernians, and honored guests. Welcome.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians is gathered here this evening to pay tribute and to thank a very special group of legislators. We Hibernians are here to thank the 89 women and men of the United States House of Representatives who are serving as members on the bipartisan Ad Hoc Committee for Irish Affairs. After twenty-five years of service, the members of the committee have done so much to bring peace with justice to Ireland.

For centuries before the United States was formed as a nation, Ireland struggled and fought for her freedom. Since 1921, Ireland has strived to be one nation united taking its rightful place among the family of nations. In that long struggle for the cause of an united Ireland, the Irish American community never received support by a large organized group of members of the American Congress.

However, twenty-five years ago that situation changed, thanks in large part to so many people, especially Congressman Mario Biaggi. It was during this very month on September 27, 1977 that the Ad Hoc Committee for Irish Affairs was born. Initially, it did not meet with universal acclamation on both sides of the Atlantic. But in time it became a valuable resource to all parties on both sides of the Ocean as it focused on the important issue of peace with justice in all of Ireland. From the onset, it focused on encouraging the United States to help broker peace initiatives. The progress that has been achieved so far is due in part to the tireless efforts of this bipartisan Ad Hoc Committee for Irish Affairs.

In time, this committee became the pre-eminent Congressional Caucus dedicated to fostering a closer relationship between the people of Ireland and the United States Congress. It was organized with the help of the national board of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and other groups. It has been an unflinching proponent of the Peace Process in the north of Ireland by hosting members from both sides of the government of the North as well as the Republic of Ireland. In doing this it has served as a valuable source of education for all the members of the United States Congress on Ireland.

This ad hoc committee was there for Ireland and the Irish American community at critical moments during the past quarter century—such as persuading President Clinton to grant Gerry Adams a visa. That bold move alone set off the current peace process in the north of Ireland—a process that is still developing and unfolding today. It was a member of this ad hoc committee namely Peter King of New York—who was a liaison between President Clinton and some of the parties in helping shape the Good Friday Agreement—even to the point of waking the President of the United States up in the middle of the night to intervene at critical moments.

Each member of the Ad Hoc Committee has made valuable—or should I say significant—contributions. In decades to come when the history of these uncertain times—the history of the “troubles” and the history of the current struggles over the Good Friday Agreement—will be written, historians will record that the Ad Hoc Committee for Irish Affairs played a critical role in achieving peace with justice in Ireland. Not only the role of Mario Biaggi will stand out, but the names of the current Co-Chairs of this bipartisan committee—Benjamin Gilman, Peter King, Richard Neal, and Joseph Crowley—will be not be lost in the annuals of history, especially the history of Ireland.

But, for each of you individually, you will know in time as you look back upon your years of service in the Congress, that your interventions and efforts—both personally and collectively—played an important role at critical times in Ireland's history today. You will have achieved the personal satisfaction of having played the role of peacemaker. And to each of you, may the promise of Scripture come true in your own lives and in exercising your responsibilities as lawmakers—“Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall inherit the earth.”

This evening, the Hibernians—the oldest Irish American fraternal organization in the

United States—welcome each of you here this evening as we pay tribute and to thank the peacemakers.

TRIBUTE TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR IRISH AFFAIRS

(By Ned McGinley)

Reverend clergy, Members of Congress, AOH and LAOH national officers, AOH District of Columbia state board officers, and members of the AOH and LAOH. Welcome to our congressional reception.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, along with our Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, is proud to host this reception for the 25 years of work that the Ad Hoc Committee for Irish Affairs has accomplished.

We know that Ad Hoc refers to a "temporary committee." When our efforts in the next few years are successful and bring about a United Ireland with Peace and Justice for all of its citizens, we will all come down here for a really big, party when we finally dissolve this Committee.

The following is a quote for the—Irish Echo of May 2, 1981 right after Bobby Sands had won a by-election to become a legally elected member of the London Parliament and put and end to the lie to the propaganda that Irish-Republicans had NO political support in the six counties in the north of Ireland. In a letter to President Reagan, the Committee wrote:

"As members of the Ad Hoc Congressional Committee for Irish Affairs, we are making an urgent appeal on behalf of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Irish National Caucus, that you immediately communicate with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to urge a humanitarian resolution in the matter of Mr. Robert Sands. Mr. Sands, a legally elected member of the British Parliament, and a prisoner in the Long Kesh prison facility, is in the 54th day of a hunger strike.

"As his condition deteriorates, violence in the North has escalated. His death very well may trigger more severe violence. It is our hope that you can convey your concern personally and immediately to Mrs. Thatcher. Clearly, time is of the essence as officials have indicated that his death may be imminent if quick action is not taken.

"As you stated in your St. Patrick's Day message, 'I add my personal prayers and the good offices of the United States to those who wish fervently for peace.' We make our appeal to you in the spirit of peace and humanity."

That telegram sent to President Reagan was signed by many members of Congress, namely Senator Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY), and Representatives Mario Biaggi (D-NY), Benjamin Rosenthal (D-NY), William Cotter (D-CT), Leo C. Zeferetti (D-NY), Norman Lent (R-NY), Harold C. Hollenbeck (R-NJ), John Conyers (D-MI), Richard Ottinger (D-NY), Nicholas Mavroules (D-Mass), William Carney (R-NY), Frank Annuzio (D-IL), Eugene Atkinson (D-Pa), Charles Schumer (D-NY), John LeBoutillier (R-NY), Benjamin Gilman (R-NY), Gregory Carman (R-NY), Hamilton Fish (R-NY), Cardiss Collins (D-IL), Samuel S. Stratton (D-NY), and James Nelligan (R-Pa).

Obviously the Ad Hoc Committee made a statement on the Hunger Strike in May of 1981 that the election of Bobby Sands may be the seminal moment in the Peace Process today. That was when Sinn Fein, the Irish-Republican political party, discovered their electoral mandate and platform. That was the beginning when they formed the strategy of today. That strategy essentially states that they are willing to beat you at "the ballot box."

It would take fifteen more years and 3,000 deaths in a population of 1.5 million, but

that strategy would evolve into the electoral successes of the day for Sinn Fein and the other Nationalist Party, the SDLP.

It built a confidence in the Irish Republicans that they were not alone and that people in the United States knew of their plight, due in no small part because of this Ad Hoc Committee.

It would bring in 1996 Gerry Adams to New York City—in no small part because of the efforts of this Ad Hoc Committee.

It would mean a ceasefire for the IRA and the decommissioning of weapons during the past two years.

It would bring about the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 that would tie everyone in the North of Ireland to the ballot box.

It would build a consensus for a political solution to what was once known as one of the world's interminable conflicts.

In all of this I do not wish to get too optimistic. The latest threat to the peace process came only last weekend because the level of tension loyalist paramilitary UDA and LVF have had during a summer of violence unparalleled in a land used to summers of violence. Their one and only aim in all of this is to draw the Irish Republican Army back into the violence, knowing that any violence by the Republicans will cause headlines while their violence will be against little girls walking to Holy Cross School to not even draw a camera.

The Royal Ulster Constabulary, about which the U.S. Congress held hearings in many instances chaired by Ben Gilman and Christopher Smith, exposed this lethal paramilitary arm of Unionism for the collusion and murders in which they had aided the Unionists.

There have been changes, but not yet enough. Those who helped murder Nationalists must be vetted from the Police Service and brought to trial. Rosemary Nelson testified at a U.S. congressional hearing, chaired by Chris Smith, in which she said that she had been threatened. Within months after she returned to the north of Ireland, she was assassinated with a bomb in her car.

The Patton Proposals must be instituted in full, not partially. The Special Branch of the RUC, which may have failed to prevent the Omagh Bombing when it protected an informant, needs to disappear.

With my own eyes I saw this past August that the RUC is still a sectarian police force in the Belfast neighborhoods of the Short Strand and Ardoyne, where Protestant gangs roam unchecked firing shots and attacking any Catholic in the area.

We need to answer the Unionists who say this process isn't working with the list of concessions made by the Republicans both in arms control and in politics. Remember that Sinn Fein gave up their long-time armed struggle to accept the ballot box as a means to bring about a United Ireland. I submit that the Ulster Unionist Party is more afraid of Sinn Fein at the ballot box than they are anywhere else, and that they are also deathly afraid of the Sinn Fein mandate with their rightful place in the government.

Please don't stop now! We together—the Ad Hoc Committee for Irish Affairs and Irish organizations like the AOH—

We have made the difference in converting the armed struggle into the political struggle.

We have made the difference between war and peace.

We have saved hundreds of lives in a country of 1.5 million.

We have brought the confidence to the Nationalist/Catholic people of the north that someone knows their plight and will give them a fair shake.

We have proved to them that they can win freedom through politics.

We have proven that they can have a United Ireland by all peaceful means.

Thank you ladies and gentlemen of the Congress for having the courage to do the right thing though it may not be the popular thing during the past quarter century.

REMEMBERING MICHELE MILLS AS A GREAT POINT-OF-LIGHT

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 16, 2002

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay a special tribute to Michele Mills, a Flight Attendant who was also a distinguished community leader and friend who's life was cut short by the American Airlines crash in Rockaway, New York which occurred only a few weeks after the September 11th tragedy. As we approach the one-year anniversary of her passing, I would like to pause for a moment to remember her and salute her as a Great Point-of-Light for All Americans.

The bird is one of God's creatures. When it is ill or near death, the bird does not fly. She prepares for death on the ground. The airplane is one of man's creations; sometimes we know when there is illness or decay and many times we do not. We say that flying is safer than driving a car, and, in our arrogant confidence, we fly our airplanes as long as we possibly can. After all, imitating God is expensive and we want to get every dollar's worth of flying time from our creations. Thus, tragedies such as the end of American Airlines Flight 587 herald the immediate need for inspections, new regulations and equipment modifications. It is the human way, not God's way.

Our Lord is always with us. But who, besides our Lord, is on every flight worldwide to guide the plane, to make the passengers comfortable or to rescue them if the need arises? The valiant crews who love their jobs and do them well. And particularly now, in the aftermath of terrorist attacks where planes and innocent lives were used as weapons of destruction, these flight attendants and pilots have a greater burden thrust upon them as a jittery nation struggles to come to terms with flying again. And, for the most part, they have been wonderful healers for our nation. Day in and day out, these unsung heroes face the same risks as their charges and they serve us all very well.

One of these unsung heroes is our friend, sister, daughter, and constituent Michele Mills. Michele Mills was born to Priscilla and Eugene Mills on June 4, 1955 in St. Mary's Hospital of Brooklyn, New York. Michele remained a proud resident of the Brooklyn communities for many years—from both Red Hook and Crown Heights. Michele graduated Franklin D. Roosevelt High School in 1973. She furthered her education at Fashion Institute of Technology and majored in merchandising/buying. She was encouraged to pursue a career in the airline industry by her sister, Tricia. She began this career with Overseas National Airlines.

Michele joined American Airlines in May, 1978, and completed 23 years of service. She always kept her priorities in order: God, Family, Work and Hobbies. She realized God's presence in her life at a very early age and