

SMALLPOX VACCINE

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 29, 2003

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, today the House of Representatives passed legislation authorizing a smallpox vaccine compensation program for first-responders. The legislation we passed today is an improvement over the legislation that the House rejected several weeks ago. Under the plan we passed today nurses, firefighters and other first-responders will not have to rush to be vaccinated in order to make an arbitrary deadline for compensation eligibility. First-responders who are permanently disabled as a result of the smallpox vaccine will receive a portion of their wages that is not subject to a lifetime cap. And first-responders who are out of work for more than ten days will receive reimbursement for lost wages from the first day of work that they missed.

These are important improvements. However, the program still falls short and I am disappointed that the Administration nicked-and-dimed first-responders throughout this process. The Republicans refused to guarantee these brave men and women who volunteer to take the smallpox vaccine to protect all of us in case of a bioterror attack at the same level of compensation that would be available to members of Congress if we are injured on the job. Nurses, firefighters, and police officers deserve a better law than this. Given that the risk of injury from the vaccine is several tens per million, and the Administration only expects to vaccinate several million, ensuring full and fair compensation would certainly have been affordable.

I want this program to work. I want first-responders to have adequate access to compensation so they feel comfortable about taking the smallpox vaccine. If this program is going to succeed, the Administration is going to have to make good on promises it made to us that it refused to put in the legislation. These promises include: assuring adequate funding so that states can provide appropriate education and screening of first-responders volunteering for the vaccine; indexing the annual cap on wage replacement to inflation; and allowing first-responders who are injured by the vaccine to deduct their compensation from their federal taxes. In response to concerns that the legislation does not allow for judicial review of compensation determinations, the Administration has said that the Secretary of Health and Human Services intends to run this program in a fair and generous way. Ensuring that these promises are fulfilled is a critical component of meeting that pledge.

I would like to thank Representative CAPPs, Representative DINGELL, Representative BROWN, Senator KENNEDY and others, as well as their staffs, for their commitment to this issue and for working with me for the last six months to improve this program so that first-responders will have some assurance that if they are injured by the smallpox vaccine, they will receive at least some measure of compensation.

RECOGNIZING ANDREW FISHER
FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF
EAGLE SCOUT**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 29, 2003

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Andrew Fisher, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 249, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Andrew has been very active with his troop, participating in such scout activities as Camp Bartle and Philmont. Over the five years he has been involved in scouting, he has earned 32 merit badges. Additionally, Andrew has held numerous leadership positions in his troop, serving as Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Senior Patrol Leader and Quartermaster. Andrew also has been honored for his numerous scouting achievements with such awards as the Foxman in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say, Brave in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say, Warrior in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say, Firebuilder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say, Tom-Tom Beater in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say, the World Conservation Award, and the 50 Miller Award.

For his Eagle Scout project, Andrew prepared a landscaping and renovation project for a memorial to a fallen firefighter in Weston, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Andrew Fisher for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO THE CLASS FROM
DULUTH CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL**HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 29, 2003

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, on April 26, 2003, more than 1200 students from across the United States arrived in Washington, D.C. to compete in the national finals of the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution program, the most extensive educational program in the country developed specifically to educate young people about the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Administered by the Center for Civic Education, the We the People program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education by an act of Congress.

I am proud to announce that the class from Duluth Central High School from Duluth will represent the State of Minnesota in this national event. These young scholars have worked conscientiously to reach the national finals by participating at local and statewide competitions. As a result of their experience they have gained a deep knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles and values of our constitutional democracy.

The three-day We the People national competition is modeled after hearings in the United States Congress. The hearings consist of oral presentations by high school students before a panel of adult judges on constitutional topics.

The students are given an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge while they evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. Their testimony is followed by a period of questioning by the judges who probe the students' depth of understanding and ability to apply their constitutional knowledge.

The We the People program provides curricula materials at upper elementary, middle, and high school levels. The curricula not only enhances students' understanding of the institutions of American constitutional democracy, but it also helps them identify the contemporary relevance of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. Critical thinking exercises, problem-solving activities, and cooperative learning techniques help develop participatory skills necessary for students to become active, responsible citizens.

Independent studies by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) revealed that students enrolled in the We the People program at upper elementary, middle, and high school levels "significantly outperformed comparison students on every topic of the tests taken." Another study by Richard Brody at Stanford University discovered that students involved in the We the People program develop greater commitment to democratic principles and values than do students using traditional textbooks and approaches. Researchers at the Council for Basic Education noted,

"[T]eachers feel excited and renewed. . . . Students are enthusiastic about what they have been able to accomplish, especially in terms of their ability to carry out a reasoned argument. They have become energized about their place as citizens of the United States."

The class from Duluth Central High School is currently preparing for their participation in the national competition in Washington, D.C. It is inspiring to see these young people advocate the fundamental ideals and principles of our government, ideas that identify us as a people and bind us together as a nation. It is important for future generations to understand these values and principles which we hold as standards in our endeavor to preserve and realize the promise of our constitutional democracy. I wish these young "constitutional experts" the best of luck at the We the People national finals.

TRIBUTE TO G. WILLIAM WARD

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 29, 2003

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate G. William Ward for earning the Blair County Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award for Business Advocacy and the National Distinguished Eagle Scout Award given by the Penns Woods Council of the Boy Scouts of America. Both awards will be presented to Mr. Ward at a dinner in his honor cosponsored by both award giving parties.

G. William Ward is a resident of Blair County, Pennsylvania and currently serves as the President and Chairman of the Board of Ward Trucking Corporation. During his tenure with Ward Trucking, he has accumulated an impressive list of professional achievements and