

proud of the service these recipients have given to the people of the City of Worcester.

Mr. Speaker, the Worcester Community Action Council (WCAC), created in 1965, serves as an umbrella organization for 20 education and social service programs. It includes Energy Assistance, Head Start, Healthy Families, Training and Youth Education Mediation, Consumer Council, and Community Connections. WCAC's mission is "to stimulate change in the fundamental causes of poverty and to create and provide opportunities for economic self-sufficiency through services, partnership, and advocacy."

Mr. Speaker, this ceremony honors organizations and individuals who promote economic self-sufficiency and work tirelessly on behalf of those less fortunate in our society. The following recipients are being honored today for their commitment to the education of all of our children: Allmerica Financial, for their support of WCAC's Cityworks Program; Anne Quinne for her work to develop programs for at-risk youth; and Lisa Perez for her efforts to encourage parent involvement in Worcester's schools.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to acknowledge the contributions of the following organizations: Nstar Gas for its support of weatherization services for families; University Home Improvement and Ken Martinetty for their services as weatherization contractors; and Amara Thomas for her participation in the Cityworks corps member and current IDA participant.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we are also honoring the contributions of the following community leaders: State Representative Robert Spellane for his service on behalf of families in need; Worcester County Treasurer Michael Donoghue for his exemplary community service; Mike Keegan for his leadership of WCAC; Winifred Octave for her parent leadership efforts; Dr. James Ostromecky for his free dental services for Head Start children; Christopher and Laura Pallotta for their support of WCAC's mediation services; Marge Perves for her community involvement and volunteer mediation services; Larry Raymond for his commitment to family and self sufficiency; and Steve Teasdale for his efforts to revitalize the Main South neighborhood.

Mr. Speaker these individuals are the embodiment of our collective common good, and I am sure that my colleagues in the House of Representatives join me in extending sincere thanks to the recipients of WCAC's Warm Friends Awards.

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THE GLOBAL PATHOGEN  
SURVEILLANCE ACT

**HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 4, 2003*

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Global Pathogen Surveillance Act of 2003 with my colleague, Congressman MARK KIRK. This important bipartisan legislation mirrors legislation offered by Senators BIDEN and LUGAR, and will reduce the risk of infectious diseases entering this country.

As we have learned from the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, and the anthrax attacks, nature and terrorists

do not stand still while the world finds ways to improve its preparedness against biological threats.

Indeed, new diseases—no matter where they start—can spread to the United States in days or even hours. Many of them, including smallpox, SARS and the plague have lengthy incubation times, lasting two to twelve days.

The flight time between any two cities, however, is under 36 hours. Any of the 140 million people who enter the United States by air each year can, unknowingly, carry these dangerous pathogens with them.

SARS, for example, came to the world's attention in East Asia in March. Today, there are over eight thousand cases worldwide, with the highest number of cases in the United States occurring in my home state of California.

Because it was not reported immediately and a strong international network was not in place to monitor and control it, SARS has become a worldwide epidemic.

It has put a severe strain on hospitals and health care systems and caused financial chaos in dozens of countries.

While Congress has been generous in funding measures to improve domestic bio-preparedness, rapid detection of outbreaks requires significant improvements in international disease surveillance.

While developing nations are most likely to experience rapid disease outbreak, they don't have the trained personnel, the laboratory equipment or the public health infrastructure to deal with epidemics—much less warn the rest of the world.

Our bill would help train public health professionals in developing countries to use electronic syndrome surveillance systems and traditional epidemiology methods to better detect, diagnose and contain infectious disease outbreaks.

Our bill would also help developing countries purchase public health laboratory equipment for health surveillance and diagnosis as well as communications technology to transmit information about infectious diseases.

This legislation would also develop and enhance existing regional health networks and establish lab-to-lab cooperative relationships between the United States and public health laboratories and foreign counterparts.

It would also strengthen the reporting capabilities of the World Health Organization, whose decision to issue a global alert in March allowed health officials around the world to take appropriate measures to control the spread of SARS.

All these provisions strengthen a global surveillance network which will detect the unique symptoms of an epidemic before it spreads and allow earlier diagnosis and better containment measures.

I call on my colleagues to support this important bill and help us close the huge gaps in our defense against emerging diseases.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT  
AUTHORIZING CONGRESS TO  
PROHIBIT PHYSICAL DESECRATION  
OF THE FLAG OF THE  
UNITED STATES

SPEECH OF

**HON. BARBARA CUBIN**

OF WYOMING

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 3, 2003*

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.J. Res. 4, a constitutional amendment to restore protections for the most widely recognized symbol of our nation and our traditions, the flag of the United States of America.

Some would call stuffing an American flag in a toilet or a trash can a work of art. I would call it a disgrace. Too many brave Americans have fought and died in defense of our flag to allow it to be soiled. In fact, they're fighting even today in Afghanistan, Iraq and all over the globe to secure the ideals for which the flag stands.

Mr. Speaker, I spent this past weekend in my home state of Wyoming to celebrate Memorial Day. I spoke to a veteran there who wore a shirt with a picture of our flag and the legend, "This flag wasn't earned to be burned."

Over the course of our history, more than a million brave Americans have given their lives in defense of our flag. We should honor their sacrifice by defending the flag with the same conviction they did. I urge the passage of this bill and yield back the balance of my time.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JIM KOLBE**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 4, 2003*

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, on Rollcall 234 on H.J. Res. 4, proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States authorizing the Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States, I inadvertently voted "yea" but I meant to vote "nay." Although I abhor desecration of our flag, I believe it is a form of political expression and dissent protected under the First Amendment. I would like the record to reflect that my intended vote was "nay"

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ASSURED FUNDING FOR VET-  
ERANS HEALTH CARE ACT OF  
2003

**HON. LANE EVANS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 4, 2003*

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today, on behalf of myself and 72 of my colleagues, I am introducing H.R. 2318 the "Assured Funding for Veterans Health Care Act of 2003." Starting in Fiscal Year 2005, the bill would require the Secretary of the Treasury to provide funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care System based on the number of enrollees in the system and the consumer price