

our hands. And if this trend is allowed to continue at a constant rate, we could have as many as 4 million autistic children in America in the next 10 years.

Despite a growing body of science linking autism to mercury and thimerosal, and the protests of hundreds of thousands of concerned parents across the country, the pharmaceutical industry continues to put mercury into vaccines for both children and adults even though they know mercury is toxic to the human brain. Pharmaceutical companies are concerned that they may be held liable in potential class action lawsuits for brain damage caused by the mercury-based preservative, which is still found in childhood vaccines diphtheria, hepatitis B and the flu shots. Because of these liability concerns, language was inserted at the last minute under the cover of darkness in the homeland security bill to protect the pharmaceutical industry from class action lawsuits. However, because we caught it, we were able to get it out of there because a lot of Members of the House and Senate thought it was terrible what they did.

Numerous scientists have testified there is a simple way to prevent this, and that is to go to single-shot vials. Those little glass containers. They would not have to put thimerosal or any preservative in if they did that. Moving to single-shot vials could have an enormously positive impact in helping to minimize, perhaps even eliminate, some of the cases of Alzheimer's and autism and other neurological disorders linked to mercury.

This is something that the pharmaceutical companies must address. Our Food and Drug Administration and our health agencies are asleep at the switch. They are letting children and adults be damaged day after day after day by allowing mercury to continue to be put into vaccines for adults and children.

We have a growing number of people who are becoming Alzheimer's patients, a dramatically growing number. We have one in 10,000 children 10 years ago that were autistic, now it is one in 150. And scientists before my committee say it is in large part because of the mercury in the vaccines. We have to get the FDA on the stick. They have to demand that pharmaceutical products having mercury be taken out of them very, very quickly. If not, we are going to continue to have an epidemic on our hands that America does not need and should not tolerate.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF ALTHEA GIBSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Madam Speaker, tonight I am introducing a resolution to commemorate

the life of the very talented Althea Gibson. Miss Althea Gibson represents an honorable and indelible mark on the history of America and the history of African Americans.

On this day, we seek to commemorate the life and achievements of Althea Gibson, a pioneer who left an unforgettable mark on sports as she broke the color barrier in tennis in America in the 1950s and helped pave the way for future generations of black athletes.

On Sunday, September 28, Miss Gibson died at the age of 76. Though the general public had largely forgotten her name in sports, Althea Gibson will always be a giant in sports history. The eldest of five children, Miss Gibson was raised in the Harlem section of New York City. She began studying tennis privately through the support of friends while furthering her education by attending Florida A&M University where she graduated in 1953.

Althea Gibson was the first black player on the Ladies Professional Golfers Association tour. She was a self-described born athlete who broke racial barriers not only in tennis but also in the Ladies Professional Golf Association. In a capstone to her career, she toured with the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team after retiring from tennis.

Miss Gibson won the American Tennis Association's Women's Singles Tournament 10 years in a row. However, tennis tournaments outside the ATA remained closed to her until 1950. In that year, white tennis player Alice Marble wrote an article in American Lawn Tennis magazine, noting that this excellent player was not able to participate in the better-known championships for no other reason than bigotry.

So later that year, Althea Gibson entered the Forest Hills, New York, national grass court championship, the first African American player of either sex to be allowed to enter. In 1950, Gibson became the first black player to compete in the U.S. tennis championships, and she played at Wimbledon in 1951. She captured the Wimbledon and U.S. championships in 1957 and 1958, and also won the French Open, and three Wimbledon doubles titles from 1956 through 1958. Her presence helped pave the way for later stars, such as Arthur Ashe, Venus and Serena Williams, and, of course, Tiger Woods.

On this day, let us all commemorate Miss Althea Gibson's fighting spirit and championship efforts. Miss Gibson came from the depths of racism and overcame much adversity. She proved as much as anyone that desire can beat the burdens of racism.

In closing, I would like to end with a quote from Miss Gibson: "In sports, you simply aren't considered a real champion until you have defended your title successfully. Winning it once can be a fluke; winning it twice proves you are the best." Today, we would like to commemorate Althea Gibson, truly one of the best.

H.R. 693, REPEALING TAX ON DEATH GRATUITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I am on the floor again. I come to the floor about once a week to talk about a bill, H.R. 693, to repeal the tax on the death gratuity.

The history of this is that in 1991 the United States Congress enacted legislation that created going from \$3,000 to \$6,000 the death gratuity. The death gratuity is a payment to the families who have lost a loved one in uniform, whether they be training or they be in war.

A couple of years ago I heard about this tax; and I thought about how unfair, how unacceptable that any family who has given a loved one in uniform for this country should have to pay a tax on a very small amount of money known as the death gratuity of \$6,000. A year ago I introduced a bill that would take care of this tax and remove it. It was put in a larger package by the House leadership, which I appreciated, and sent over to the other body; but they did not act on the legislation. So we went another year that families who lost loved ones paid a tax on their gift of that loved one to this Nation and for freedom.

Again this year, Madam Speaker, we sent a bigger bill over with this language in it that would repeal the tax, but the other body will not take it up. And I want to give some examples of this, Madam Speaker.

From September 2001 through December 2001, 292 families in America had to pay a tax on their gift, that gift being a family member in uniform. In the year 2002, 1,007 families had to pay Uncle Sam for their gift of their loved one in uniform who died fighting for freedom. Already this year it is over 300. I do not know what the total will be when we reach December 31.

Madam Speaker, let me show a photograph of a young man who is 6 years old. His name is Tyler Jordan. Tyler is holding the American flag under his arm as he is looking at his daddy's casket. Tyler's father was a gunnery sergeant named Phillip Jordan, who was killed in Iraq fighting for freedom.

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I look at this little boy, I saw it in the newspaper and it struck me so personally, I decided to try to get a copy of this young boy's face. Tyler's mother is going to get a bill from Uncle Sam, is not giving your daddy enough without receiving a tax from Uncle Sam on a small amount of money, \$6,000, the death gratuity.

I want to read an e-mail from a father who e-mailed me last week. "Dear Representative JONES, Thank you for your support of H.R. 693. Our son, Sergeant Jacob Frazier, was killed in action on March 29, 2003, in Afghanistan. Upon being told we would be taxed on