Under the Pension Fairness Act, if a company terminates an underfunded workers' pension plan or converts a workers' pension plan into a cash balance plan that cuts older workers' benefits or takes away their choice to stay in their original plan, the company's executives and directors may not enhance their own deferred compensation deals for the next 5 years. If any new deals for executives or directors are cut the year prior to an underfunded plan termination or a conversion that hurts older workers, payments to executives or directors under those new deals are also suspended for 5 years. It's very simple: If the business or the pension plan is in such dire straits that a termination or conversion is necessary, then executives and directors should not be showering themselves with new and improved benefits.

This bill is about fairness and common sense. It places the retirement security of workers and executives on more equal footing. And it sends a rightly discouraging message to those executives who would seek to cut and run from their pension promises, leaving the federal government to pick up the tab.

IN HONOR OF DR. JAMES ZOGBY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Dr. James Zogby, husband of Eileen Patricia McMahon, father of five children, and founder and president of the Arab American Institute (AAI). Under his leadership and vision, the Arab American Institute has advocated for the Arab community in a number of areas impacting public policy. Where the Arab American Institute has been instrumental in empowering Arab Americans through education, voter registration, and mobilization, James Zogby has led the way.

Dr. Zogby earned his doctorate from Temple University's Department of Religion after receiving his Bachelor of Arts from Le Moyne College. In 1976, Dr. Zogby was chosen as a Humanities Post-Doctorate Fellow at Princeton University and, on various occasions, has been awarded grants for research and writing by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Defense Education Act, and the Mellon Foundation. Dr. Zogby was a co-founder and chairman of the Palestine Human Rights Campaign in the late 1970's, and he later co-founded and served as the Executive Director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee. In 1982, he co-founded Save Lebanon, Inc., a non-profit, relief organization funding Lebanese social welfare projects and health care for Palestinian and Lebanese victims of war.

Following the 1993 signing of the Israeli-Palestinian peace accord in Washington, Dr. Zogby led Builders for Peace, a private sector committee promoting U.S. business investment in the West Bank and Gaza. Along with former U.S. Congressman Mel Levine, his colleague and co-president of Builders for Peace, Dr. Zogby led a U.S. delegation to the 1994 signing of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement in Cairo. After 1994, Dr. Zogby continued to work with U.S. agencies including AID, OPIC, USTDA, and Departments of State and Commerce to promote and support Palestinian economic development.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Dr. James Zogby for numerous accomplishments and advocacy efforts for peace.

CELEBRATING THE GROUNDBREAKING OF THE GREAT LAKES NATIONAL CEMETERY

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the groundbreaking of the Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly, Michigan. The Great Lakes National Cemetery will serve as Michigan's second national cemetery and serve the needs of the nearly 460,000 veterans living within 75 miles of Oakland County, Michigan.

In 1987, the Detroit region was one of ten areas identified by the Veterans Administration as having a large veteran population not served by either a national or state veterans cemetery within a reasonable distance. The new 544 acre Great Lakes National Cemetery will meet the needs of Michigan's finest men and women for the next fifty years.

Mr. Speaker, every American that wears the uniform deserves a final resting place that honors and remembers their service to America. However, the families of these veterans should not be required to travel great distances to pay their respect to their loved ones. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the service the Great Lakes National Cemetery will bring to the Veterans and their families in Southeast Michigan.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RICH ENGLEHART

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Rich Englehart and thank him for his exceptional contributions to his community and the State of Colorado as Delta City Manager. He will always be remembered as a dedicated public servant and leader of his community. As Rich celebrates his retirement, let it be known that he leaves behind a terrific legacy of commitment to the people of Delta and the State of Colorado.

For nearly twenty years Rich has played an important role in municipal government. As City Manager, Rich is responsible for implementing the policy and procedure that the City Council makes. He also advises the City Council on all matters relating to the planning, development and operating status of the city departments. His good nature and guidance have done much to help grow the city, and foster good working relationships between civic, business, and municipal leaders. An avid outdoorsman, Rich participates in a variety of sports, including playing baseball for the Mesa State Mavericks.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that Rich Englehart has ceaselessly dedicated his time and efforts to serving his county and the people of Colorado as City Manager for Delta. I am honored to bring his hard work and commitment to the attention of this body of Congress and this nation today. Thank you for all your service Rich, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING OLYMPIAD PAUL FOERSTER

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to recognize Paul Foerster, resident of Rockwall, Texas and recipient of a gold medal in the Games of the XXVIIIth Olympiad in Athens, Greece.

On August 21, 2004, Paul Foerster, and his teammate, Kevin Burnham, won the men's team gold medal for the United States in the 2004 Olympic Regatta for sailing in the 470 Class.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the entire 4th District of Texas, I would like to take this opportunity to commend and congratulate Paul for his outstanding performance and representation of the United States in the Games of the XXVIIIth Olympiad.

HONORING INSPECTOR CLAUDIO GONZÁLEZ

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Inspector Claudio González for his remarkable work with the Union City police force throughout his 27-year career. He is being honored today, October 8, 2004, at a retirement party in Union City, New Jersey.

After emigrating from Cuba in 1962 and attending school in Jersey City, Inspector González began his career as a patrolman for the Union City Police Department. Since that time, he has held an extensive array of positions within the police force, including working as a member of the Office of Professional Standards and becoming the first Hispanic Lieutenant of Police, Captain of Police, Commander of the Investigations Division, and Inspector of Police, which made him the highest-ranking Hispanic officer in the State of New Jersey. Inspector González was known for being a fair, savvy, street-smart officer who accelerated in all of his assigned divisions, relying on his impressive martial arts training as well as quick thinking to handle difficult situations.

When he was not working to secure the safety of Union City, Inspector González developed and taught anti-drug programs at local schools. He received a proclamation from the New Jersey State Legislature for his efforts, which preceded the establishment of D.A.R.E. programs. Additionally, he has taught classes to narcotic agents and members of the Detectives' Bureau.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Inspector Claudio González for his

leadership and extensive work with the Union City Police Department. His courage, contributions to the force, and strong commitment are an inspiration to the community.

TRIBUTE TO GENERAL ATOMICS

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor General Atomics, an organization that has been a catalyst for improving science and technology education for thousands of students year after year. General Atomics, located in San Diego, California, began in 1955 for the purpose of harnessing the power of nuclear technologies to benefit mankind. General Atomics' basic research into fission and fusion has matured into many technologies, making them one of the world's leading resources for high-technology systems development ranging from the nuclear fuel cycle to remotely operated surveillance aircraft, airborne sensors, and advanced electric, electronic, wireless, and laser technologies.

While General Atomics has been pushing the boundaries of technology for almost 50 years, they have also heavily supported educational programs in their own community and beyond. As part of their commitment to education, General Atomics provided technical and administrative guidance to the newly-formed Science and Technology Education Partnership (STEP), which was created in my congressional district five years ago to inspire students to pursue an education in science and technology fields. Beyond their five years of participation in STEP, General Atomics has played an active role in bringing science and technology directly to Riverside County students and those from surrounding areas through their participation in each of the previous annual STEP Conferences that have been held in Riverside, California. They support the STEP Teacher Program by presenting tutorial workshops each year for elementary and middle school math and science teachers. In addition, they have become an integral and featured part of the STEP Student Program, which is attended by over 4,000 students plus more than 400 teachers and parents each year. Their exhibit booth in the ''Discovery Zone'' provides students with a hands-on introduction to plasma, electricity, thermal energy, and more. Technical personnel from General Atomics are on hand to explain to the students how the technologies work and how they are used in government and commercial applications. In the ''Oh! Zone,'' students participate in an interactive Science Show with Rick Lee and Alex Nagy, two General Atomics scientists. The Science Show involves live demonstrations, often using student volunteers, of different technologies and scientific principles in order to show students that science can be interesting, useful, and fun.

General Atomics is a valued member of the technical community and a true partner in education. Their generous efforts have helped make science and technology interesting and accessible to thousands of students within the Inland Empire, throughout Southern California, and beyond.

ECONOMISTS ENDORSE INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE TO $7.00

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, increasing the minimum wage is a vital issue for working families across the country. The minimum wage has not been increased in 7 years. The value of the last minimum wage increase has been fully eroded. Today, the minimum wage is worth less than it has been in 46 out of the previous 48 years. As a percentage of the hourly wage of non-supervisory employees, the minimum wage is at its lowest level in 55 years. This decline is causing serious hardships for low-income families.

To address this problem, I introduced H.R. 4256, the ''Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2004,'' which increases the minimum in three steps from its current level of $5.15 to $7.00. Ninety-four of my colleagues have joined me in sponsoring this legislation. On Wednesday, more than 562 prominent economists—including 4 Nobel Prize winners in economics and 7 past presidents of the American Economic Association—are joining us in endorsing an increase in the Federal minimum wage to $7.00.

In their endorsement, these economists say, ''We believe that a modest increase in the minimum wage would improve the well-being of low-wage workers and would not have the adverse effects that critics have claimed.''

They go on to state:

> As economists who are concerned about the problems facing low-wage workers, we believe the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2004's proposed phased-in increase in the federal minimum wage to $7.00 falls well within the range of options where the benefits to the labor market, workers, and the overall economy would be positive.

Below is a copy of the economists' statement. A complete list of the cosigners can be found on the Economic Policy Institute's WEB site at: http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/minwagestmt2004.

IT'S TIME FOR A RAISE—HUNDREDS OF ECONOMISTS SUPPORT A MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

The minimum wage has been an important part of our nation's economy for 65 years. It is based on the principle of valuing work by establishing an hourly wage floor beneath which employers cannot pay their workers. In so doing, the minimum wage helps to equalize the imbalance in bargaining power that low-wage workers face in the labor market. The minimum wage is also an important tool in fighting poverty.

The value of the 1997 increase in the federal minimum wage has been fully eroded. The real value of today's federal minimum wage is less than it has been in 46 out of the last 48 years. Moreover, the ratio of the minimum wage to the average hourly wage of non-supervisory workers is 33%, its lowest level in 55 years. This decline is causing hardship for low-wage workers and their families.

We believe that a modest increase in the minimum wage would improve the well-being of low-wage workers and would not have the adverse effects that critics have claimed. In particular, we share the view the Council of Economic Advisers expressed in the 1999 Economic Report of the President that ''the weight of the evidence suggests that modest increases in the minimum wage have had very little or no effect on employment.'' While controversy about the precise employment effects of the minimum wage continues, research has shown that most of the beneficiaries are adults, most are female, and the vast majority are members of low-income working families.

As economists who are concerned about the problems facing low-wage workers, we believe the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2004's proposed phased-in increase in the federal minimum wage to $7.00 falls well within the range of options where the benefits to the labor market, workers, and the overall economy would be positive.

Twelve states and the District of Columbia have set their minimum wages above the federal level. Additional states, including Florida, Nevada, and New York, are considering similar measures. As with a federal increase, modest increases in state minimum wages in the range of $1.00 to $2.00 can significantly improve the lives of low-income workers and their families, without the adverse effects that critics have claimed.

IN HONOR OF HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month—a celebration of Americans of Hispanic heritage and their significant, collective and individual contributions to our community and to our nation.

Hosting one of the events this year is the Cleveland Public Library. The Cleveland Public Library and regional branches continue their commitment to promoting our diverse community, richly infused with Hispanic culture and language. As part of the Library's 2004 Strategic Plan, new and permanent resources of Spanish Language collections are now underway, along with the implementation of a Spanish language Web site.

Hispanic Heritage Month is reflective of the 500-year history of Hispanic culture and contributions to America. Hispanic Americans have contributed immeasurably to all areas of our culture—from medicine, law, and business, to education, music and the fine arts. Hispanic Americans in our community and in communities across the country are life-saving doctors and nurses, veterans, inspiring professors, dedicated teachers, committed elected officials, fair-minded judges, and hardworking factory employees. Americans of Hispanic heritage bring energy, innovation, and a real sense of social justice to America, while retaining the cultural traditions of their homeland for all citizens to enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honor and celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, and join me in expressing my gratitude for the outstanding contributions made by Hispanic Americans. Their journey to America, fraught with significant obstacles and strife, paved the way for a better life for their children and future generations, and signifies what it means to be an American. Within our diversity we find strength. Within our traditions we find unity. And because of their journey, and the journey of people from all points of the world, we are stronger as a community, more unified as a Nation, and better as people.