

Daniel has taught more than 150 youths not only the physical techniques of Taekwondo, but also self-discipline, confidence, respect, and integrity.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Daniel Edmondson for his volunteer activities. His being recognized at the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards is truly a great accomplishment. I applaud his efforts and wish him the best with his future endeavors.

HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROMOTION ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4157) to amend the Social Security Act to encourage the dissemination, security, confidentiality, and usefulness of health information technology:

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Chairman, I believe there is great potential in the widespread adoption of health information technology. By expanding the use of health information technology, we can reduce medical errors, improve the quality of care and patient safety, enhance efficiency and significantly reduce health care costs.

However, the bill before us fails to make any progress toward greater adoption of health information technology.

H.R. 4157 fails to provide for the development or adoption of interoperability standards. It also fails to provide adequate funding to assist providers transitioning to an electronic medical records system, and it greatly weakens Medicare's fraud and abuse laws.

The RAND Corporation recently estimated that by implementing health information technology, we can save as much as \$162 billion per year. Unfortunately, H.R. 4157 accomplishes so little that we would fail to yield any of these potential savings.

The most troubling aspect of this bill is its failure to protect an individual's medical privacy.

Even the President of the United States, believes an individual's medical information should be protected. On January 27, 2005, the President stated, "I presume I'm like most Americans—I think my medical records should be private." And on May 22, 2006, the President stated, "Our goal, by the way, is for every American to have an electronic medical record. And—but, by the way, with a guarantee of privacy."

During the committee process, Mr. DOGGETT and I offered an amendment that would have strengthened privacy protections for individuals. Specifically, the amendment: (1) expressly recognized the right of an individual to privacy and security; (2) required individuals to consent to having their information shared; (3) allowed individuals to prohibit access to particularly sensitive information in their health record (i.e., HIV, mental health, genetic information); (4) required individuals to be notified if their health record has been breached, and (5) allowed individuals to obtain damages from an entity that wrongfully uses or discloses identifiable health information.

Unfortunately, our Republican colleagues did not share these goals and voted against these provisions on numerous occasions. Yesterday, we joined our colleagues from the Energy and Commerce Committee and offered a similar amendment again before the Rules Committee. The amendment was blocked there as well.

As we move forward on health information technology, it is absolutely essential that an individual's most personal and vulnerable information is protected. In a digital environment, HIPPA is just not enough.

Mr. Chairman, I strongly believe in the potential of health information technology. Unfortunately, I cannot support the legislation before us because it fails to truly make any progress in achieving that goal.

CONGRESS SHOULD UPDATE CREDIT UNION REGULATIONS AND IMPROVE RULES FOR CREDIT CARDS

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, we all recognize the importance of the financial services industry—including both banks and credit unions—to our economy. I support and applaud the steps both have taken toward better services and improved products.

However, I think there's a need to change some of the rules involving credit cards and I also think we need to remember the need for diversity in the industry. That's why I am cosponsoring H.R. 2317, to update the regulation of credit unions, and have introduced a bill dealing with credit cards.

The last major changes to the Federal Credit Union Act were in 1998, and since then there has been time to identify unnecessary and outdated provisions and develop legislation that would make common sense improvements.

That is the background for H.R. 2317, the Credit Union Regulatory Improvements Act (or "CURIA"), introduced by our colleagues, Representatives ED ROYCE and PAUL E. KANJORSKI. It combines a series of regulatory enhancements that will allow credit unions to operate more effectively and efficiently. These changes can help improve productivity and efficiency in a competitive and dynamic marketplace, and will translate into better and lower-cost service to credit union members.

The current bill improves upon similar bipartisan legislation introduced in the 108th Congress, and its broad support is shown by the fact that it has no fewer than 121 cosponsors. That support reflects the reality that credit unions—with 87 million members nationwide and 1.5 million just in Colorado—provide choice in the financial services industry.

My support for credit unions does not mean hostility to banks, because I do not think credit unions represent a threat to the continued success of banks. Credit unions remain member-owned not-for-profit institutions directed by volunteer boards that pool their resources to help each other. And while credit unions have changed and grown, that has not prevented banks from growing as well. In 2005, bank profits reached a record level of \$134.2 billion.

Banks have a 94% share of the financial services industry, holding more than \$10 trillion in assets. In fact, the net growth in bank assets in 2005—\$626 billion—was nearly as much as the combined total assets of all credit unions in the country while one of the biggest banks has assets that exceed the \$669 billion in assets held by all the credit unions.

In view of these realities, I am not persuaded that the modest changes in credit union regulation included in CURIA represent a real threat to the continued success of the banking industry—and there is no doubt they can and will benefit consumers.

Similarly, consumers will benefit from the common-sense changes in the rules governing issuance of credit cards that would be accomplished by enacting H.R. 5383, the Credit Card Accountability Responsibility and Disclosure Act, which I introduced earlier this year.

That bill reflects the reality that Congress needs to do more to promote responsibility by those who provide credit, beginning with credit card companies. Like a similar (but not identical) bill introduced by Senator DODD, my bill takes some simple, common-sense steps to stop abusive practices, educate cardholders, and stiffen the penalties for violations.

I hope that when we return in September, the House will have an opportunity to consider both H.R. 2317, the Credit Union Regulatory Improvements Act, and H.R. 5383, the Credit Card Accountability Responsibility and Disclosure Act.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MARTIN TAGGART

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Martin L. Taggart as he retires from a distinguished career as a coach and an educator at Moapa Valley High School.

Marty Taggart grew up in Afton, Wyoming. He graduated from Southern Utah University with a major in Physical Science and Health and minors in both Math and Botany. During college, Taggart played 4 years of football and spent his summers as a forest ranger.

Marty has been a beloved teacher in Moapa Valley for the past 35 years. When he began his career, Moapa Valley High School served all of the students in Moapa Valley from Kindergarten through 12th Grade. Marty spent the first 13 years of his career teaching junior high school math, science and physical education. However, he has spent the majority of his career teaching at the high-school level. In addition to math, science and physical education, Taggart has taught health, careers, and weight training while at Moapa Valley High School.

Although he has been an incredibly committed educator, perhaps his most memorable contributions to Moapa Valley High School are those he made while coaching football and wrestling. Coach Taggart founded the wrestling program in Moapa Valley and has been the driving force behind its expansion and success over the past 31 years. He has also spent the past 33 years coaching football at Moapa Valley High School. Both teams have been very competitive and enjoyed many successes as a result of Coach Taggart's dedicated leadership.

As a coach and as an educator, Marty Taggart has been devoted to helping his students grow and succeed. He has emphasized discipline and hard work as a way for every person to achieve at the height of their ability. In doing so, he has made a profound impact on his students, his colleagues and the community as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Marty Taggart. The commitment he has shown to both the academic and athletic programs at Moapa Valley High School has truly enriched countless lives. I applaud Marty's years of service to the school and surrounding community and I wish him the very best for an enjoyable retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF IKE AND OLIVE HAMMOND OF ORLEANS, INDIANA

HON. MICHAEL E. SODREL

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Mr. SODREL. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a minute to recognize a couple of my constituents marking a truly momentous occasion. W.E. "Ike" and Olive E. Hammond of Orleans, IN will celebrate 60 years of marriage on Wednesday, August 2nd, 2006.

Both Ike and Olive have been lifelong residents of Orleans and have been active participants in their community. Both are involved in the local Republican Party, and have been for quite some time. In fact, their daughter shared a memory of riding on a float in a parade in 1952 proudly wearing her, "I like Ike" memorabilia. Olive served as County Vice-Chairwoman for the party and Ike served three terms on the Orleans Town Council. To this day, the Town Council looks to Ike for consultation on matters of importance to community. In 2001, Ike was recognized as "Citizen of the Year" in Orleans. The Hammonds have been members of the Orleans United Methodist Church for over 60 years.

Ike proudly served our country in the Second World War in the U.S. Army Air Corps as a crew member on a B-17. Ike continues to be an active member of the American Legion in Orleans. In his civilian career, Ike was in the insurance business retiring in 1988 after a 40-year career. Olive served the area as a Probation Officer in Orange County and has since retired.

In what was perhaps their most important job, the Hammond's raised three daughters who love, support, and congratulate them on their 60 years of marriage.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor I share in congratulating these two fine people who have enjoyed 60 years of love together as husband and wife. I wish them many more years of happiness and memories together.

HONORING TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE BOB HUNTER

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Bob Hunter has served the people of Taylor and

Nolan Counties honorably in the Texas Legislature for the past 20 years. He truly is a statesman and a scholar. Now, as he leaves the Texas House of Representatives, I would like to take time to recognize his tireless service to the State and her people.

Dr. Hunter was born in California, but his home is firmly in Texas. He has left a legacy of service that began with the Navy in the South Pacific and has spanned the six decades since. He has been a champion of higher education and a servant to the people of Abilene and the surrounding area.

Dr. Hunter began his relationship with the region with his enrollment as a student at Abilene Christian University in 1948. He took his first job after his Navy service back at ACU in 1956 and remained a vital part of the university's administration until 1993, when he retired as Senior Vice President. The degrees he earned in his time at ACU were just his first. He has gone on to be honored with no fewer than seven honorary doctorate degrees.

Dr. Hunter received many honors in gratitude for his work to open the doors of academic choice for all Texans. He was instrumental in passage of the Texas Tuition Equalization Grant program, which helps Texas students to attend the Texas private college or university of their choice. While an ACU administrator, he was appointed to the State's Advisory Council for Technical-Vocational Education and served as Executive Vice President of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas, serving 40 institutions statewide.

In 1986 Dr. Hunter was elected to the Texas House of Representatives and since then has served the citizens of his district faithfully, chairing several House committees and working on issues such as higher education, economic development, tourism and veterans affairs. While a State Representative, he has continued to serve his alma mater and the people of his district through involvement in civic organizations and charities.

As Representative Hunter retires from the Texas Legislature to return to his wife, three children and four grandchildren, I congratulate and thank him for his many years of service to the Abilene area and the State of Texas.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "FEDERAL LIVING WAGE ACT ACT"

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the "Federal Living Wage Act," legislation to mandate a livable wage for employees under federal contracts and subcontracts. Twenty Representatives are original cosponsors to this important legislation.

I introduce this bill after the Chicago City Council took a strong stand for workers by passing a living wage ordinance for employees of big-box retailers. The ordinance is an important victory in the fight for living wages for all workers.

That fight now needs to come here, to Washington, where it is long overdue. The bill I am introducing today will hopefully move us closer to delivering all workers in America a fair and equitable wage. No full-time worker

deserves to live in poverty. And certainly, the federal government should not be in the business of paying federal workers, or federally contracted workers, sub-poverty wages.

Although Congress passed laws, such as the Davis-Bacon Act and the Service Contract Act, to help ensure that employees of Federal contracts earn a decent wage, thousands of Federal workers and federally contracted workers still do not earn enough to support themselves and their families.

This legislation will allow hard-working individuals to earn quality wages and to increase their savings for such essential needs as their retirement and their children's education. The Federal government must take responsible, workable steps to reward working Americans and to help keep them out of poverty. This bill represents a practical and tangible step toward this goal and I urge my colleagues to join me in calling for the passage of this important and sensible legislation.

WSSC EXTENSION REMARKS

HON. ALBERT RUSSELL WYNN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the commendable efforts of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) in safeguarding the citizens of Prince George's and Montgomery counties in Maryland from flooding. On the weekend of June 24, 2006 anywhere from six inches to two feet of rain fell in the Washington, DC area, leaving some homes under water, bridges washed away, and residents displaced.

The WSSC is among the ten largest water and wastewater utilities in the Nation, serving 1.6 million customers in Prince George's and Montgomery counties. The agency's response to the storms and subsequent flooding was executed with foresight and sound planning. Their staff remained in constant communication with city, state, and emergency officials, allowing residents to evacuate in a safe and timely manner.

One noteworthy individual is WSSC Systems Control Group Leader, Karen Wright. Wright and her staff were responsible for monitoring the rainfall and opening the dam gates. Recently, she was recognized by The Baltimore Sun for her efforts.

In crisis situations such as the June storms, it is comforting to know that the employees of the WSSC can rise to the occasion, make the difficult decisions, and safeguard our citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in commending the WSSC and its employees on a job well done.

HONORING THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE VETERANS HOMES

SPEECH OF

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2006

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 347, honoring