

Guam Memorial Hospital, the University of Guam and the Guam Blue Ribbon Education Committee. In addition, he served on the board of the former Medical Center of the Marianas. In recognition of his service, he received an Honorary Doctor of Law degree in 1983 from the University of Guam.

Pete Ada, Jr. epitomizes the businessman whose success derives from a motivation to provide products and services that make his community a better place to live, and who has profited as a by-product of that dedication. By his induction into the Guam Business Hall of Fame, he sets a standard for others to emulate. We congratulate him and his proud wife Fe and their family, and we join with all the people of Guam in celebrating his achievement.

RECOGNIZING THE ZACCAGNINO FAMILY, AMERICA'S FUNNIEST FAMILY, FROM ELMWOOD PARK, IL

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 2, 2003

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Zaccagnino family, from Elmwood Park, in the 5th Congressional District of Illinois. The Zaccagnino family was chosen from hundreds of families who submitted videotapes in hopes of winning the ABC Family cable network "My Life Is a Sitcom" contest, replete with a chance of starring in a sitcom based on their life.

According to a recent Chicago Tribune article, the Zaccagnino family is already famous—and their sitcom hasn't even aired yet! Evidently, the family—Diane, Karen, Camille and Danny—have been feted by everyone in Chicago; and now Capitol Hill! Horwath's restaurant threw them a party; their state representative filed a resolution in their honor; teachers are using the family's history as assignments; and the crème de la crème—the family recently taped "The Oprah Show."

Finding humor in life is challenging, but the Zaccagnino family sets a great example. Karen is the owner of Karen's Hair'm, a beauty salon located on Belmont Avenue, where societal issues are viewed through changing hairstyles. And as Elmwood Park is known for its outstanding Italian food, it's understandable that a lot of the laughs take place in the kitchen. I am proud of Chicago's own Zaccagnino family, and I look forward to seeing their lives coming soon to a television near you.

Chicagoans can see the funny family for themselves on the ABC Family website where visitors can view video submissions and vote for their choice for "America's Funniest Family."

I urge my colleagues, indeed all of America, to keep an eye out for the Zaccagnino family. I have a feeling we'll all be wishing we were part of such a loving, funny and lively family.

HEALTHY FORESTS RESTORATION ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2003

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, conserving our environment is important. Our forests are an important part of both Michigan's and our country's environment. In the west, catastrophic wildfires have decimated our forests over the last several years destroying both government and private property. The Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (H.R. 1904) is a common-sense, cost-effective piece of legislation that helps to control these fires as well as combat destructive insect and disease infestations in our forests.

Removing some of the bureaucratic red tape for performing fire prevention measures is not only environmentally friendly but also fiscally responsible, as fire prevention costs American taxpayers approximately one-fourth of what it costs to fight catastrophic forest fires. The Healthy Forests Restoration Act authorizes the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to reduce the amount of underbrush and deadwood buildup in forests that serve as kindling and fuel for the hottest, most dangerous fires. It would regulate BLM's activities by putting limits on the tree removal and road construction that has provoked controversy at times in the past. This would give BLM the tools it needs to confront the increasing threat of destructive forest fires on federal lands that have had serious impacts both on people and wildlife.

The bill takes additional measures to improve our forests. These include provisions to encourage energy production from renewable energy sources, protection of watersheds in forest areas and the creation of a forest reserve program aimed at preserving and rehabilitating up to one million acres of degraded and rare forest lands.

Disease and insect infestations are not only detrimental to our woodlands, but also to our tree-lined streets and backyards. In southeast Michigan, we are combating an exotic beetle known as the Emerald Ash Borer. The beetles' larvae feed on the sapwood and eventually kill branches and entire trees. This invasive pest has resulted in the quarantine of all ash products in six counties in southeastern Michigan. There are 28 million ash trees in the six quarantined counties and an estimated 700 million ash trees in Michigan. We are now finding that the pest is spreading into Ohio. The magnitude of this problem is serious. Preliminary data from the Forest Service estimates that the potential national impact of the Emerald Ash Borer is a loss of ash trees up to 2 percent of total timber with a value loss of between \$20–60 billion.

Following discussions with Secretary Veneman and gaining the support of the Michigan delegation, Michigan Department of Agriculture, and DNR we were able to get the approval of \$14.6 million in emergency assistance from USDA to combat the Emerald Ash Borer. This federal funding will supplement resources provided by state and local authorities and will be used for pest surveillance, quarantine of infected areas, and some tree removal. In order to more efficiently combat de-

structive pests like the Emerald Ash Borer, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act puts in place measures that will allow accelerated information gathering on such insect infestations. By removing bureaucratic red tape and being more proactive in maintaining forest health, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act is a step in the right direction towards efficiently managing our forests, preventing catastrophic fires, controlling damaging insect infestations, and protecting our environment.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1588) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2004 for military activities of the Department of Defense to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2004, and for other purposes:

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Chairman, the legislation before us is of great importance, perhaps today more than ever. Even as we debate this legislation today, our brave men and women are serving in harm's way. That is why I strongly support many provisions of this legislation; particularly the 4.1 percent across-the-board pay increase for military personnel, as well as the vital readiness, modernization, and infrastructure improvements, which will keep our forces the best-trained and best-equipped in the world.

As we are all painfully aware, there are many security challenges that face our great nation. As such, it is critical that we provide the necessary investments in our national defense. However, because of several highly controversial provisions in what is traditionally a bipartisan bill, I have strong reservations about supporting H.R. 1588 as it is currently written.

One of my primary concerns pertains to the environmental provisions in this legislation that weaken environmental protections. Although I fully support maintaining the highest possible level of military training and readiness, I believe such readiness must also be balanced against our duty to protect at-risk species, especially in light of existing Department of Defense exemptions in current environmental laws. H.R. 1588 does not adequately address this concern.

The Department of Defense contends that military training on the approximately 25 million acres of land at the more than 425 installations nationwide is greatly constrained by environmental laws such as the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act. However, a GAO report issued in June 2002 found that training readiness remains high and that the ESA and the MMP are not hampering military readiness. In addition, existing environmental laws already have national security exemptions, yet DoD has never bothered to apply for them. Although I support Chairman HUNTER's attempt to temper this extreme anti-environmental provision, I am dismayed that Democrats were denied the right to offer the Rahall/Dingell amendment,

which would have addressed these environmental exemptions in a much more comprehensive manner.

Another provision that is of great concern to me pertains to the DoD's civilian personnel. H.R. 1588 contains broad, sweeping provisions that grant the Secretary of Defense authority to create an entirely new civilian employee system for DoD's 700,000 civilian workers, which strips these employees of some of their basic rights, such as the right to notice before they are fired and the right to join a union. Representatives COOPER, DAVIS, and VAN HOLLEN offered an important amendment before the Rules Committee to make major modifications to these provisions, in order to protect fundamental employee rights in any new National Security Personnel System designed by the DoD. Disturbingly, the Republicans disallowed this important amendment from being considered on the floor today. I wish I could say I was shocked at this action, but unfortunately it has become standard fare for the Majority to stifle debate and discussion on the important issues of the day.

Last, and certainly not least, is my concern over the nuclear weapons provisions in H.R. 1588. This legislation authorizes previously prohibited research on low-yield nuclear weapons and also authorizes \$21 million to study the feasibility of developing a Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator.

Our military needs improved capabilities to hold at risk hardened, and deeply buried targets in rogue nations that might contain prohibited weapons of mass destruction programs. However, instead of building new nuclear weapons and sending the signal to our allies and enemies alike that it's okay to build nuclear weapons, I believe we should fund weapons that have just as strong a deterrent capability, but do not encourage new uses for nuclear weapons or encourage a new nuclear arms race.

The military has not even asked for nuclear weapons to do the job because there are already several conventional programs underway that would allow us to get at the same targets. A recent article quotes Adm. James Ellis, head of U.S. strategic command, as saying he wants to "reduce the country's dependence on nuclear weapons by using conventional, precision-guided bombs and missiles."

Mr. Chairman, let me reiterate, I strongly support a strong national defense to address the many national security challenges we face in this uncertain world. Excluding these extraneous, highly controversial provisions, H.R. 1588 contains many important provisions to improve our nation's defenses. I support the important provisions that provide good pay, housing and training for the men and women in uniform and fund important modernization priorities that will ensure that we have the most technologically advanced military in the world. I am very hopeful that the environmental, civil service, and nuclear weapons provisions are addressed in conference in order to make this a more acceptable and bipartisan piece of legislation.

HONORING DON MIDDLETON

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 2, 2003

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of our great champions of education in Colorado, Mr. Don Middleton. Mr. Middleton is retiring as Superintendent of Clear Creek School District after 37 years of service in public education.

During his tenure at Clear Creek, he has played a valuable role in raising the District's test scores across the board. The effect of his integrity, honesty and passion for education has been far reaching. In fact, he has been credited with restoring the pride of the educational community in his schools through his tireless efforts and compassionate leadership.

Don has been recognized on numerous occasions for his exceptional work in education. He has been given awards such as the Administrator of the Year Award of Excellence; the Award of Distinguished Service; a Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Service Adams County #1; and the Hall of Fame Award from the Mapleton Education Association. Interestingly enough, if you ask Don to talk about his long and distinguished career of service, you would most likely find that he would rather talk about the kids he has met along the way. His dedication is evident by his enthusiastic presence at so many school functions and classroom visits.

Don Middleton has been a dedicated leader and an unwavering advocate for excellence in education. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Mr. Middleton for his hard work on behalf of Colorado's children and families. I wish him success in all of his future endeavors.

HONORING MARY ANN McROBERT

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 2, 2003

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mary Ann McRobert, recipient of the Lenawee Chamber's 2003 ATHENA award.

Throughout her life, Mary Ann McRobert has distinguished herself both personally and professionally through her commitment to helping those in need. Earning a Nursing Degree from St. Vincent's Hospital School of Nursing, Mary Ann went on to earn two degrees in Social Work: a bachelor's degree from Siena Heights University and a Masters degree from the University of Michigan. She has shared her experience and knowledge in nursing and social work as an instructor at Siena Heights University and Adrian College.

Mary Ann has made the most of her extensive education and training, serving in a variety of nursing situations, as a social worker, and as an administrator of several social service organizations. In the last 18 years, she has served as: Interim Director of Call Someone Concerned, Executive Director of the Family Awareness Center, Administrative Director of Bixby Medical Center Psychology Unit, Clinical Social Worker in private practice, and Interim

Director of Family Counseling and Children's Services. She also served two terms as President of the Board of Directors for the Family Awareness Center, two terms as Vice President of the Board of Directors for Family Counseling and Children's Services, and the Gerontology Network. Mary Ann has also volunteered for Hospice of Lenawee.

Mary Ann McRobert is well respected in her community, and with good reason. She is well known for her ability to initiate a project, enlist the assistance of others, and see the plan through to completion. Her efforts are not for her own benefit, but for the benefit of others. She has been a fierce advocate and courageous leader for social service causes and, by mentoring and her example, has opened many doors for women and men in community leadership.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION AMENDMENTS OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM UDALL

OF MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2003

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, people in New Mexico are hurting. Since January 2001, the unemployment rate in my state has risen to 5.9 percent. While every single person on unemployment would rather have a job, until the economy reverses, we in Congress have a moral obligation to help the jobless make ends meet. The extension will help nearly 5,000 New Mexicans who still have not found jobs, and were scheduled to exhaust their Federal benefits at the end of this month.

We have been calling for this type of legislation for weeks, and I applaud the Majority for finally doing what is right. Unfortunately, although they have done what's right, they haven't done enough in this bill to help all Americans who are out of work.

Last year, because of the failed economic policies of this administration, Congress was forced to enact the Temporary Extension of Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) bill. Sadly, though, the need has only increased since then. The economy has actually gotten worse since Congress passed TEUC in March 2002.

The number of unemployed (8.79 million) is at the highest level in nearly a decade. The unemployment rate rose to 6.0 percent in April, compared to 5.7 percent when TEUC was enacted in March 2003 and when the program was extended in January of this year. The number of payroll jobs fell for the third straight month in April; unemployment is now 2.1 million below its level when the recession began. Long-term unemployment also continues to get worse.

Unemployment benefits provide an economic lifeline for families struggling to find work and boost an ailing economy. People are losing their jobs, looking for work, and finding none.

It is unfortunate that the House leadership waited so long to bring up this bill. It is also unfortunate that the House leadership has refused us a vote on the Democratic alternative—yet again.

While I will vote for this bill because it is critical to the millions of Americans who have lost