

THE LEON S. BENSON HOLOCAUST STUDIES COLLECTION AT THE SAN MATEO PUBLIC LIBRARY

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Leon S. Benson family and others who have made the contributions to the Leon S. Benson Holocaust Studies Collection of the San Mateo Public Library. The official dedication ceremony for this excellent collection will take place this Sunday, September 24, 2000, and I wanted to take a moment to share with my colleagues some information about this wonderful educational endeavor.

Leon S. Benson, like myself, was a survivor of the Holocaust. After he passed away in January of last year, his family embarked on a fund-raising drive to create a permanent Holocaust studies collection at the San Mateo Public Library that would honor his legacy. I am delighted that our library will have this collection of books and multimedia reference materials.

Mr. Speaker, it is extremely important to have this type of research facility at the San Mateo Public Library. First and most importantly, it provides a resource for students of San Mateo and neighboring communities. As many of you are aware, California public schools require High School students to study the Holocaust, as well as the policies of Nazi Germany that led up to it. The Benson collection provides an excellent local resource which our students will put to good use when they do research for their assignments.

Second, the collection will be a valuable asset to all who visit the San Mateo Public Library. I would hope that the Leon S. Benson Holocaust collection is utilized, not just by students, but by others who need to know of this dark period in the history of mankind. Only through education and awareness can we confront anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and bigotry and work to eradicate them.

One of the major problems facing Holocaust historians in this country, as well as the rest of the world, is the fact that people who lived through the atrocities, people like Mr. Benson, are passing on, and their first-hand knowledge of the Shoah passes with them. Preserving the history of that dark era of humanity is a critical necessity. Mr. Speaker, I can think of no better way to honor the legacy of a survivor of the Holocaust than in the manner which Leon Benson's family have chosen to honor him.

CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2000

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, because September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month this is an excellent time to reflect on the problems faced by working parents struggling to meet the needs of a child stricken with cancer. I am sure that all would agree that there are few Americans more in need of tax relief than

families forced to devote every available resource to caring for a child with a terminal illness such as cancer. This is why I have introduced the Family Health Tax Cut Act (H.R. 4799). This legislation provides a \$3,000 tax credit to parents caring for a child with cancer, another terminal disease, or any other serious health condition requiring long-term care. H.R. 4799 also helps all working parents provide routine health care for their children by providing them with a \$500 per child tax credit.

The bill will be particularly helpful to those parents whose employers cannot afford to provide their employees' health insurance. Oftentimes those employees work in low-income jobs and thus must struggle to provide adequate health care for their children. This burden is magnified when the child needs special care to cope with cancer or a physical disability. Yet, thanks to Congress' refusal to grant individuals the same tax breaks for health-care expenses it grants businesses, these hard-working parents receive little or no tax relief to help them cope with the tremendous expenses of caring for a child requiring for a child requiring long-term or specialized care.

According to research on the effects of this bill done by my staff and legislative counsel, the benefit of these tax credits would begin to be felt by joint filers with incomes slightly above 18,000 dollars a year or single income filers with incomes slightly above 15,000 dollars per year. Clearly this bill will be of the most benefit to working families balancing the demands of taxation with the needs of their children.

Under the Family Health Tax Cut Act, a struggling single mother with an asthmatic child would at last be able to provide for her child's needs; while a working-class family will have less worry about how they will pay the bills if one of their children requires lengthy hospitalization or some other form of specialized care.

Mr. Speaker, it is tough enough for working families to cope with a child with a serious illness without having to sacrifice resources that should be used for the care of that child to the federal government. It is hard to think of a more compassionate action this Congress can take than to reduce taxes on America's parents in order to allow them to help provide quality health care to their children. I therefore call on my colleagues to join me in helping working parents provide health care to their children by cosponsoring H.R. 4799, the Family Health Tax Cut Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2000

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on September 14, 2000, I was detained with business in my District, and therefore unable to cast my votes on rollcall numbers 472 through 476. Had I been present for the votes, I would have voted "aye"; on rollcall vote 475, and "no" on rollcall votes 472, 473, 474 and 476.

Mr. Speaker, I am unable to support the Conference Report for H.R. 4516, the Legislative Branch Appropriations for F.Y. 2001, because it bypassed the normal appropriations

process. Moreover, this legislation raises Members' salaries while falling half a million dollars short of the Administration's budget to fund more important priorities of the American people. However, there are several provisions in the report which I strongly support. I applaud the conferees for fully funding the Administration's law enforcement initiatives, including a proposal to add 600 AFT agents to more fully enforce existing gun laws. In addition, I strongly support the provision which would repeal the 3 percent telephone excise tax that was levied as a luxury tax over 100 years ago to fund the Spanish American War. Finally, the \$258 million for the U.S. Customs Department's automation program in the legislation is critical, and I am pleased the conferees recognized its importance. I look forward to enacting these measures in a bill that better funds other needed priorities, which is arrived at through a more thorough discussion between Members of Congress.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HEREDITARY DISORDERS NEWBORN SCREENING ACT OF 2000

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2000

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, there is no uniform federal standard for screening newborn infants for hereditary disorders. Currently, states decide for themselves on an individual basis the types of disorders for which newborns are screened. As a result of this piecemeal approach, a haphazard system prevails under which detectable disorders—disorders that can profoundly affect the health of an infant for life—may or may not be found early enough to make a difference depending on the state in which a newborn lives. If a newborn lives in a state that happens not to screen for a particular disorder, the failure to screen could result in a tragic outcome that might have been different had the infant simply lived in another state. This system essentially subjects newborns with detectable disorders to a game of "Russian Roulette".

Last month, the Newborn Screening Task Force, which was convened by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) at the request of the Health Resources and Services Administration, published a report on newborn screening in the AAP journal Pediatrics. Among the report's recommendations is a call to "adhere to nationally recognized recommendations and standards for the validity of tests." "State newborn screening systems" the Task Force observed "have a responsibility to review the appropriateness of existing tests [and] tests for additional conditions." In other words, the Task Force is calling on the states to eliminate the disparities that exist in newborn screening by expanding their programs to test for a common set of core disorders.

Achieving this goal is no small task for the states. The technology for screening, which continues to advance at a rapid pace, is extremely expensive, and there needs to be a more coordinated system for developing and implementing an expanded newborn screening program. The federal government can and should assist in creating this system.

Today I am introducing legislation that will work towards eliminating the disparities that