United States of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

# House of Representatives

## RECOGNIZING THE GAY AND LESBIAN ACTIVISTS ALLIANCE OF WASHINGTON, DC 34TH ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION HONORING DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

SPEECH OF

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

*Tuesday, April 19, 2005*

---

- Mr. Speaker, I have the distinct honor and pleasure of representing America's oldest, continuously operational gay and lesbian rights organization: the Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, D.C. (GLAA). GLAA is a Washington, DC institution in the vanguard of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered civil rights movement. For 34 years, GLAA has remained a tenacious, persistent, and most importantly, respected, advocate for lesbians and gays.

- Since 1971, GLAA has fought to improve District government services to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) communities, especially for those services provided by the Metropolitan Police Department, the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department, the Department of Health and the Office of Human Rights. In every election year GLAA educates District voters by rating candidates for Mayor, Council, and Board of Education. GLAA outspokenly advocates safe and affirming schools for gay and lesbian youth. GLAA vigorously lobbies this body to defend gay families from undemocratic and discriminatory amendments to the District's budget.

- On April 20, GLAA will hold its 34th Anniversary Reception honoring the recipients of its Distinguished Service Awards for 2005: recently retired Whitman-Walker Clinic executive director Cornelius Baker; the fundraising charity Brother, Help Thyself Inc.; D.C. Council Chairman Linda Cropp; *Washington Post* columnist Colbert I. King; and lesbian cultural trailblazer Jane Troxell.

- GLAA's 34 year fight to secure all the birthrights enjoyed by Americans for the LGBT residents of Washington, D.C. is more poignant as United States Citizens living in our nation's capital, who have served honorably in every American war, including the present war in Iraq, are taxed without representation. GLAA's open and forthright advocacy reminds us that LGBT soldiers, who have sworn to protect our country with their lives, must serve in silence, without the open support of their chosen families and communities, neither asking nor telling.

used her background and experience to make a difference in the lives of the residents of Hamden as well as those throughout the State. With more than a decade of experience working with local and regional offices of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) as well as several years with the Connecticut Department of Education, Nancy focused much of her time on improving the quality of education for Connecticut's children. She served on the Assembly's Task Force on Student Financial Aid, the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Future of the Library, and the State Advisory Council on Special Education. As a legislator, she was recognized for her efforts, which is reflected by the myriad of awards and commendations she received throughout her tenure. Her distinguished career came to an end when she retired in 2003, however, she left an indelible mark on the institution which will be remembered by her colleagues and will certainly serve as an inspiration for members to come.

For her many invaluable contributions to her community and to the State of Connecticut, I am proud to stand today to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Nancy Beals. With her husband Richard, 3 children, and 9 grandchildren, she is certainly a busy woman, however, I have no doubt that though she no longer serves in public life, she will continue to work on behalf of her community and make a difference in the lives of others.

## INTRODUCTION OF SSI MODERNIZATION ACT

### HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 19, 2005*

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program provides benefits to nearly 7 million elderly and disabled individuals who have few, if any, other resources. While it serves as the primary Federal program that assists low-income elderly and disabled Americans, many of the components of the program have not been updated in decades.

Since the inception of the program in 1972, the general income exclusion, which permits outside income to be added to the SSI benefit without penalty, has been set at $20. This income exclusion is generally applied to Social Security earnings, which are based on past employment. A second exclusion was also created to allow the first $65 in monthly earnings to be disregarded from SSI benefits, plus one-half of the remaining earnings. Neither of these provisions, which reward past and current work, have been increased in 33 years. As a result, these income exclusions have lost more than 75 percent of their real value over time. If they had kept pace with inflation over the last three decades, the general exclusion would be worth $90 a month, rather than $20; and the earnings exclusion would be worth $295 a month, rather than $65.

I am therefore pleased to introduce legislation today—along with Representative JIM MCDERMOTT, the Ranking Member of the Human Resources Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee which has jurisdiction over the SSI program—to reduce the disincentives for work, savings and education in the SSI program. The SSI Modernization Act would reward work by increasing the general income exclusion to $40 a month and the earned income exclusion to $130 a month, then index the amounts to inflation in future years. The bill would also increase the SSI asset limit from $2,000 for an individual and $3,000 for a couple to $3,000 for an individual and $4,500 for a couple. Increasing the resource limits would provide an incentive for individuals to save for their future. Finally, the bill would encourage disabled children to complete high school by delaying the period in which they are required to go through a redetermination process to evaluate whether they remain SSI eligible under the adult program requirements. Because some disabled children may not be able to complete their secondary education before the age of 18, the legislation would delay a recipient's adult SSI redetermination if they are enrolled in secondary education and between the ages of 18 and 21.

Mr. Speaker, the provisions in the SSI program have not been updated in decades. Updating the program by rewarding work, savings and education will help improve the lives of millions of our most vulnerable seniors and disabled Americans who depend on this program to survive. As the Social Security Commissioner declared last spring before our Human Resources Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee, SSI recipients are the "poorest of the poor." Efforts to improve the quality of life for these individuals will go a long way to ensuring that they have a basic level of support. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

## RECOGNIZING THE GAY AND LESBIAN ACTIVISTS ALLIANCE OF WASHINGTON, DC 34TH ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION HONORING DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

### HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 19, 2005*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I have the distinct honor and pleasure of representing America's oldest, continuously operational gay and lesbian rights organization: the Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, D.C. (GLAA). GLAA is a Washington, DC institution in the vanguard of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered civil rights movement. For 34-years, GLAA has remained a tenacious, persistent, and most importantly, respected, advocate for lesbians and gays.

Since 1971, GLAA has fought to improve District government services to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) communities, especially for those services provided by the Metropolitan Police Department, the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department, the Department of Health and the Office of Human Rights. In every election year GLAA educates District voters by rating candidates for Mayor, Council, and Board of Education. GLAA outspokenly advocates safe and affirming schools for gay and lesbian youth. GLAA vigorously lobbies this body to defend gay families from undemocratic and discriminatory amendments to the District's budget.

On April 20, GLAA will hold its 34th Anniversary Reception honoring the recipients of its Distinguished Service Awards for 2005: recently retired Whitman-Walker Clinic executive director Cornelius Baker; the fundraising charity Brother, Help Thyself Inc.; D.C. Council Chairman Linda Cropp; Washington Post columnist Colbert I. King; and lesbian cultural trailblazer Jane Troxell.

GLAA's 34-year fight to secure all the birthrights enjoyed by Americans for the LGBT residents of Washington, D.C. is more poignant as United States citizens living in our nation's capital, who have served honorably in every American war, including the present war in Iraq, are taxed without representation. GLAA's open and forthright advocacy reminds us that LGBT soldiers, who have sworn to protect our country with their lives, must serve in silence, without the open support of their chosen families and communities, neither asking nor telling.

## RECOGNIZING ROBERT MCCAFFREY

### HON. MELISSA A. HART

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 19, 2005*

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Robert McCaffrey of Allison Park, PA for his distinguished service during World War II.

Recently, the National Personnel Record Center (NPRC) confirmed Mr. McCaffrey's entitlement to ten medals related to his service. Several of these medals had been misplaced over the past 60 years. While a 1973 fire had destroyed his original service record, an alternate record recently confirmed Mr. McCaffrey's entitlement to these medals. It is my honor to present Mr. McCaffrey with these decorations.

Mr. McCaffrey served in the United States Army from June 1943 until January 1946. During this time, Mr. McCaffrey received the following medals for his service: the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, the Good Conduct Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with one bronze service star, the World War II Victory Medal, the Combat Infantryman Badge 1st Award, the Philippine Liberation Ribbon, the Honorable Service Lapel Button WWII, the Sharpshooter Badge with Rifle Bar, and the Marksman Badge with Carbine Bar.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring Robert McCaffrey. It is an honor to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania and a pleasure to salute citizens such as Robert who make the communities that they live in truly special.

## IN RECOGNITION OF PAUL WARD FOR HIS 33 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE CONTRA COSTA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN SERVICES

### HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 19, 2005*

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career accomplishments of Paul Ward for his 33 years of service to the Contra