

INTRODUCTION OF THE POST OFFICE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 2001

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2001

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I came to Congress dedicated to making the federal government a better partner in building livable communities. Perhaps the most important opportunity for realizing this goal is to ensure that the federal government lead by example through such simple actions as locating federal facilities in ways that support existing communities.

Today I am introducing the Post Office Community Partnership Act. This legislation, similar to the bills I introduced in the 105th and 106th Congresses, outlines minimum community contact procedures that the United States Postal Service must pursue for any proposed closing, consolidation, relocation, or construction of a post office. Simply put, the bill requires the Postal Service to comply with local zoning, planning, or other land use laws.

This bill is being introduced with 57 bipartisan original cosponsors. In the 106th Congress this bill was supported by 240 bipartisan cosponsors. Identical companion legislation is being introduced this week by Senators JAMES JEFFORDS of Vermont and MAX BAUCUS of Montana. This continued and widespread support, in addition to the multitude of letters received from constituents and stories in newspapers throughout the country, illustrates the important need for this bill to become law.

The Post Office Community Partnership Act takes another step in making the federal government a better partner with communities and local governments. It is important that local officials and citizens have input into the decisions that impact the daily livability of their communities. Additionally, this bill addresses the need for the Postal Service to abide by a community's own plans for growth management, land use, traffic management, and environmental protection—rules by which all citizens and businesses must adhere.

Communities and neighborhoods across the country have been subjected to Postal Service decisions that have negatively impacted service to postal customers and community development. This bill provides communities an opportunity to be notified of Postal Service plans in advance, which will allow for interaction in the decision-making process between local government officials, the public, and the Postal Service. The beneficial results of this type of interaction can be seen from Fairview Village in my congressional district to Castine, Maine.

In Fairview Village, Oregon, by working with the developers of the community, the post office was the first civic building constructed in the area and acted as an anchor for what has developed into a retail street. By centrally locating the post office as the developers proposed, residents can easily walk or drive to the post office from anywhere in Fairview Village. In Castine, Maine, the Postal Service proposed moving the oldest operating post office in the country—a national historic landmark—from its downtown location to the suburbs. After a public outcry, the Postal Service and the Town of Castine worked together to find a way to expand the existing building and

keep the post office in its historic downtown location.

Despite these examples, too often the Postal Service does not involve the community and instead relies on the fact that they are not required to follow local land use laws when building new facilities or renovating existing facilities.

The Post Office Community Partnership Act puts in place basic procedures for notifying local officials and post office customers of any planned facility changes or construction. The Act also requires that the Postal Service follow local land use laws, procedures and public participation requirements to the same extent and manner as other private enterprises. It has been shown that the Postal Service can manage this process without hampering its mission of cost effective and efficient universal service as evidenced by Fairview Village, Oregon and Castine, Maine. It is time to ensure that the Postal Service operates within the same framework and rules that a community imposes on its own citizens and businesses.

The Post Office Community Partnership Act would establish community notification and land use policies and procedures that should have been in place all along. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation that will help ensure that the post office is a productive federal partner in building livable communities.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO GERRITT BENJAMIN MEYERS III, CHAE CARLSON AND OLIVER MARTIN

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2001

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the accomplishments of three Lansing, Michigan, 2001 high school graduates who have played a major role in the selection and celebration of the nation's Capitol 2001 Holiday Tree, which will be provided by the state of Michigan this year.

Mr. Gerritt Benjamin Meyers III, Ms. Chae Carlson, and Mr. Oliver Martin have worked with a group of underclassmen at Waverly High School in Lansing for the past five months to create and maintain the U.S. Holiday Tree 2001 web site. As the senior members of their "Webmasters" group, Mr. Meyers, Ms. Carlson and Mr. Martin provided leadership, working many volunteer hours with the team to produce an attractive, well-organized web site that is easy to navigate and filled with helpful information. Mr. Meyers designed the Michigan map with holiday tree that forms the artistic theme for the pages and each of these seniors has participated in developing graphics and page layouts and also in updating the pages as plans for the selection, cutting and transport of the tree continue.

Their efforts leave a legacy for Michigan and the citizens of this nation who will enjoy not only the holiday tree but also the web site designed by Mr. Meyers, Ms. Carlson, Mr. Martin and their classmates and instructor/advvisor Ms. Janice Kesel. I urge my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Mr. Gerritt Benjamin Meyers III, Ms. Chae Carlson and Mr. Oliver Martin for their mature, professional approach to chronicling the holiday tree and designing www.holidaytree2001.org

NATIONAL DAY OF AWARENESS FOR STURGE-WEBER SYNDROME

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2001

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. MALONEY and I rise today to recognize today as a national day of awareness for Sturge-Weber syndrome. We feel that it is important to recognize this day because Mrs. Karla Priepeke, a native of Haddon Heights, New Jersey and resident of Sandy Hook Connecticut, brought her son's plight to our attention. Her son is affected by this disease and rather than turn inward she has made it her mission to inform and educate members of the society and especially the medical community about this disease. This is why we wish to do our small part to increase awareness of this disease by submitting this Sturge-Weber Foundation press release for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on this national day of awareness of Sturge-Weber Syndrome.

Sturge-Weber Syndrome is a congenital disorder most easily recognized by a port wine stain on the face and/or body. No one is sure how or why it occurs. Babies born with Sturge-Weber can suffer from any or all of these complications: glaucoma, blindness, seizures that range from mild to the need to remove half the brain, mental retardation, and paralysis. The port wine stain often elicits rude stares and outrageously intrusive remarks from the public.

The Sturge-Weber Foundation (www.sturge-weber.com) is establishing May 16, 2001 as the second national Day of Awareness for Sturge-Weber Syndrome. People will make a donation to the Foundation and wear a Sturge-Weber sticker on May 16th. They will receive a packet of information about the syndrome and the work of the Foundation so they can answer questions from colleagues and friends.

The Sturge-Weber Foundation was created in 1987—the result of tenacious parents who refused to accept that all that was known about Sturge-Weber were three paragraphs in medical textbooks. Through Herculean volunteer efforts, the Foundation support group started. Their outstanding web site links families all over the United States and in many parts of the world. The Foundation seeks to improve the quality of life for individuals with Sturge-Weber Syndrome by acting as a clearinghouse for information, providing emotional support, and facilitating research. A minuscule 8 percent of funds taken in goes towards administration. The rest, including what's collected for the National Day of Awareness, goes directly to education, emotional support and research.

The Foundation has attracted the attention and respect of a dozen teams of scientists who are tackling the question of how Sturge-Weber occurs from different angles Klippel-Trenaunay is a related syndrome in which port wine stains on limbs extend to muscle tissue and bone affecting circulation and mobility. Most children with port wine stains have neither Sturge-Weber Syndrome nor Klippel-Trenaunay. Of course, these can cause dermatological complications as the child matures.

Sadly, the culture in the United States over-emphasizes the importance of physical beauty