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# NEWS

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### Top News

## Bernardi hearing carried light-hearted atmosphere

April 25, 2004

**PETER LYMAN**  
**WASHINGTON NOTEBOOK**

Praise and jests were Doled out generously this past week as former Syracuse Mayor Roy Bernardi testified before a Senate panel on his nomination for the No. 2 post at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Sen. Elizabeth Dole, R-N.C., is a member of the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, which conducted the hearing.

Her husband, former Senate majority leader and 1996 Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole, was on hand to speak on behalf of another nominee.

Dennis Shea, a longtime member of Bob Dole's Senate staff, has been

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tapped as HUD's assistant secretary for policy development and research.

Both Doles offered kind words for Bernardi for his service as mayor of Syracuse and as HUD's assistant secretary of community planning and development, a post he has held for three years.

There was serious business at hand, but the hearing took on the air of a class reunion. Bob Dole, long renowned for his quick wit, exchanged several good-natured jabs with his former colleagues, including Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., who appeared before the panel in support of Bernardi. Rep. James Walsh, R-Onondaga, also testified for Bernardi.

One exchange came between Bob Dole and his longtime close friend, Sen. John Warner, R-Va. At one point, Warner noted that his own remarks were taking up much more time than Dole's. That didn't quite seem proper, he said.

Without missing a beat, Dole replied, "That's because I don't have a vote."

### Green chemistry

For many people, the term "chemical plant" evokes images of smelly smokestacks and polluted runoff and costly, protracted clean-ups.

A measure approved by the House of Representatives this past week aims to address those concerns. It was cosponsored by Reps. John McHugh, R-Pierrepont Manor, and Sherwood Boehlert, R-New Hartford.

The Green Chemistry Research and Development Act would promote "benign by design" chemistry in the private sector, emerging technology that focuses on preventing pollution rather than cleaning it up after the damage has been inflicted upon the environment.

The measure directs the National Science Foundation and other federal agencies to work with private business to develop green technologies in the chemical industry.

It also would provide money to undergraduate and graduate programs to train the next generation of chemists and engineers.

"This is especially important for the citizens of Central and Northern New York," McHugh said. "Green chemistry will directly benefit many of our rural farming neighbors by developing safer pesticides that would target and kill harmful organisms while having no (negative) effect on crops."

Programs at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse and at State University College at Potsdam would receive federal money from the legislation, McHugh said.

After House approval, the bill was sent to the Senate, where it was referred to the Committee on Science, Commerce and Transportation.

### Rail fan

Boehlert was honored this past week by the National Association of Railroad Passengers, which presented him with its George Falcon Golden Spike Award during a ceremony at Washington's historic Union Station on Capitol Hill.

Boehlert was cited for his "tireless work over many years for high speed



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rail development and for our national rail passenger system. He is one of the reasons Amtrak is alive, well and improving."

NARP is a Washington-based nonprofit organization that works to improve passenger rail service around the United States. Peter Lyman's Washington Notebook appears Sunday in The Post-Standard. He can be reached at (202) 383-7818 or by e-mail at [peter.lyman@newhouse.com](mailto:peter.lyman@newhouse.com)

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