

I think there is some real news here -
Please advise

August 24, 1995

(Encl.)
THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
9.6.95

MEMORANDUM TO HAROLD ICKES
ERSKINE BOWLES

FROM: BETSY MYERS

RE: WOMEN & THE BUDGET STRATEGY

As I reported in my memorandum to Leon Panetta on July 31, women's organizations and women political appointees are eager to carry the President's budget message. We need your help securing the President's participation and leadership.

More than any other constituency, women -- as breadwinners and caretakers of children and aging parents -- are directly impacted by proposed budget cuts in health, education, job training, Medicare and crime (see attached grid).

Budget cuts directly impact every issue that resonates with women and families and provide a perfect opportunity not only to sell the budget to America but also to give women a reason to go to the polls in 1996 -- if we speak directly to them.

(1) The women's vote will be crucial in '96:

Recent polls and studies abound on the importance of the gender gap and the women's vote in '96. "The Democratic Party could have kept control of Congress had its women been as 'excited' about their party as men were about the GOP," *U.S. News & World Report* reported from pollster Celinda Lake in its survey and article, "What do women want?" (8/14/95).

We are successful with the women's constituencies when the President is perceived as feeling and understanding the daily struggles of the average American family.



Women represent more than half of the drop-off voters (those who voted in 1992 but stayed home in 1994). (*U.S. News & World Report*, 8/14/95)



White women are now evenly split along party lines in support for congressional candidates. (Public Opinion Strategies)

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Half of women think Washington budget cuts have gone too far, but half of men say cuts haven't gone far enough. Lower-wage women are the most nervous about the GOP Congress: 61 percent -- more than any other group -- believe Republican budget cuts have gone too far. (*U.S. News & World Report*, 8/14/95)

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- o Even "born again" Christians show a gender gap on the budget: A plurality of white, born-again women believe the Republican budget cuts go "too far," while white, born-again men support the cuts by 56 percent to 29 percent. (Lake Research)

(2) **Women's concerns mirror the President's budget priorities**

Across party lines, women are concerned about budget cuts that will hurt the programs that currently help their families, including:

- Education and training programs that help women advance and become self-sufficient and that also provide opportunity for their children;
- Medicare and aging programs that help families care for aging parents;
- School meals and programs for children;
- Health care programs.
- Funding for Violence Against Women Act.
- Earned Income Tax Credit and cuts to the safety net.

New polls show women's top concerns are family concerns: Jobs, education and crime.

(3) **Our strategy to sell the President's budget includes the following:**

I. PRESIDENTIAL EVENT:

I need your help securing the President's participation in at least one of the following events:

- (1) Visit a **predominantly female workplace** (e.g., a hospital, school, factory or office), and talk with workers in an employee lounge or cafeteria. **Working women best represent family concerns:** family checkbook, child care, education, health and Medicare, jobs, and stress from balancing work and family. A nursing home would add a Medicare angle.
- (2) **Kitchen table talk** with a family of three generations:
 - **a grandmother** reliant on Medicare and elderly programs;
 - **a mother** concerned about family checkbook, drug-free schools for her kids, help for her aging parents, and student loans and skill grants to continue her education;
 - **a daughter** in Head Start or an older daughter concerned about drug-free schools and college loans.
- (3) Visit a **Battered women's shelter** and host a discussion on domestic

violence and GOP cuts to the Violence Against Women Act, despite its funding from the Crime Trust Fund. Participants could include:

- law enforcement officials;
- advocates;
- battered women.

(4)

White House Town Hall Meeting with families to discuss the budget cuts' impact on their pocketbooks, their kids and their aging parents.

II. PRESIDENTIAL BRIEFINGS:

The following briefings are necessary for our amplification and communications strategy:

- (1) **Women Appointees' Roundtable** with the President for 30 senior women political appointees whose programs are affected by the budget cuts. Women appointees all have constituencies that have never been touched by the White House. Appointees will amplify the President's message through travel and media.
- (2) **Women Constituents' Roundtable** with the President for 25 women leaders whose organizations and constituents are focused on the budget cuts. These women are necessary for amplifying our message.

III. PRESS EVENTS FOR OTHER PRINCIPALS:

- (1) **"Oprah Winfrey Show"** on women and the budget. This popular show reaches many women who currently are not hearing the President's message.
- (2) **Working mothers' roundtable** discussion with a 10 to 12 typical working women whose personal and family concerns exemplify the impact of the budget cuts. Vice President preferred.
- (3) **PTA meeting** with discussion by community mothers to highlight a family message and education programs.
- (4) **Community college nursing program** with discussion by women on jobs, student loans and skill-grants to highlight a Middle Class Bill of Rights message.
- (5) **Child care center** or Head Start located inside a supportive business. Discussion by business leaders and mothers on importance of public-private partnership.

- (6) **Neighborhood safety meeting** with local families and women police officers.
- (7) **Low-wage poultry plant** to target low-wage women with a message on education, health care, minimum wage, and families just above the safety net.

Office of Women's Initiatives and Outreach
July 31, 1995

CUTS TO PROGRAMS IMPACTING WOMEN

	PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL	REPUBLICAN CUTS
EFFECTS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING	Women's Educational Equity Act Program: Maintains \$4 million which supports the research, development, and dissemination of curricular materials, training programs, guidance and testing activities, and other projects to promote educational equity for women and girls.	House appropriation bill eliminates this program that shares curricular materials with over 4,000 organizations and individuals yearly, helps schools implement non-discriminatory practices, and trains hundreds of teachers.
	Federal Direct Student Loan Program: Supports direct loans and phase out of guaranteed loans in order to save money for taxpayers. Lower cost of borrowing for students and reduce costs for schools.	House appropriations bill cuts administrative funding \$230 million, leaving less than what is needed to administer the direct loan program which will stop growth of efficient, cost-effective direct lending in order to keep paying banks, state agencies, and secondary markets. Republican budget reduction proposals also support the costly guaranteed programs instead of the direct loan program and will therefore charge students billions more (over seven years) for their college loans.
	Education for Disadvantaged Students: Boosts funding by \$302 million, to over \$ 7 billion per year, to help states raise academic achievement of 6.4 million disadvantaged children.	House bill reduces funding by \$1.1 billion, cutting up to 1.1 million children from program, and eliminating as many as 29,000 teacher and aide jobs.

CUTS CONT.	PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL	REPUBLICAN CUTS
EFFECTS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING	Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities: Provides funding at \$500 million per year, for a safer, more drug-free learning environments for 39 million children in over 14, 000 school districts.	Reduces funding to \$200 million, a 60% cut from the President's request, depriving over 23 million students of services next year.
	Head Start: Increases 1996 funding by \$400 million and adds 32,000 new Head Start slots for children in 1996--and 50,000 new slots by 2002.	Cuts funding by \$137 million from 1995 level, shutting out 45,000-50,000 children from Head Start in 1996.
	Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations: Maintains funding at \$774,000 to promote training and employment opportunities for women in nontraditional fields.	Cuts funding by 18%.
	Goals 2000: Provides \$750 million in 1996 to raise academic standards and student achievement eventually in all schools, and in 1996 in more than 16,000 schools serving 8.8 million students in 48 states.	Eliminates all funding for education reform, severely undermining state and local efforts to improve student achievement. Without this funding, much needed improvements in teacher training, educational technology and parental involvement will not be implemented.
	School-to-Work: Boosts funds to \$400 million, a 60% increase over 1995, to support all states' building school-to-work systems with 1-year planning and 5-year implementation grants.	Cuts funds from the President's 1996 request to \$190 million, impairing efforts of 28 states to complete reforms begun in 1994 and 1995, and denying 22 states the chance to implement their reform plans to raise student skills and build a more competitive workplace.

CUTS CONT.	PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL	REPUBLICAN CUTS
EFFECTS ON FAMILIES AND CHILDREN	Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): Provides \$1.319 billion in 1996, matching pre-recission 1995 level.	Eliminates the LIHEAP program, ending assistance to between five and six million low income families.
	Food Stamp Program: Will serve 27 million people in 1996, about 60% of whom are female.	The House 1996 appropriations bill decreases benefits by \$190 million, freezing the food stamp standard deduction at the 1995 level. The Republican budget reduction would cut Food Stamps over \$35 billion over seven years.
	Special Supplementary Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC): Increase funding in 1996 by \$350 million and adds 200,000 women, infants and children to the program.	Funds WIC at \$90 million below the President's request, serving 50,000 fewer women, infants and children.
	School Meals Initiative: Provides \$26 million to help schools meet Dietary Guidelines for healthy meals.	Provides \$5 million for the School Meals Initiative, \$21 million below the President's request.
	Public Housing: Provides \$8.1 billion in 1996 for public housing capital and operating funds, enough to reduce a backlog of capital needs, tear down or reconfigure the worst projects, and prepare for a proposed transition to portable assistance, giving choices to public housing residents.	Cuts 1996 funding by 37%, or \$3 billion. These cuts will force public housing authorities to under-maintain and abandon projects or cut security and services.

CUTS CONT.	PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL	REPUBLICAN CUTS
EFFECTS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS	Violence Against Women Programs at the Department of Justice: Increases funding from \$25 million to \$175 million.	Cuts funding by \$100 million to \$75 million. These cuts threaten the full enforcement of the VAWA, where they are concentrated at the local level. These cuts will be felt in local shelters, police stations, and courthouses, where they are desperately needed.
	Violence Against Women Programs at the Department of Health and Human Services: Increases Crime Trust Fund funding for rape and domestic violence prevention, domestic violence education, battered women's shelter, and a domestic violence hotline from \$1 million to \$61.9 million.	Cuts \$21.9 million from the President's 1996 request, eliminating programs to reduce sexual abuse of youth and providing less funding for battered women's shelters.
EFFECTS ON OLDER WOMEN	Administration on Aging: Boosts funds by \$21 million, to \$897 million. Maintains 1995 level for nutrition programs that include Meals on Wheels.	Ends 7 of 12 elderly programs and cuts funds for all others, but one. Organizations like Meals on Wheels would be reimbursed for 12 million fewer meals served to older Americans.
	Medicare: Eliminate the co-payment for mammograms for senior women.	No Republican proposal yet.
	Respite Care for Families of People with Alzheimer's Disease: Helps Medicare beneficiaries who suffer from Alzheimer's disease by providing respite services for their families for one week each year.	No Republican proposal yet.

CUTS CONT.	PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL	REPUBLICAN CUTS
EFFECTS ON OLDER WOMEN	Home and Community -Based Care: Provides grants to states for home- and community-based services for disabled elderly Americans.	The average beneficiary will pay at least \$1400 more in 2002 for home health care services, and the average Medicare recipient will pay \$1000 more for skilled nursing home services.
	Medicaid: Contains a mix of policies that save \$54 billion between now and 2002 and protects critical coverage for senior women.	Cuts \$182 billion from Medicaid over the next seven years by making the program a block grant to states which leads to lower benefits for low-income mothers and children and the elderly and disabled.
	Options: Expands the managed care options available to beneficiaries to include preferred provider organizations and point-of-service plans.	Utilizes vouchers which may threaten Medicare access of the elderly to high quality medical care.
EFFECTS ON HEALTH CARE	Substance Abuse & Mental Health Grants: Roughly maintains 1995 level of \$566 million.	Cuts 64%, or \$364 million, compared to the President's plan, jeopardizing substance abuse and mental health services for tens of thousands of pregnant women and high-risk youth.
	Title X. Requested \$199 million for Family Planning grants, \$6 million above the FY 1995 level.	Abolishes Title X family planning grants, the Community Health Centers, and the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant and reallocates the \$193 million. There will be no guarantees that these funds will be used for family planning services.
	Human Embryo Research.	Prohibits Federal funds from being spent on research that involves human embryos.
	Medicaid Funding.	Allows states the option to deny Medicaid funding for victims of rape and incest abortions.

CUTS CONT.	PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL	REPUBLICAN CUTS
EFFECTS ON HEALTH CARE	Funding for Residency Accreditation Related to Abortion Procedures	Prohibits Federal funds from being dependent on residency accreditation requirements that include abortion training.
	Federal Employees' Health Benefits Program. (FEHBP)	Precludes Federal employees and their families from purchasing health insurance coverage through FEHBP that covers abortions.
	Abortion Services.	Bans privately funded abortion services at U.S. military hospitals and other federal facilities to women stationed overseas.
EFFECTS ON THE ECONOMY	Department of Labor Wage & Hour Administration: Provides \$117 million to enforce the Family and Medical Leave Act and other worker protections particularly for low wage workers.	Cuts 7.5% of the Wage & Hour enforcement office which threatens the office's ability to handle any enforcement of the Family & Medical Leave Act. Reduces the number of low-wage women (e.g., in garment sweatshops) whose minimum wage and hour rights are protected (women account for the majority of minimum wage earners).
	Small Business Administration's Office of Women's Business Ownership: Provides \$4 million for the Women's Demonstration Site Program.	Cuts 50% of the funding of the President's 1996 request to \$2 million for the Women's Demonstration Site Program. Significantly reduces the amount of business education and training SBA can provide to women-owned small businesses.
	Department of Labor, Women's Bureau: Provides \$9 million to promote the interests of wage-earning women.	Cuts budget by 7.5% from the 1995 level.

CUTS CONT.	PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL	REPUBLICAN CUTS
EFFECTS ON THE ECONOMY	Small Business Administration, National Women's Business Council.	Reduces budget from \$500,000 in 1994 to \$200,000 in 1996.
EFFECTS ON SERVICE PROGRAMS	Community Service Employment for Older Americans: Increases 1996 funding by \$15 million to provide almost 2,500 additional part-time work opportunities for low-income persons age 55 and older to work in community service activities.	Cuts funding by \$46 million, eliminating over 5,500 opportunities for elderly low-income women to work in part-time community service jobs.
	AmeriCorps: Increases funding by \$211 million and adds 20,000 new service opportunities for Americans to address vital local community needs such as health care, crime prevention and education.	Terminates AmeriCorps, eliminating nearly 25,000 opportunities for women to serve their communities and earn a monetary award to help them further their education or training.
	Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA): Increases funding by \$12 million to allow an additional 800 VISTA volunteers to work in low-income communities to alleviate poverty.	Cuts the VISTA program by 57% and denies nearly 2,400 women the opportunity to serve in their communities as VISTA volunteers and earn a monetary award to help them further their education or training.
	National Senior Volunteer Corps: Increase funding by \$32 million to provide Americans age 55 and over the opportunity to help the homebound elderly, disabled children, troubled adolescents and others in their communities.	Cuts funding by \$53 million and denies nearly 130,000 older women the opportunity to serve their communities.

A REPORT CARD ON WOMEN'S ISSUES IN THE 104TH CONGRESS



THE GOP LEGISLATIVE WAR ON WOMEN

A REPORT CARD ON WOMEN'S ISSUES IN THE 104TH CONGRESS

GOP DECLARES LEGISLATIVE WAR ON WOMEN ON 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S VOTE

August 26, 1995 marks the 75th anniversary of the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution which gave American women the right to vote.

Women's 72 year campaign for the right to vote will go down in history as one of the longest, most peaceful struggles for political power and civil rights in American history. During those years women circulated petitions, published newspapers, chained themselves to the White House fence, and organized countless marches. Suffragist Susan B. Anthony was even arrested and put on trial for casting a vote.

American women prevailed and achieved this historic step forward by strength of argument, personal dedication, and tireless activism. No PACS, no conspiracy theories, no divisive tactics, no anti-government rhetoric--just the facts and the passion of their convictions.

Eventually, President Woodrow Wilson, Congress and state legislatures took note and ratified the Nineteenth Amendment. Even after women had won the right to vote, suffrage leader Alice Paul urged women to look forward: "When you put your hand to the plow, you cannot lift it until you reach the end of the row." Paul realized that although a great victory had been won, the battles faced by American women to achieve real equality would continue.

Now more than ever, American women must keep their hands to the plow. The power of women's vote has never been as crucial as it is today. Actions the 104th Congress has taken against American women make dedication to keep "plowing forward" even more important. The Republican Congress is pushing an extreme agenda that is anti-women, anti-choice, and anti-working family. 1995 is the 75th anniversary of women's suffrage, but this new Republican Congress is intent on making it a time for women to suffer.

American women are vital to our nation's economic, social, and political well-being. Yet, even as we celebrate the contribution of women to the American body politic, this Congress undermines women's very ability to continue contributing to their families and their country.

The Republican Congress has taken actions that demonstrate that they don't really understand the economic insecurity women feel today. Most women are struggling to make ends meet and are frustrated that they can't spend more time with their children and families because of economic responsibilities. But the new Republican Congress is oblivious to women's economic worries about affordable health insurance and an economically secure old age. Republican lawmakers dismiss women's worry about violence, which threatens them and their children.

Republican actions over the past six months have only fueled women's economic insecurity and pessimism about the direction of the country. For the past 200 days, special interests have been running roughshod over the public interest and women's economic and constitutional rights have been among the hardest trampled.

This assault on women's rights comes on the heels of thirty years of steady legislative progress on a range of issues of concern to women. Under Democratic leadership, Congress has passed legislation to toughen child support laws; to guarantee working families the right to take an unpaid leave to bond with their newborn and in family emergencies; to enforce equal pay for equal work; to provide for safe, affordable child care; to expand opportunities for women-owned businesses; to strengthen laws against rape, domestic violence, and other violence against women; and to improve the quality of women's reproductive health.

Since 1979, when the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues began monitoring legislation affecting women and families, Democrats have used their power to pass into law over 200 bills that have improved the status of women and their families in American society. Led by the Democratic Party, the 103rd Congress set a historic precedent for women by passing into law 66 bills that helped women and their families.

THE NEW REPUBLICAN CONGRESS, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF NEWT GINGRICH, IS PASSING BILLS THAT WEAKEN AND THREATEN WOMEN'S RIGHTS, HEALTH, FREEDOM, OPPORTUNITIES, ECONOMIC EQUITY, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY.

The Republicans in the House of Representatives have over the past six months, with only cursory debate, slashed spending on a host of programs that millions of women use every day. These cuts will have real consequences for real people, and for women in particular. Because of these cuts, young women will not be able to get student loans, older women will have a tougher time qualifying for Social Security, women will be unable to get family planning services, women will not be able to enter the workforce because they won't be able to afford childcare, and girls will not be able to participate in school sports.

Under the guise of balancing the budget, the Republican Congress is sacrificing the constitutional rights of women as citizens and their economic rights as taxpayers in order to appease the Christian Coalition and its social agenda. Women pay the same taxes as men do, but are not getting their money's worth from their government--be it in health research or education. Republicans have even gone so far as to demand that women who are not on welfare, but are simply trying to get a court order enforced, give back 15% of any child support enforcement officials help them recover.

In the workplace, women earn 72 cents on the dollar, but they get further shortchanged in the funding for programs that benefit them. For example, in last Congress, under Democratic leadership, the House unanimously authorized and agreed to fully fund the Violence Against Women Act. Yet, in this Congress, Republicans funded the implementation of the law at only 60 cents on the dollar. It is clear that if women in Congress and in our communities had not been diligently and constantly monitoring the funding of VAWA, the funding level would have remained at low Republican levels. Only after advocates in Congress mobilized and fought for more funding for rape crisis centers, battered women's shelters and education programs to prevent such violence, did the House reinstate some of that money. The law, however, remains funded at \$109.4 million below its authorization of \$273.6 million.

In specific, the GOP's battle against women has been fought on several fronts:

CHOICE:

Never has the House voted to restrict so many reproductive rights with this much speed. The sheer number of actions successfully taken sends a signal that this new Republican Congress is anti-choice with a vengeance. Attached is a list of their actions. Over the past six months, the ultra conservatives in the Republican Party have embarked on an aggressive assault on women's reproductive health and choice despite Newt Gingrich's pre-election promises that women's abortion rights would not be in the line of fire of a Republican Congress. However, now even Republican moderates are nervous about the implication of the string of anti-choice legislation the House has passed. Anti-choice forces have passed 12 legislative provisions in House committees and on the floor that restrict women's constitutional rights to abortion and family planning. To live up to a deal made with the religious right, the House Appropriations committee tried to eliminate Title X-- the nation's only program devoted exclusively to family planning services. They were defeated in a narrow, rare, and tenuous victory for women. In addition, they have passed provisions in the foreign aid bill to cut funding to international family planning programs, thereby making abortion an international litmus test. They have also worked to allow states to deny Medicaid coverage of abortions for poor women who are the victims of rape and incest.

EDUCATION

When the House cut student loans by \$10 billion, they made it harder for thousands of young women to get an education. But the House of Representatives added insult to injury when they cut funds for education programs specifically designed to make sure our daughters have the same educational opportunities that our sons have. From weakening enforcement of Title IX, the civil rights law guaranteeing equal opportunity in education, including access to school sports program, to defunding the Women's Education Equity Act, a program established in 1974 to monitor sex discrimination in federally funded education programs and provide for gender equity programs, the House has backed off from our country's educational commitment to half of our children.

HEALTH

In 1990, when the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues uncovered the inequities of medical research on women, Congress made women's health a national priority. Over the past six months Republican lawmakers have made clear that women's health is only a priority when it doesn't cost much or when it doesn't conflict with special interests. When the House passed Product Liability Reform legislation, as part of the Republican Contract with America, American women who were harmed by medical products lost the ability to collect fully for non-economic damages such as the loss of fertility and other reproductive health injuries and women who are homemakers lost their access to punitive damages.

The budget cuts contained in the Recision Bill and the Labor/HHS Appropriations bill hamper women's access to reproductive health services and cut funding for the Public Health Services Office on Women's Health, which monitors and coordinates the government's women's health activities. While NIH funding remained intact, earmarks for specific research programs, including those that benefit women such as contraceptive and infertility research and osteoporosis research, were eliminated. Cuts in other Public Health Service agencies--such as the Agency for Health Care Policy Research and the Office of the Surgeon General will lead to fewer studies, guidelines, and advocacy on women's health issues.

Further, Republican welfare reform legislation dealt a blow to women's health when it severed all federal responsibility for the Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program, one of the most effective nutrition programs for pregnant women, and dropped all national nutrition standards and nutritional counseling requirement. In fact, under the Republican bill, states aren't even required to establish a WIC program.

FAMILY

Republicans have talked a good game on being family-friendly, but their actions have not backed up their rhetoric. They have abolished federal commitments to children's safety and well being. Republicans have cut the school lunch program, nutrition programs, summer youth programs, and Head Start. Programs on child abuse, foster care, and adoption have been consolidated and slashed.

Working families that depend on women's economic contributions to family income were particularly hard hit by Republican actions to cut child care assistance. When the House passed H.R. 4, the Republican welfare reform legislation, it cut overall funding for child care by \$1.1 billion over five years. In the year 2000, child care funding would be cut by \$379 million thereby covering 323,000 fewer children. For working poor families, childcare takes more than one fourth of their income--27%--and can be a prohibitive cost to entering the workforce. Poor mothers who will be forced to work because of welfare-to-work requirements will be in a double bind--a situation that puts the Republican pro-family rhetoric to shame.

SAFETY

Republicans reneged on Congress' pledge to fully fund and implement the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), a bill that the House passed unanimously in 1993, initially funding it at half of its authorization. Republicans failed to fund battered women's shelters, programs for victims of child abuse, and training for state judges. In the Republican effort to roll back the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act, the House deleted requirements that funds be used for crime prevention programs in communities. This cuts funding for programs that give children and teens a safe place to spend out-of-school time so that they are less like to be affected by violence in their communities. By cutting funding for Safe and Drug Free Schools Act by a whopping 59% (\$286 million), Republicans have just said no to our children's safety.

Lastly, House Republicans refused to pass an amendment that would have clearly allowed local municipalities to use federal funds to upgrade abortion clinic security and build upon the assurance the Democratic House gave women last Congress when it passed the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act.

ECONOMIC SECURITY

The only bright spot for women in the past 200 days has been the bipartisan support for child support enforcement--a key to women's economic security. Republicans, however, have diluted the strength of this provision by proposing a 15% tax on child support collections for women who are not on welfare --- despite the fact that it is money owed to them and keeps their families off public assistance. The Republican Budget Resolution's cuts to Medicare and Medicaid hit women especially hard since one quarter of all women over age 65 live at or near the poverty line. The Republican Budget Committee in their proposed budget resolution also recommended that the income women can disregard as they compute their eligibility for Social Security payments be lowered by \$5, thereby making some current recipients ineligible for SSI and Medicaid benefits--both economic lifelines for older women.

Women's battles for economic equality and justice in the workplace are among the most difficult faced today and throughout history. To make the already intense workplace problems for women even worse, actions taken in the appropriations bill for the Department of Labor make it even tougher for women to enter the workforce by eliminating the Women in Apprenticeship program which trains women for non-traditional jobs. Throughout the Department of Labor appropriations, women will be directly affected by almost \$1 billion in cuts to programs like the Women's Bureau and job training programs.

Each rollback outlined in this report represents women who are being pushed back from their goals of equity and economic self-sufficiency. Cumulatively, however, these legislative changes and budget cuts represent a complete turnaround from the constant progress women had been making in their quest for equality under the law.

When Congress returns from its August break, it will take up two issues that strike at the pocketbook of American women--affirmative action and Medicare.

Affirmative action goes to the heart of America's commitment to equal opportunity. Nearly three out of 10 (29.9%) lower and middle managerial positions in private industry are now filled by women, almost triple the percentage in 1966, before affirmative action policies were first enacted. Republicans have introduced legislation to undo the federal government's role in promoting equal employment opportunities and to prohibit the use of racial and gender preferences by the federal government in awarding and administering federal contracts, in hiring and promoting federal workers and in administering federally conducted programs and activities--even court-ordered affirmative action remedies for proven, intentional discrimination. In other words, the old boy who-you-know network will prevail even if more qualified women are available for the job.

Republicans are mounting this effort at a time when for many women sex discrimination in the workforce is still a big problem that keeps them from equal pay and equal jobs. In 1994, women filed 39,990 sex discrimination charges against their employers with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission--the most ever filed in one year.

If affirmative action helps women to survive economically in their working years, Medicare helps them to survive physically in their older years. Women make up the majority of Medicare beneficiaries. Nearly 20 million older women are Medicare beneficiaries. A typical older woman, age 75 and older, has an annual income of just \$9,170 with an average of out-of-pocket health expenses of more than \$1,500. For these women, any boost in Medicare out-of-pocket expenses could mean economic disaster for her and her family. Under the proposed Republican Medicare cuts, the average Medicare beneficiary would pay approximately \$3,400 more per year in out-of-pocket expenses. The cuts will also result in an additional 20% copay in Home Healthcare and skilled nursing facility care. These "sick taxes" would disproportionately affect women--the predominant beneficiaries of this type of care.

On this 75th anniversary of women's suffrage, Democrats celebrate women's right to vote, a key milestone in achieving equality. Gaining that right was crucial to making the government more responsive to women. Today, it is equally important to restore to American government the steadiness and common sense required to respond to the needs of ALL of its people.

As Democrats, we pledge to rededicate ourselves to the principles of equity for women in our society and ask that women use the power of the vote to do the same.

CHOICE

The House took the following actions since January 1995:

HOUSE VOTED TO:

- *Ban funding to organizations that privately finance abortion counselling or procedures, organizations that participate in abortion-related lobbying activities and to the United Nations Fund for Population Assistance.

- *Reduce by 50% the amount of money available for international family planning programs. In addition, family planning programs must compete for funds with other development assistance programs.

- *Ban allowing federal employees to choose health insurance which covers abortion.

- *Ban abortions for women in the military stationed overseas, paid for with their own money.

- *Ban abortions for women inmates in federal prisons.

- *Ban Legal Services Corporation, which provides legal aid to the poor, from taking up any abortion issue.

- *Provide bonus grants to states that reduce the number of abortions, thus rewarding states for making abortion services more difficult to obtain.

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTED TO:

- *eliminate the country's 25 year old family planning program that provides family planning services, pelvic exams, Pap tests, screenings for sexually transmitted diseases, and other health tests for women.

- *prohibit federal funding of research on human embryos, an effort that could hamper medical research on safer contraception, as well as research to find out what causes and how to cure birth defects and other diseases.

*reverse the current requirement that ob-gyn residency programs must provide training in abortion procedures in order to meet accreditation standards.

*reverse the requirement that states must cover abortions for victims of rape and incest under Medicaid..

THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, IN A STRAIGHT PARTY LINE VOTE, REPORTED OUT LEGISLATION TO:

*Ban late term abortion procedures, even if the life and health of the woman is in jeopardy. The legislation, H.R. 1833, is the first bill the House Judiciary Committee has ever reported that directly unravels the constitutional rights of women as ruled in Roe v. Wade. It is also the first bill in the history of Congress that bans a particular medical procedure. The House will vote on the bill when they return in September.

BILLS ENACTED HELPING WOMEN AND FAMILIES: 1981-1995

