

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 18, 1998

The Honorable Cynthia A. McKinney
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-1011

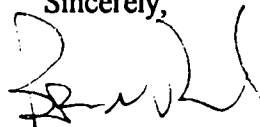
Dear Congresswoman McKinney:

Thank you for your letter to the President on child care. It is clear that you share the President's commitment to making child care better, safer, and more affordable for America's working families. As you know, included in the President's child care initiative is a proposal to modify the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC) to provide greater tax relief to low- and middle-income working parents. I know you have been a leading proponent of reforming the CDCTC in the Congress.

In addition, the President's proposal: (1) makes a significant new investment in the child care block grant, so that states can provide child care subsidies for more children in low-income working families; (2) dedicates funding for enforcement of state health and safety standards in child care, through, for example, increased unannounced inspections; (3) establishes a Child Care Scholarship Fund; (4) creates an Early Learning Fund to provide challenge grants to communities for activities that improve child care quality and safety and promote early learning; (5) doubles the number of children served by Early Head Start and expands Head Start; (6) builds the supply of after-school programs through a significant investment in the 21st Century Community Learning Center program; and (7) establishes a new tax credit for businesses that offer child care services to their employees. In total, the President proposes \$21.3 billion over the next five years for these investments.

The President believes that by continuing to work together on a bipartisan basis and by taking the best proposals from both sides of the aisle, we will achieve legislation that is right for America's children and families. I look forward to working with you on this in the months ahead.

Sincerely,



Bruce Reed

Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy

CYNTHIA A. MCKINNEY
4TH DISTRICT, GEORGIA

COMMITTEE ON BANKING
AND FINANCIAL SERVICES
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND CONSUMER CREDIT
GENERAL OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS
INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS
WESTERN HEMISPHERE



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-1011

WASHINGTON OFFICE:

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-1605
FAX (202) 226-0691

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□ 246 SYCAMORE STREET
SUITE 110
DECATUR, GA 30030
(404) 377-6900
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INTERNET ADDRESS:
cymck@hr.house.gov

JAN 5 4:10:39

December 16, 1997

The Honorable William J. Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

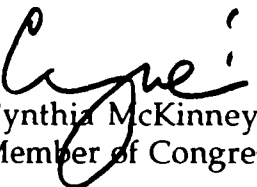
I applaud your recent announcement to include daycare relief to working families in your State of the Union Address. As you look to achieve this, I would like for you to consider my proposal for helping working families to afford daycare.

At the end of this first session, I reintroduced the Family Dependent Care Act. By making the tax credit refundable, expanding the income scale and increasing the credit, more working families will have the opportunity to benefit from the daycare credit. In the 104th Congress, I introduced similar legislation and at the time, it was also included in the Democratic Families First Agenda. Currently, the Family Dependent Care Act is gaining cosponsors everyday and has been included in the second session Democratic Agenda.

Again, I thank you for taking the initiative to helping working families. I look forward to your support on this important issue. For your convenience, I have enclosed a copy of the Family Dependent Care Affordability Act.

With the warmest personal regards, I remain

Sincerely,


Cynthia McKinney
Member of Congress

Enclosure

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 23, 1998

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-0703

Dear Congresswoman DeLauro:

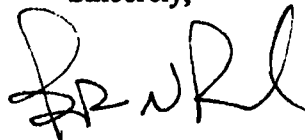
Thank you for your letter regarding the President's child care initiative and for your strong support of an ambitious investment in child care. The initiative builds on the leadership that you have demonstrated in putting forward bold initiatives to improve the quality of care our children receive, especially in their earliest years.

As you know, the President has proposed an historic child care initiative which will improve child care for America's working families. The President's proposal invests \$21.3 billion over five years to help families pay for child care, build the supply of good after-school programs, improve the safety and quality of care, and promote early learning.

The President's initiative will make child care more affordable by doubling the number of children receiving child care subsidies to more than two million by the year 2003, increasing tax credits for three million working families to help them pay for child care, and providing a new tax credit for businesses that offer child care services for their employees. It will also help improve the quality of care our children receive by enhancing early childhood development through a new Early Learning Fund as well as by supporting enforcement of state child care health and safety standards. Finally, the President's child care initiative addresses the huge demand for care of school-age children by providing after-school programs for up to half a million children per year.

Thank you again for your tremendous leadership on this important issue. We look forward to working with you over the coming months to pass comprehensive child care legislation which will meet the needs of America's families.

Sincerely,



Bruce Reed
Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy

Rosa -
Thanks for inviting me to see your colleagues the
-H... I think Democrats are in great shape!

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 14, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR BRUCE REED
JENNIFER KLEIN

FROM: SUSAN BROPHY
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Enclosed please find a copy of a letter that was sent to the President from Rep. Rosa L. DeLauro (D-CT).

I do not believe this letter requires a Presidential response at this time. Please review the attached material and respond directly to the Member(s) of Congress. Please forward a copy of the response to Chris Walker, Office of Legislative Affairs.

Thank you very much for your assistance in this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Chris at 456-7500.

Enclosure

436 CANNON BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0703
(202) 225-3681

59 ELM STREET
SECOND FLOOR
NEW HAVEN, CT 06510
(203) 562-3718

KILLINGWORTH/CLINTON
(203) 689-1181

STRATFORD
(203) 378-9005



UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ROSA L. DELAURO

3D DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

January 6, 1998

CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES:
LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
AND EDUCATION

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT,
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION,
AND RELATED AGENCIES

President William J. Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20006-9900

JAN 7 5:06:04

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to express my appreciation for the leadership that you and the First Lady have shown on the issues of quality child care and the needs of very young children. Your White House conference on early brain development, conference on child care, and your commitment to expanding Head Start, have brought attention and resources to deal with this problem in a way which no other individual or group could have done alone.

I am particularly pleased to hear that you are planning to make a substantial child care initiative an important part of your State of the Union speech and fiscal year 1999 budget. Last November, I joined a group of Senators and Representatives in urging OMB Director Raines to target \$20 billion over the next five years to an initiative that would improve the quality and accessibility of child care for American working families, and would like to thank you for proposing such an initiative. I look forward to joining you at the White House tomorrow afternoon to hear the details of your proposal.

As you know, I have proposed legislation that would provide grants to states to help families afford good child care and create incentives to improve the quality of available care. I urge you to ensure that the proposal you unveil tomorrow include a substantial commitment to quality and access, particularly for the children of the poor and working poor who are most vulnerable, who need quality care the most, and who are least likely to receive such care without support. I assure you that I will do everything in my power to move such a proposal through Congress this year.

I look forward to hearing the details of your initiative and to working with you on this issue through the coming months.

Sincerely,

ROSA L. DeLAURO
Member of Congress

RLD/bjs

cc: Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
Director Franklin Raines
Secretary Donna Shalala
Secretary Robert Rubin

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 18, 1998

The Honorable James P. McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-2103

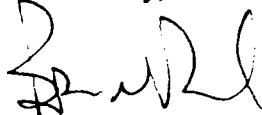
Dear Congressman McGovern:

Thank you for your letter to the President, and for your strong support of an ambitious new investment in child care. As you know, the President's balanced budget includes \$21.3 billion over the next five years to make child care better, safer, and more affordable for America's working families.

The President's plan will: (1) make a significant new investment in the child care block grant, so that states can provide child care subsidies for more children in low-income working families; (2) dedicate funding for enforcement of state health and safety standards in child care, through, for example, increased unannounced inspections; (3) establish a Child Care Scholarship Fund; (4) create an Early Learning Fund to provide challenge grants through states to communities for activities that improve child care safety and quality and promote early learning; (5) double the number of children served by Early Head Start and expand Head Start; (6) build the supply of after-school programs through a significant investment in the 21st Century Community Learning Center program; (7) provide greater tax relief for three million working parents with child care costs through reforms to the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit; and (8) establish a new tax credit for businesses that offer child care services to their employees.

The President believes that by continuing to work together on a bipartisan basis and by taking the best proposals from both sides of the aisle, we will achieve legislation that is right for America's children and families. We look forward to working with you on this important issue in the months ahead.

Sincerely,



Bruce Reed

Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy

Thanks for pushing so hard on this issue!

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 14, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR BRUCE REED

FROM: SUSAN BROPHY
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Enclosed please find a copy of a letter that was sent to the President from Rep. James P. McGovern (D-MA).

I do not believe this letter requires a Presidential response at this time. Please review the attached material and respond directly to the Member(s) of Congress. Please forward a copy of the response to Chris Walker, Office of Legislative Affairs.

Thank you very much for your assistance in this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Chris at 456-7500.

Enclosure

JAMES P. MCGOVERN
3RD DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

SUBCOMMITTEES:
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION
WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-2103

January 5, 1998

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(202) 225-6101

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34 MECHANIC STREET
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WORCESTER, MA 01608
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ATTLEBORO, MA 02703
(508) 431-8025

218 SOUTH MAIN STREET
SUITE 204
FALL RIVER, MA 02721
(508) 677-0140

<http://www.house.gov/mcgoovern>

William Jefferson Clinton
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

'98 JAN 6 PM 12:31

Dear Mr. President:

I wish to express my deep appreciation and strong support for the issues you and the First Lady have raised over the past year regarding early childhood development and access to quality child care. On behalf of my constituents and colleagues, I would like to encourage you to make these important issues of development and care for our youngest citizens -- those five years and younger -- a centerpiece of your address to the nation on January 27th.

In meetings last November between White House officials and Members of Congress who have taken the lead on these issues, we discussed a proposal that would target \$20 billion over the next five years toward improving the quality of early childhood development and increasing the ability of working families to have access to quality early childhood development and child care programs. In recent weeks, White House officials have made statements indicating a commitment to achieve these goals through a combination of tax credits for families paying for child care and increased funding for early childhood development and child care programs that enhance the quality of care and access to these services.

I want you to be assured that I will strongly support such initiatives, especially those that would allow more lower-income working families to place their infants and toddlers in a quality developmental environment and those that would make funds available to states to enhance access to and the quality of their programs for children five years and younger. I would hope that such proposals initiated by the White House would be balanced between providing financial relief to those families who can already afford child care and providing program funds for enhanced access and quality care to working families of more modest means. I would also hope that proposals will support state initiatives to improve the quality of early child care and increase access to that care. It is essential that states be able to attract the very best child care providers by establishing high standards and salaries commensurate with the training and education required for quality care.

Together, you and the Congress have already taken initial steps toward achieving these goals. Last year's budget agreement included \$4 billion over five years to expand the Head Start/Early Start program, which is facing reauthorization during this session of Congress. And

last year, through the efforts of many of my colleagues and me, the FY98 appropriations bill for Labor, Health and Human Services, and the Education Departments included \$114 million in additional funding for key early childhood development programs.

Early childhood development and quality child care are key elements in providing for the collective good of our nation. Their benefits are not just to the families and children themselves; their benefits accrue to the whole of society. Programs and incentives that ensure quality care and an environment in which every child in America might develop to his or her full potential will contribute to a healthier, more productive nation. Such programs are an investment in America's future, and I salute you and the First Lady for championing these programs.

I look forward to reviewing your proposals as they are announced and to hearing them highlighted in the State of the Union Address later this month.

Sincerely,



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

cc: First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
Franklin Raines, Director, Office of Management and Budget

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 23, 1998

The Honorable Tim Roemer
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Roemer:

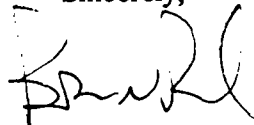
Thank you for your letter regarding your legislation, which promotes employer-provided child care through a business tax credit.

As you know, the President's child care initiative also includes a tax credit to businesses that provide child care services for their employees, by building or expanding child care facilities, operating existing facilities, training child care workers, or providing child care resource and referral services to employees. The credit covers 25% of qualified costs, but may not exceed \$150,000 per year.

In addition, the President's child care initiative will make child care more affordable by doubling the number of children receiving child care subsidies to more than two million by the year 2003, and by increasing tax credits for three million working families to help them pay for child care. It will also help improve the quality of care our children receive by enhancing early child childhood development through a new Early Learning Fund as well as by supporting enforcement of state child care health and safety standards. Finally, the President's child care initiative addresses the huge demand for care of school-age children by providing after-school programs for up to half a million children per year.

We look forward to working with you over the coming months to pass comprehensive child care legislation. The President believes that by continuing to work together on a bipartisan basis and by taking the best proposals from both sides of the aisle, we will achieve legislation that helps Americans fulfill their responsibilities as workers, and even more important, as parents.

Sincerely,



Bruce Reed
Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy

THANKS FOR PUSHING SO HARD ON THIS!

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 23, 1998

The Honorable Deborah Pryce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Pryce:

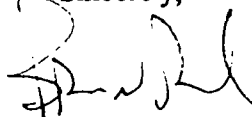
Thank you for your letter regarding your legislation, which promotes employer-provided child care through a business tax credit.

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In addition, the President's child care initiative will make child care more affordable by doubling the number of children receiving child care subsidies to more than two million by the year 2003, and by increasing tax credits for three million working families to help them pay for child care. It will also help improve the quality of care our children receive by enhancing early child childhood development through a new Early Learning Fund as well as by supporting enforcement of state child care health and safety standards. Finally, the President's child care initiative addresses the huge demand for care of school-age children by providing after-school programs for up to half a million children per year.

We look forward to working with you over the coming months to pass comprehensive child care legislation. The President believes that by continuing to work together on a bipartisan basis and by taking the best proposals from both sides of the aisle, we will achieve legislation that helps Americans fulfill their responsibilities as workers, and even more important, as parents.

Sincerely,



Bruce Reed
Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 15, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR BRUCE REED
Jennifer Klein

FROM: SUSAN BROPHY
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Enclosed please find a copy of a letter that was sent to the President from Reps. Tim Roemer (D-IN) and Deborah Pryce (R-OH).

I do not believe this letter requires a Presidential response at this time. Please review the attached material and respond directly to the Member(s) of Congress. Please forward a copy of the response to Chris Walker, Office of Legislative Affairs.

Thank you very much for your assistance in this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Chris at 456-7500.

Enclosure

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 23, 1997

JAN 5 11:21 AM '98

The Honorable William J. Clinton
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

DPC
Rud & Klem

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing to commend you for expressing your commitment to expanding access to affordable, quality child care for working families. We share this goal, and look forward to working with you to develop effective policies that will ensure our nation's children receive the care they need to develop into healthy, intelligent, and productive adults.


As you contemplate a variety of policies designed to help parents balance work and family, we thought you may want to consider legislation that we have sponsored in each of the past three Congresses. The Child Care Availability Incentive Act (H.R. 988) would provide tax credits to businesses that provide licensed on-site or site-adjacent dependent care to their employees. In our view, child care available at the work site offers benefits to be realized by both the employer and employee, including greater worker productivity, lower absenteeism, and happier, less-stressed parents and children. H.R. 988 addresses a growing concern of many parents in America, without creating another government program or placing new mandates on businesses.

Each year, since 1993, our bill has received broad, bipartisan support. In the 105th Congress, H.R. 988 has been cosponsored by 45 Members -- 15 Republicans and 30 Democrats. We have attached a copy of our legislation, as well as a cost estimate by the Congressional Budget Office, for your review. We welcome any comments and questions you may have.

Again, we stand ready to work with you on a bipartisan basis to provide a brighter future for our nation through the care of our children. Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


DEBORAH PRYCE
Member of Congress


TIM ROEMER
Member of Congress

HOUSE
 JACHER, TEXAS,
 HARMAN
 HILUF M. CRANE, ILLINOIS
 WILLIAM M. THOMAS, CALIFORNIA
 SAM M. GIBBONS, FLORIDA
 CHARLES B. RANGEL, NEW YORK

SENATE
 BOB PACKWOOD, OREGON,
 VICE CHAIRMAN
 WILLIAM V. ROTH JR., DELAWARE
 ORRIN G. HATCH, UTAH
 DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN, NEW YORK
 MAX BAUCUS, MONTANA

KENNETH J. KIES
 CHIEF OF STAFF
 MARY M. SCHMITT
 DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF
 (LAW)
 BERNARD A. SCHMITT
 DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF
 (REVENUE ANALYSIS)

Congress of the United States

JOINT COMMITTEE ON TAXATION
 1015 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
 WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6453
 (202) 225-3621

APR 04 1995

Honorable Deborah Pryce
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mrs. Pryce:

This letter is in response to your request for a revenue estimate of H.R. 881, the "Child Care Availability Incentive Act".

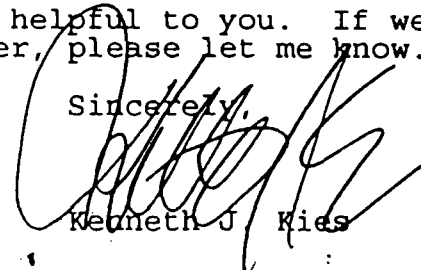
Specifically, this bill would grant employers a tax credit equal to 50 percent of the expenses paid or incurred by the employer during the taxable year in providing dependent care services for employees. No tax credit would be allowed for expenses paid by the employer which were reimbursed by the employee for such dependent care services. For purposes of this proposal the term "qualified day care center" means any day care center (1) which is operated by the taxpayer exclusively for purposes of providing dependent care services to employees, (2) which is located on the business premises of the taxpayer or on a site adjacent to such premises, (3) which complies with all applicable laws and regulations of a State or unit of local government, and 4) the operation of which is part of a dependent care assistance program.

As requested in your letter of March 29, 1995 we are estimating this bill as if it were included in H.R. 1215 as passed by the Committee on Ways and Means. It is assumed that this bill would be effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 1995. The effect on Federal fiscal year budget receipts is shown below.

Fiscal Years [Millions of Dollars]					
1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	1996-2000
-54	-120	-165	-219	-283	-841

I hope this information is helpful to you. If we can be of further assistance in this matter, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Kenneth J. Kies



June 25, 1998

The Honorable Vic Fazio
Chairman
Democratic Caucus
U.S. House of Representatives
1420 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Fazio:

We are pleased that the House Democratic Caucus has developed a comprehensive child care proposal based on the plan which President Clinton outlined last October at the White House Conference on Child Care. We welcome strong Democratic leadership in Congress that recognizes the importance of improving the availability of quality care for all American children. Because the cornerstone of quality child care is the presence of consistent, stable, qualified *and* well-compensated caregivers, we urge the Caucus to consider expanding three components of the proposal to strengthen the capacity of child care programs to secure and retain highly-qualified teachers and providers, and to reward those who have made a career commitment to this field. The components are discussed below.

Quality Fund/The Early Learning Fund

The Early Learning Fund will support programs that strive to improve the quality of care young children receive. The provisions already included in the Fund, such as training and improved staff-child ratios, are necessary but not sufficient to upgrade services. In addition, centers that pay better attract and retain more qualified teachers, and are rated higher in program quality. We therefore recommend that the Fund include specific language that authorizes and encourages states to identify and fund compensation initiatives for the child care workforce as a strategy for improving child care quality. We have enclosed our publication, *Making Work Pay: Promising Practices for Improving Compensation*, which highlights successful models to address this issue.

Standards Enforcement Fund

Public concern about the health and safety of children currently ranks as one of the most widely discussed topics in American society, and we applaud efforts proposed in the Standards Enforcement Fund. In devising efforts to protect our children, one strategy that is often overlooked is to use child care workers and parents as “internal regulators” of child care facilities. We have enclosed a proposal developed by our organization last

year, *Licensing Standards: Key Provisions for Child Protection in Child Care Facilities*, which outlines strategies for including child care workers and parents in monitoring the health and safety of children. Integrating these provisions into the proposed plan would be an appropriate and effective strategy for protecting the health and safety of children in all child care settings.

Child Care Provider Scholarship Fund

Caring for children is a job that requires specialized training and skills, as acknowledged by the Child Care Provider Scholarship Fund which promotes and supports significant educational opportunities for entry-level child care workers. As President Clinton articulated at the White House Conference on Child Care, however, most child care workers have already completed academic training, and many have achieved a child care credential or college degree. These experienced workers have made a substantial investment in their careers which should not be lost – but presently, we continue to lose a large proportion of them each year to other professions, because of the difficulty of earning a livable wage in child care. Therefore, we encourage you to broaden the scope of the Scholarship Fund so that those individuals who have already obtained training in early childhood development and education can access resources to continue in their professional development. We are enclosing a copy of C.A.R.E.S., a legislative initiative recently passed by the California Assembly, as an example of this type of strategy.

We applaud the Caucus's efforts to introduce a comprehensive child care plan in this legislative session. We believe that expanding the scope of the Quality Fund/Early Learning Fund, Standards Enforcement Fund, and Child Care Provider Scholarship Fund in the House Democratic Child Care Proposal is crucial to providing better services for children and families, and better child care jobs for teachers and providers. As the Caucus works to finalize this proposal, please feel free to call us if we can offer any assistance.

Sincerely,



Marcy Whitebook
Co-Director



Marci P. Andrews
Public Policy Coordinator

Encl.

Cc: Joan Lombardi
✓Jen Klein

Congress of the United States**Washington, DC 20515****April 1, 1998**

The Honorable Bill Archer
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:


We are writing to urge you to bring comprehensive child care legislation before the Ways and Means Committee as soon as possible. As you know, President Clinton proposed an initiative to improve the quality, safety and affordability of child care nearly three months ago and many Members also have legislative proposals pending before the Committee. However, the Committee has yet to hold even a single hearing on this issue which every day impacts the safety and development of our children and the economic security of millions of working Americans.

The facts on child care speak for themselves. In the nearly 18 million American families with children under the age of six, 65% of their mothers work. Furthermore, even in families where the mother is *not* in the workforce, 32% of preschool children participate in some type of child care or early education program. These statistics clearly illustrate the growing need for quality child care, but they do not depict the daily struggle millions of American families have in paying for day care. For middle-income families with children under the age of two, child care now represents their third largest expense, surpassed only by housing and transportation. The picture for low-income families is even bleaker: those that paid for care for children under the age of five lost 25% of their income to child care expenses. And finally, let us not forget the scientific evidence illustrating that the *quality* of day care will have a direct impact on a child's intellectual growth and future ability.

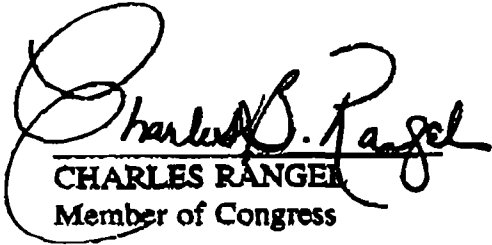
For all of these reasons, we believe the Ways and Means Committee should consider comprehensive child care legislation before the end of this legislative session. We look forward to your reply to this letter and to working with you to develop a proposal that will help American families meet the dual challenges of working and raising a family.

Sincerely,

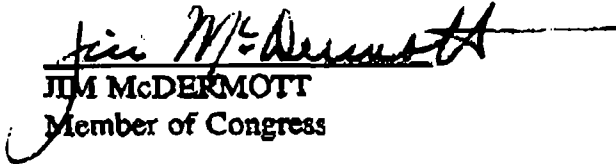

BARBARA B. KENNELLY
Member of Congress


SANDER LEVIN
Member of Congress

The Honorable Bill Archer
Page 2

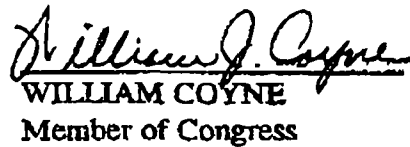

CHARLES RANGEL
Member of Congress


ROBERT MATSUI
Member of Congress

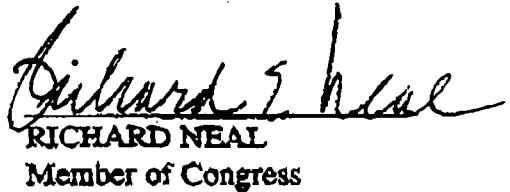

JIM McDERMOTT
Member of Congress

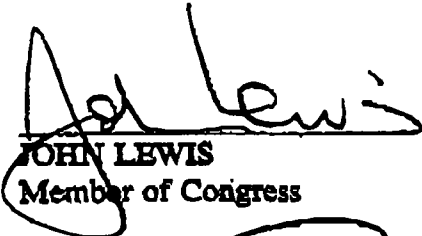

BENJAMIN CARDIN
Member of Congress

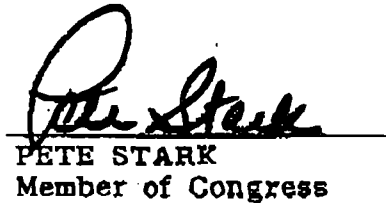

KAREN THURMAN
Member of Congress

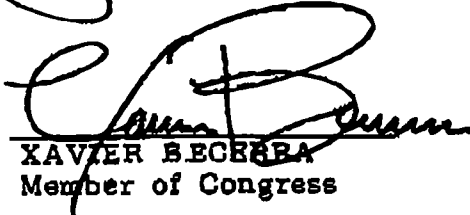

WILLIAM COYNE
Member of Congress

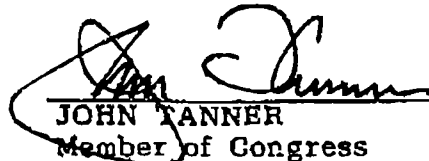

MICHAEL McNULTY
Member of Congress


RICHARD NEAL
Member of Congress


JOHN LEWIS
Member of Congress


PETE STARK
Member of Congress


XAVIER BECERRA
Member of Congress


JOHN TANNER
Member of Congress

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 25, 1998

The Honorable Steven R. Rothman
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Rothman:

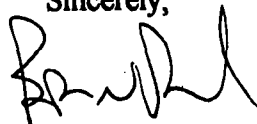
Thank you for your letter about the views of your constituents on child care. One of the goals of the White House Conference on Child Care was to spark discussions all across the country similar to the one you had with residents of Bergen County. We know that child care is a pressing concern to millions of families, and we very much appreciate your efforts to help us hear the views of Americans on this issue.

You raised three very important child care challenges: safety, access and cost. The President's historic initiative to improve child care for America's working families responds to these child care concerns. The President's proposal invests \$21.7 billion over five years to help families pay for child care, build the supply of good after-school programs, improve the safety and quality of care, and promote early learning.

The President's child care initiative will make child care more affordable by doubling the number of children receiving child care subsidies to more than two million by the year 2003, increasing tax credits for three million working families to help them pay for child care, and providing a new tax credit for businesses that offer child care services for their employees. It will also help improve the quality of care our children receive by enhancing early child childhood development through the new Early Learning Fund as well as supporting enforcement of state child care health and safety standards. Finally, the President's child care initiative addresses the huge demand for after-school care by providing such care for up to half a million children per year.

Thank you again for providing us with the views of your constituents on this important issue. We look forward to working with you in the coming months to ensure that all of America's families can fulfill their potential without having to worry that child care will be too expensive, unsafe or simply unavailable.

Sincerely,



Bruce Reed

Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 31, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR BRUCE REED
JENNIFER KLEIN

FROM: SUSAN BROPHY
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Enclosed please find a copy of a letter that was sent to the President from Rep. Steven R. Rothman (D-NJ).

I do not believe this letter requires a Presidential response at this time. Please review the attached material and respond directly to the Member(s) of Congress. Please forward a copy of the response to Chris Walker, Office of Legislative Affairs.

Thank you very much for your assistance in this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Chris at 456-7500.

Enclosure

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1997-1998
HONORABLE OFFICE BUILDING
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

COMMITTEES:
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME

COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC POLICY AND TRADE

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October 22, 1997

Hon. William Jefferson Clinton
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

10/27/97 2:22

Your White House Conference on Child Care could not have been more timely. Over the past decade, the number of American families with two working parents has expanded dramatically. In 1995, 62% of all working women had children under six years old. The question of what to do with our children while parents are at work is certainly the family question of the 90s.

Just this past Monday, I had the opportunity to meet with parents in my district who are seeking a better solution to their child care problems. The meeting was held at the Corporate Child Care Center in Little Ferry, New Jersey and included four parents: Lloyd Domke of Ridgefield, Julie Blacker of Wood-Ridge, Joanne Hazuda of Lodi and Diane MacNeill of Ridgefield Park. We were also joined by Andrea Marinelli of Hackensack and Angela Ludveggen of Wanaque who work for the child care center and are parents themselves.

We all have seen the "hidden camera" news stories of child care services that abuse the children. Ensuring that parents have a viable child care option -- in terms of cost and safety -- is important to the health of all our families. And it is essential to the health of our children.

The reality is that a bad child care experience can be the difference between a healthy child and someone who has permanent emotional scars. And the cost of care is often prohibitive. The issues raised at this meeting centered on three topics: safety, access and cost.

SAFETY

The Bergen County parents I met with want to mandate criminal background checks for EVERY worker employed in child care facilities. Only through background checks, would they feel safer about putting their children in the hands of people they barely

know. Even at the most expensive child care centers, without these background checks, their children are still at risk. And they specifically noted that it should include everyone associated with the agency -- from the director to teachers to janitors.

The other safety issue which concerned them was inspections. In response to a recent series of investigative articles in the Bergen Record, the State of New Jersey recently announced that it would increase inspections at state licensed centers. Nonetheless, the director of Corporate Child Care said that in the year she has been at the center, they have NEVER been inspected. One of the parents called the lack of inspections, "a sin." They specifically cited smaller child care centers, often times having fewer than five children, that they said are rarely, if ever, inspected.

ACCESS

In Bergen and Hudson Counties, both parents often need to work just to pay the bills. Many families do not have a relative living close by who can take care of the child all day. So they turn to child care. And often times, it is difficult to find and very expensive. In NJ, we only have 2,830 licensed child care centers. That may sound like a lot, but that is only 5 child care centers per municipality. It is not getting the job done.

This has led to the proliferation of some small, less-equipped child care centers more interested in turning a profit than caring for kids. When looking for good child care, these parents said they came across day care centers that were located in someone's basement. They were not properly maintained, were very dark and did not have educational toys for the children.

They also noted that, generally, day care centers are only open until 6 pm. In northern New Jersey, the "9 to 5" job is often a thing of the past. We need to encourage child care centers to be more flexible to today's demands on our workforce. This not only puts a strain on parents who may need to leave work early, but it could mean that young children are left unattended in their home.

COST

Figuring out how to offer families quality child care at a reasonable price is a problem unique to our generation.

Because we have so few child care centers, there has yet to be true competition that would bring the cost down. Some parents said that they knew people who chose not to work because it was better financially for them to stay home and not pay for child care. Obviously the parents had a lot of ideas when it came to how we can help with costs. They mentioned increasing government subsidies

White House Conference On Child Care

Page 3

and offering tax incentives that encourage businesses to make a greater contribution to child care.

We also need programs that encourage states to make this a higher priority for themselves. In 1994, New Jersey spent 10 times as much on corrections than it did on child care.

Thanks to your leadership, we already have increased federal assistance to families in need of child care. Since 1993, federal funding for child care has increased by approximately 68% and provides child care services for over one million children. And in 1995, you directed the Department of Health and Human Services to establish the Child Care Bureau to streamline child care operations.

Earlier this year, I helped in your fight for additional funds for the Social Services Block Grant program that goes towards child care services. The Majority Party in Congress tried to cut \$135 million from the program, but we stopped them. I also have co-sponsored the "Working Families Child Care Act of 1997" to give low income families access to child care.

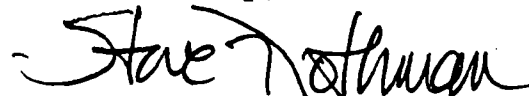
CONCLUSION

I hope the White House Conference on Child Care can help us figure out how our nation can better respond to the needs of working families. This week I was provided a glimpse of the state of child care in Bergen County. It is clear that we need to make providing safe, affordable child care a national priority.

I am also concerned about the quality of services children from around the country are able to receive. Are state standards strong enough in every state so that children across America are protected? What kind of immunization requirements do different states have? I hope one of the results of the White House Conference is to determine whether we need national standards for child care safety.

I wish you the best of luck in conducting this conference. This has been a priority for America's families. You should be commended for making this a priority for your Administration. I look forward to working with you on this issue in the weeks and months ahead.

Sincerely,



STEVEN R. ROTHMAN
Member of Congress

in this whole economic expansion. But those at the bottom rungs of the economic ladder have not gotten their fair share of the extraordinary prosperity that we are experiencing under President Clinton's leadership.

So I don't understand why there is such opposition to the very modest increases that we are talking about, that even if implemented will hardly permit workers to provide for their families and be out of poverty. As a result of the 1996 welfare reform legislation, many, many more people were thrown into poverty. In many instances, they are not going to get the health care or the day care that they need, depending on a particular State's rules in this regard. But there will be millions of Americans who will be out there in the job market without the health care for their children that Medicaid would have provided or child care coverage that welfare benefits would have provided.

What we are asking is that at least we pay them a livable wage. I don't think a single parent, with \$10,000 or \$12,000, is going to have the kind of child care that any of us would understand or respect. Yesterday, I was in Dorchester, Massachusetts, meeting with parents about an after school program, which has been in effect for a number of years. It's going to be expanded. The mayor of Boston calls it the 2-to-6 program, and is trying to make available, in all parts of Boston, after-school programs for children. It is a very ambitious program. We have seen our Republican Governor indicate that he is supporting the after-school program. I listened to the parents who were out there, who talked about what happens after their children are 12 years old. The State of Massachusetts has a program that provides modest support for this kind of program for children up to 12 years old, but cuts it off there. Parents with tears in their eyes were saying, "We work hard trying to provide for our families, and we just can't make it. Our children are going home and staying in an empty house in the afternoon." They pray that they are not going to get themselves in trouble, that the worst thing that will happen to them is they will just watch television. It might cost those parents \$5 or \$10 a week, maybe \$20 a month to be able to have an after-school program. I expect that any single mom getting an increase in the minimum wage wouldn't think that much of a problem. That is happening in many communities in this country.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the 10 minutes allocated to the Senator have expired.

Mr. KENNEDY. I ask unanimous consent for 4 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, we will have a chance to debate this issue. It is not one that should take a great deal of time to review. We have been through this debate time and time

again. It hasn't got the complexities of many of the proposals the President will be talking about tonight. It is basic and fundamental. Every Member of this body has addressed this issue and voted on it one way or the other. It is going to be really a reflection of our values.

Finally, Mr. President, by not increasing the minimum wage, we leave many workers so poor that they are eligible for government assistance programs, such as food stamps. These programs are being paid for by other workers' taxes. In effect, these employees are subsidizing the businesses that aren't paying a fair wage. I think that is wrong.

We will have a chance to review the latest economic information available. We have to address that issue. We understand it. Some of us believe that Americans who work hard and play by the rules ought to be able to get a livable wage as a matter of principle. To achieve that goal, we have to address the impact on inflation and job loss. We will make that argument and we will make it with a great deal of enthusiasm. Two articles from the Wall Street Journal show that the increase in the minimum wage did not cause job loss or increase inflation. I will include those articles in the RECORD at the appropriate place following my remarks. Here was the newspaper that opposed it hammer and tong the last time we had the increase. I do not suggest that they are going to editorialize in favor of it this time. But, nonetheless, the various studies have shown that there is no evidence that modest increases in the minimum wage would harm the economy or cause job loss.

Mr. President, I don't know what will be in the President's State of the Union speech tonight. There are some reports that he will indicate support for an increase in the minimum wage. And if he does I hope that our Chambers will show support for that proposal because I know it will make all the difference in the world for millions of Americans and their families. Increasing the minimum wage will allow them to look to the future with a greater sense of hope.

Mr. WELLSTONE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended for 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I have a couple of questions that I may want to put to my colleague in just a moment.

Mr. President, the Senator from Massachusetts touched on two concerns that I want to speak about for a brief period of time. The Senator mentioned welfare. Earlier when I was speaking I didn't talk about the welfare bill. But I want the Senator to know that as we see the reports that this has been a

huge success because there are 4 million fewer people receiving welfare assistance, I think there has been a lot of confusion. Welfare reform doesn't mean that there are fewer people on welfare. It doesn't mean you reduce the number of people receiving assistance. It means you reduce poverty. That is what it is about. It works if you are reducing the poverty for these families which are 90 percent women and children.

When I have been traveling around the country it is heartbreaking. The Senator talks about after school. There are 3- and 4-year olds home alone right now. That should not be the case because mothers are told to work. There are also preschoolers who are in very ad hoc arrangements with a relative for this week or that week, then somebody else the next week. We don't have affordable child care. In East LA in Los Angeles there is a waiting list of 30,000 for affordable child care. The President will be speaking about that tonight. Mr. President, there are first- and second-graders.

I met a woman in Los Angeles who broke down crying because she is so scared because her first-grader goes home alone—she is at work—to a very dangerous housing project, and is told to lock the door, and take no phone calls. There are children who don't play outside right now.

So when the Senator from Massachusetts talked about child care, I just want to emphasize the fact that welfare reform only means reduction of poverty. It means that children are in safe places receiving good child care. That is not happening.

Mr. President, I also want to point out that there are too many mothers who in our community colleges who are now told, "You cannot pursue your education. You have to work." The job is \$5.15, and if the minimum wage isn't higher one year later they will be worse off.

I am going to have an amendment for student deferment for those mothers because that is toward economic self-sufficiency, and another amendment that is going to require States to provide to Health and Human Services the data in 6 months as to how many families are moving toward economic self-sufficiency because you just can't eliminate people from assistance and cut off assistance if people do not have the jobs and decent wages.

Mr. President, I wanted to ask the Senator this question. The Senator from Massachusetts was speaking to an issue that I hear about everywhere I go, and it sounds like the President is going to be speaking to it, which is that I think people in our country believe that if you play by the rules of the game and you work 40 hours a week or thereabouts 52 weeks a year you ought not to be poor in America. That is what this is about. The last time we had a debate on the minimum wage the Senator from Massachusetts just insisted that the Senate would address

this issue. Does the Senator intend to make this such a precise priority for his work that one way or another all Senators are going to be voting on this? Are we going to have it on the floor of the Senate? Are we going to have the debate? Are we going to have a vote on it so all Senators can be held accountable to working families, or not?

Mr. KENNEDY. Absolutely, Senator. We will vote on this issue, and the earlier the better as far as I am concerned, so that minimum wage earners can continue the progress that they have made during the last 2 years. We will vote on this measure. I think that those who are opposed to it will give the Senate the opportunity to vote on it—at least I certainly hope they will. But the Senator is quite correct. We will vote on it one way or the other, and I think we take to heart that Congressman GEPHARDT, Congressman BONIOR and others have an identical bill. They are strongly committed. As Senators remember, there is a more complicated rule process over in the House of Representatives. But there is no reason in the world that we in the Senate cannot have an opportunity to vote on that measure and attach it to legislation and send it over to the House. We will do that and continue to do it until we are successful.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I am an original cosponsor. I am pleased to hear that because that is part of what I am here for as a Senator.

Let me ask the Senator from Massachusetts one final question. We don't just look at polls. But does the Senator have, in terms of what people in the country have been saying about raising the minimum wage 50 cents a year over the next 3 years—and we index it after that—is there broad public support that is a matter of simple elementary judgment?

Mr. KENNEDY. The Senator is correct. It is interesting that studies from this month show even greater support for the increase than we saw when we began this debate in the last Congress. Most Americans understand that we have had this extraordinary prosperity for millions of Americans over the period of the last 6 years. Most Americans understand that it has been working families who have made a difference. Those families include minimum wage earners—teachers' aides, who work in classrooms; health care aides, who work in nursing homes; and people who clean office buildings in communities across the country. Those men and women work hard, and they take pride in their work. Many of them have children, and we all know how hard it is to try to raise a family on \$5.15 an hour. All those workers ask is to be treated fairly.

One of the most startling developments in the last few years is the number of working families who are using soup kitchens, food pantries and homeless shelters in cities across the country. The U.S. Conference of Mayors re-

leased a study showing that in 1996, 38% of those seeking emergency food aid are working—not unemployed. This is up from 23% in 1994. And, officials in two-thirds of the cities cited low wages as a primary reason for hunger. I don't know whether the Senator has this problem in rural communities in his region of the Nation. But in urban areas, almost 40 percent of those seeking emergency food aid are working, and they still can't make it.

All we are saying is that if you are working you shouldn't have to go to a soup kitchen. When you are working, you shouldn't have to bring your children to a soup kitchen in order to be fed. The minimum wage is designed to prevent such problems. It has been a part of the fabric of our society since the late 1930's, and it has been something which has had bipartisan support in the past. We are hopeful that it will have bipartisan support this time. Ultimately we will have it. But it had bipartisan support under President Bush, and President Nixon supported the increase as well. And Republicans in this body have supported it, too.

Many of our colleagues are constantly talking about the importance of rewarding work in our society. But when you have people who are able-bodied, who want to work, and who have jobs—there is something wrong if they can't make it on their own. There is something wrong if we do not try to address that problem.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I have one final question.

The people who contribute don't have a lot. They are not the heavy hitters. They are not the ones always here in Washington to lobby us.

How does the Senator think we could win this fight?

Mr. KENNEDY. The Senator makes a good point because the organizations, the National Federation of Independent Businesses, the National Restaurant Association and others are out there already trying to discourage people from supporting this program. We will have a chance to deal with their arguments when we see what has actually happened in terms of the expansion of the restaurant industry and employment among restaurant workers. The Senator is no less interested in expanded employment or adequate income for restaurant workers than I am, and they still have done better with our modest increases in the past, and they will in the future.

I want to ask if the Senator will agree with me on one other proposition. We will hear during the debate that at least a quarter of these are teenagers who are making the minimum wage. In my State, tuition at the University of Massachusetts in Boston costs \$4297. These students are still 18 and 19 years old. They are teenagers, and many of them are working. These students need the money.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, it is my time. I ask unanimous consent to have 4 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Many of their parents never went to college. These are teenagers. These students are trying to earn enough to buy their books and maybe attend an athletic event once in a while or be able to pay in order to rent athletic equipment. These students—and yes, they are teenagers—are working long and hard, and they deserve the increase, too.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, the Senator asked about Minnesota. Just two final points.

One, I was speaking on the floor earlier and I said that I think most families are focused on how you earn a decent living and how you give your children the care you know they need and deserve. I think the minimum wage bill is an important step in that direction along with whatever we can do on affordable child care and health care. That is the key to family income in this country.

I spoke earlier about the record of inequality. Secretary Reich had a very important piece in the New York Times about it. But now we see, Mr. President, a merger with education because, as a matter of fact, I say to my colleagues and my friend from Massachusetts what I find when I travel around Minnesota—and I was a college teacher for 20 years—is that many students are taking 6 years to graduate and not 4 years because now students are working on the average of 25 or 30 hours a week at two minimum-wage jobs.

So we now are talking about a piece of legislation that speaks to the issue of how families can have more income and also how students can afford their higher education. Many of these students are 18 and 19. But let's not trivialize the teen part. They are young women and young men who are working hard to be able to go to school. You had better believe that this minimum wage bill is really of critical importance to these young people as to whether or not they are going to be able to complete their education and do well financially.

So the Senator is absolutely correct. There is the strongest correlation to education and affordable education which I think all of us agree is an absolutely crucial issue.

Mr. President, today I am co-sponsoring a bill introduced by my colleague and friend Senator TED KENNEDY, co-sponsored by a number of others, a measure which I consider to be one of the most important items we can pass and enact this year—the "American Family Fair Minimum Wage Act of 1998." Our bill would increase the minimum wage by 50 cents a year during each of the next three years. After that, it would index further increases in the minimum wage to increases in the cost of living.

This 3-year increase of \$1.50—raising the federal minimum wage to \$6.65/hour by September 1 of the year 2000, and

TRIBUTE TO EDNA KELLY

(Mr. TOWNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce to my colleagues the sad news of the passing of one of our illustrious former New York colleagues, Edna F. Kelly, who served in this body from 1949 to 1968. Representative Kelly died at her residence in Alexandria, Virginia at the age of 91 on December 14 of last year. Throughout her 19-year career in the House, Representative Kelly was recognized for her expertise in foreign affairs, serving as the chair of the Subcommittee on Europe and retiring from Congress as the third ranking member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

During her tenure, Edna Kelly was responsible for measures that settled displaced people after World War II and refugees for Russia and Eastern Europe. She also helped to create the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

Edna Kelly was truly a legislative pioneer. To pay tribute to her achievements, I have requested time tomorrow, and I urge my colleagues to join me in sharing their thoughts on this great lady and her accomplishments as a member of this House.

SUPPORT THE PRESIDENT'S CHILD CARE INITIATIVE

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, when I ran for this office, I called for a new national initiative on child care. I have visited child care facilities throughout my district. Every morning all across this country parents go to work and trust the most important people in their lives, their children, to someone else. Thirteen million children under age six are in child care during the day.

In other homes across the country, children under the age of 6 are glued to the television. They watch TV for hours because they have no place to go, no activities to occupy their time. Too much child care is of mediocre quality, but still not affordable to most working families. This is not because child care providers make big salaries.

Help is on the way. The President's proposal provides \$21 billion over 5 years to improve child care for America's working families. It doubles the number of children receiving child care subsidies, and it increases the tax credits for families and businesses.

Our mission is simple: Leave no child behind; support the President's child care initiative.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1500

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1500.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

WISE INVESTMENTS IN AMERICA

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, Americans are focused on the President right now, but it is important that they focus as well on the agenda that he will be outlining here this evening.

As we finally resolve the budget deficit, it is time to direct our attention and our energy to other deficits that exist in this land: Deficits in child care, deficits in our schools, deficits in health care and in our transportation system. Too many Americans approach the age of their 50s or 60s without the security of health insurance. They risk losing all that they have worked for with a health care emergency. They get downsized and down and out when it comes to health insurance and protection against a health care emergency.

The President has properly advanced the notion of expanding and strengthening Medicare, and providing all of us, regardless of age, a health care consumer Bill of Rights. Likewise, as we made progress last session on higher education, this session we should be devoting our attention to strengthening the public education system and to recognizing that one of the best ways to back up families is to provide them the child care resources, through our tax system and otherwise, to back up their efforts. These would be wise investments in America.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM "BILLY" ROLLE

(Mrs. MEEK of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in sadness for the loss of what I call an urban patriot, a young man by the name of William "Billy" Rolle who resided in Coconut Grove, Florida. He not only resided there, Mr. Speaker, but he helped to build the youth of that community. Not only did he build the youth, but he also helped the elderly. He closed the gap between youth and old age by working very hard with all people in Miami and in Dade County.

Billy Rolle was a jazz man. He played the saxophone, not only from the rhythmic standpoint of playing the keys on the saxophone, but he did it from the standpoint of training young people in music. He trained them in athletics. He had an AAU track team. He did everything he could to help the young people in Miami.

Mr. Speaker, Billy Rolle did not have all the money that government puts into programs, but what "Billy" Rolle

did was to put himself into these programs, to train these young people, take them off the street, to be sure that they learned many things that would improve their quality of life. It is such a time now that we grieve the death of William "Billy" Rolle, because he died an untimely death. But Mr. Speaker, Billy Rolle shall always be remembered as a man in Dade County who did a lot for many, many people, but most of all, he gave of service and invested in human lives, and for that, we shall always remember William "Billy" Rolle, Frankie Rolle, his lovely wife of 46 years, his daughter Melanie, his son, little Billy, and the other children throughout Dade County that William "Billy" Rolle helped.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will recognize Members for Special Orders until 5:30 p.m., at which time the Chair will declare the House in recess.

□ 1515

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

TYPHOON PAKA

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express on behalf of the people of Guam our heartfelt sympathies to all our fellow Americans who are victims of winter storms and who are still without electricity to keep themselves warm.

Mr. Speaker, as the Nation's attention focuses on the plight of our friends and neighbors in the northeast, we in Guam are quietly recovering from the devastation of a massive tropical cyclone, Typhoon Paka, which struck Guam on December 16th. Paka destroyed or severely damaged 8,000 homes, injuring more than 200 people and leaving more than 3,000 families homeless. Of the homeless, more than 1,000 required temporary housing immediately.

The typhoon made a shambles out of hundreds of public and private buildings and facilities, schools, churches, stores, businesses and parks. The island was stripped of foliage, and thousands of trees as well as even concrete power poles were mowed down. Typhoon Paka pummeled Guam for 12 hours, causing an estimated \$256 million in damages.

Christmas in Guam was not as bright as usual, but the people of Guam celebrated a joyous and grateful holiday

many families that would like to adopt children and just plain cannot because of the cost involved. We have changed the tax code so there is now a \$5,000 adoption tax credit to help those families that would like to adopt children.

In summarizing, we have come a long ways in a few years. We are through those broken promises of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings I and Gramm-Rudman-Hollings II, the budget deal of '90, the budget deal of '93. That stuff is in the past. Raising taxes to get to a balanced budget, that is in the past. That is not what is going on out here any more.

Controlling the growth of Washington spending, slowing down how fast spending is growing in this government. I would like to see this get down to a zero at some point. So we have a long ways to go. But by slowing the growth of Washington spending, coupled by a strong economy, we have actually reached a balanced budget not in 2002 as promised, but rather 4 years ahead of schedule.

We are about to make the first payment, and here is our vision for the future, we are about to make the first payment on that debt. And over a period of time we have the plan written to pay off the Federal debt so our children can receive this Nation absolutely debt free. As we pay that debt off, Social Security is restored. The money that has been taken out is part of that debt, so we pay that money back into Social Security and Social Security is solvent for our seniors.

The third part of the vision is that we continue to lower taxes on American workers because we know the tax rate in this country is too high. That is where we are going.

So as you listen to the State of the Union tonight, I think it is very, very important that we understand that if you hear the word "expansion," that means more Washington. And just temper your reaction to these new good programs with an understanding that expansion means the American people send more money to Washington so Washington can decide how to spend that money as opposed to Washington spending less money, leaving it in the pockets of the American people for them to decide how they can best spend their money in their families.

DEMOCRATS UNITED BEHIND PRO-FAMILY, PRO-CHILD MESSAGE OF PRESIDENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I must say that I do not intend to use all of the time this evening. I will be joined by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and we wanted to briefly, if we could, talk a little bit about the Democrats' unity behind the pro-family and pro-child message that we know

will be an important part of the President's State of the Union address this evening.

I think it is fair to say that for the last few years, and certainly in this past year in 1997, the Democrats have stressed the need for measures that basically help the family, help the average family in this country, particularly those who have children, and a big part of that has been affordable health care.

We all realize, and Democrats in particular realize, that more and more people in this country do not have health care insurance. And even if they do have health care insurance, a lot of times they are not getting the quality of care or they do not have the access to all the procedures that they should have.

In addition to that, there is a real problem in this country in terms of the availability of child care for America's working families.

And also pensions. Many of my constituents have complained to me about lack of adequate pensions, people that were promised pensions, or thought that when they retired that pensions were going to be available to them and all of a sudden find out that they are not.

So tonight the President will be stressing this Democratic pro-family, pro-child message, and there are just four points that I wanted to highlight. One is the need for more affordable and accessible health care for what we call the near elderly, those seniors aged 55 to 65 that have a greater risk of losing employer-based health insurance but yet are not eligible for Medicare.

Democrats are proposing a targeted and self-financing proposal which will enable Americans ages 62 to 65 to buy into Medicare by paying a premium. And they will also provide coverage to displaced workers over 55 through Medicare and COBRA coverage for those whose companies renege on their commitments to provide retiree health benefits.

Also, Democrats are very conscious of the fact that there are problems with managed care in this country, and we are going to work, and the President will talk tonight about high quality health care through a consumer Bill of Rights that he has proposed. No patient should be denied high quality care. Care should be based on medical needs and not financial ones.

So a big part of the Democratic agenda this year will be managed care reform and basic consumer protections for individuals in HMOs or managed care organizations.

Also, Democrats want to invest in child care for America's working families. The President will announce a historic initiative to improve the quality and availability of child care for all parents. Democrats are working to ensure that parents no longer have to make choices between work or not working that basically revolve about whether or not they have access to child care.

And lastly, Democrats want, and the President will talk tonight about the effort to achieve secure and comfortable retirement. For more than 50 million American workers, there is no pension coverage. And Democrats will work to promote pension plans among small businesses.

I do not want to take up a lot of time. I want to yield to my colleague from Texas, who has been so much involved over the last year, in 1997 and before, in bringing this pro-family, pro-child message to the floor of the House of Representatives. I would yield to her at this time.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his leadership and for allowing us to have an opportunity through a special order to address the American people and to emphasize the Democrats united message.

For many of us returning to Washington, we were certainly asked what would be the focus of this next year, and I am very glad to say that we have not strayed away, with the leadership of the President, from what are really truly important issues to this country, and that has to be more affordable and accessible health care.

I could not have been more pleased when the President announced more than 2 weeks ago the idea that individuals 55 to 65 had a greater risk of losing health insurance or coverage, and that he wanted to stand on the side of those hard working Americans who might have fallen on hard times because of downsizing and with an inability to have health coverage, that they would be eligible for Medicare. That is not a throw-away of good dollars, that is a providing an enhancement of dollars, and I think that is extremely importantly.

□ 1600

I also want to say that I could not be more enthusiastic about a consumer bill of rights as it relates to health care.

I have experienced it personally. I know how families sometimes are subjected to difficult decisions; and, therefore, when they need a consumer bill of rights most, it is when they need medical care, and decisions have to be made. We need to be able to ensure patients that the patient-doctor relationship is a sacred relationship. It will not be tampered with because of financial concerns and because someone has to save money moving people from one hospital to the next, dumping people out of hospitals. I think that is extremely important.

I would like to add two other points about the importance of the State of the Union and unity of Democrats leading out in this country along with my colleagues who are thinking along the lines of making this economy better but also working with people who need our help most, that is America's working families, child care.

Chairing the Congressional Children's Caucus. I had the pleasure of

being with the First Lady when she had the Child Care Symposium just before we left in the late fall of 1997 for our district work session. And everywhere I have gone, the working families, men and women, single parents, two-parent families, have talked about the big chunk that child care takes out of their paychecks. We need to find a way to be catalytic, to be helpful in making sure that we have a child care system that works.

My colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), mentioned something very, very important and that was the pension system, or Social Security. For some reason or another, people think that because Democrats helped bring about Social Security that we don't know how to fix it or to work with some of the problems. Our position is, let us not eliminate it; let us not accuse it of the wrongs; let us make sure we emphasize the rights of Social Security. It has given people the privilege of being secure in their old age without the big company pensions that many people have had the pleasure of having but a lot of working men and women in America have not had the pleasure.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I did not mention Social Security. But I know that the President is going to emphasize it tonight.

I think that the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) brings up a very good point; and that is, the Republicans I think want us to forget or want the American people to forget that Social Security works. It has been working. People have gotten their checks. They have gotten their COLA on an annual basis.

It does bother me, I have to say, to some extent to hear these constant references to the fact that the system is broken or that we need to find alternatives to Social Security and different private-sector options that are out there.

I am not saying that we should not study those things. But I think there has been a concerted effort on the part of our Republican colleagues and the Republican leadership to give the impression to the American people that the Social Security system is broken and it cannot be fixed. That is simply not the case. Everyone gets a Social Security check. People have gotten a COLA on a regular basis.

It is true that we need to study what needs to be done to make sure that in the future that Social Security is there and is intact, and Democrats are certainly a big part of that and have been emphasizing that there does need to be some attention paid to that. But, what is the expression, let us not throw out the baby with the bath water?

Social Security works, and we need to emphasize that. Too often I hear from the other side that somehow it is broken or we need to replace it. I do not want our colleagues on either side of the aisle or the American people to think that that is the case. It is not, and it is simply not true.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).
Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) very much for yielding.

Let me say that I would be very hesitant, very hesitant and quite concerned if we were to take on the cry of fire in a crowded theater with respect to Social Security, when it has worked for years and years and years.

Let me conclude by mentioning some other very important items that I see, at least at this juncture, in this State of the Union that we can be very proud of. That is why Democrats are unified around the President's message.

Do we realize that the President is offering to present to the American public 100,000 new teachers for grades 1 to 3, a school construction plan that generated out of the work? As I see the gentleman from California (Ms. WATERS), chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, a lot of work went into this whole idea of school construction. And I see, I think, my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), as well, who is coming to join us. These are important issues that we must deal with in the State of the Union and, as well, in looking to a program forthright.

So I think that we have a lot to be proud of. We have a mentoring program that the President is going to be offering; and I would say to anyone who walks past a school, if they can take 5 minutes to go inside and say something to a student, they are going to see the fruit borne on that over and over again.

Then they have the continue moving people from welfare to work, which is a very important part of his message, as well as three points: an increase in empowerment zones for those of us in urban areas, community development banks, providing tax incentives for low-income housing. And, of course, he is going to continue, as we just celebrated and commemorated the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, the race initiative.

So I think we have a lot to share this evening, a lot to celebrate. Because we are on a new vision, a new path that continues, but we are still moving in a direction that helps those people who need the help most. And I am very glad to join my colleague here on the floor to speak about some very important items that will be raised tonight in the President's State of the Union.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman; and I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), who has for several years now been talking about the need for this school construction program.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I was just walking by and I heard my distinguished colleagues referring to the important initiatives that are going to be discussed in the State of the Union, and I wanted to thank them

because these issues are what people really care about. We all are coming back today, and most of us have had discussions in our district with seniors, visited schools, had many meetings, hearings on Medicare, on child care, on issues of concern to real people. My constituents wanted us to come here and solve problems. That is what this is all about. We are here to solve problems.

My colleague referred to the terrible conditions of some of our schools. We talk about educating youngsters. We talk about standards. We talk about more teachers. But if the school buildings are falling apart, then it is pretty difficult to focus attention on the agenda in those buildings.

I have visited some schools where there is plastic on the ceiling holding up the walls. These roofs have been leaking for years. And children are sitting in classrooms under conditions that I certainly do not think most of us would want our children to be in.

So I was particularly pleased that, after all of us have been working many, many years to build support for partnership with local governments on school construction, that the President is taking a strong position to assist local governments to repair our schools.

Again, this is a partnership. The Federal Government is not just going to go in and say, here you are, here is the money. These are partnerships. And if we can develop partnerships in highways and prisons and a whole myriad of uses, then it seems to me we should be investing in our school construction. I was very pleased to see that in the President's initiatives.

Also, when it comes to child care, many of us understand that if we are going to put people to work, we have a responsibility to be sure that our children, our future, are well-taken care of. And, again, I want to congratulate this administration in putting forth the proposal to really invest in child care and making sure there are enough slots for the children in all of our communities and also to be sure that there are regulations in place so a mother who put her child in child care or a father who puts his child in child care knows that those children will be safe. So child care is another proposal that we all have to rally around.

And Medicare extension. This is a problem that is brought up to me all the time. Why should people not be able to buy into Medicare to be sure that they have the health care that they need? This is brought up in the senior centers, in casual meetings, in the supermarkets. People are worried about health care, and this is a very important proposal. I was very pleased that my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), that he tried to quiet the fears of many people that Medicare is going broke.

We have reformed, we have strengthened Medicare since its founding in the 1960s. Yes, we have to make changes.

We have to be sure that Medicare and Social Security are solid programs when the baby-boomers come of age. But Medicare and Social Security are not going broke in 1 year or 5 years or 10 years.

We have to address the challenges ahead, make sure there are programs for our baby-boomers so we can give them the benefits of these great, great programs. But let us not frighten seniors. They are worried and they are worried for the children and for the children's children.

So I know my colleague is committed and I am committed and we are committed to work to continue to strengthen Medicare, to strengthen Social Security. But let us not set off the alarm. I am very concerned that there are people on the other side of the aisle that are doing just that. Let us maintain our solid positions that these are important programs, but we have to move ahead constructively and not set the alarm bells.

So education, child care, health care, these are all things that people care about; and that is why I am so enthusiastic about the State of the Union this evening. I look forward to hearing it. We just talked about a few of the proposals. But food safety, genetic discrimination, this is a State of the Union message that is solid, and it is dedicated to the people of this country.

I want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), again for discussing the State of the Union. I know we are committed to making sure that this will be a productive session, that we are here to focus on what really matters to real people to solve their problems, and this is a good kickoff to an agenda that matters to real people.

I thank my colleague again for leading this special order.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY) again. I think she really summed up what tonight is all about, and that is trying to help the average American, the family, the children. That is what my constituents and I am sure all of our constituents are telling us; and, also, we are doing it in the context of this balanced budget.

The President keeps saying over and over again, look, we passed the Balanced Budget Act this past summer in 1997. We are meeting the guidelines of that. Even within that we can still help with some of these other pro-family measures. Many of them, as my colleagues know, either cost no money or very little money and in the long run actually saved the Federal Government money. He keeps stressing that.

I think that is important in the context of what he is going to state tonight. But I think it is a very auspicious beginning for 1998; and we have to work hard, as Democrats, to make sure that the pro-family, pro-child agenda gets passed and that we can bring our Republican colleagues along.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 8:40 p.m. for the purpose of receiving in joint session the President of the United States.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 8:40 p.m.

□ 2055

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 8 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.

JOINT SESSION OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE HELD PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 194 TO HEAR AN ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The Speaker of the House presided.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms, Mr. Bill Sims, announced the Vice President and Members of the U.S. Senate, who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the Vice President taking the chair at the right of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort the President of the United States into the Chamber:

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY);

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY);

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER);

The gentleman from California (Mr. COX);

The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. DICKEY);

The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON);

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT);

The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR);

The gentleman from California (Mr. FAZIO);

The gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. KENNELLY);

The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY); and

The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. SNYDER).

The VICE PRESIDENT. The President of the Senate, at the direction of that body, appoints the following Senators as members of the committee on the part of the Senate to escort the President of the United States into the House Chamber:

The Senator from Mississippi (Mr. LOTT);

The Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. NICKLES);

The Senator from Florida (Mr. MACK);

The Senator from South Carolina (Mr. THURMOND);

The Senator from South Dakota (Mr. DASCHLE);

The Senator from Kentucky (Mr. FORD);

The Senator from Maryland (Ms. MR. KULSKI);

The Senator from Louisiana (Mr. BREAU);

The Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY);

The Senator from Nebraska (Mr. KERREY);

The Senator from New Jersey (Mr. TORRICELLI).

The Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID);

The Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER);

The Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN); and

The Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY).

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Roble Olhaye, Ambassador of the Republic of Djibouti.

The Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

The members of the Cabinet of the President of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

At 9 o'clock and 9 minutes p.m., the Sergeant at Arms, Mr. Wilson Livingood, announced the President of the United States.

The President of the United States, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, and stood at the Clerk's desk.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

The SPEAKER. Members of the Congress, I have the high privilege and the distinct honor of presenting to you the President of the United States.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The PRESIDENT. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of the 105th Congress, distinguished guests, my fellow Americans, since the last time we met in this Chamber, America has lost two patriots and fine public servants.

**RETIREMENT OF POLICE CHIEF
RAY WRUBLEWSKI**

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 1998

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise before you today to pay tribute to one of the many fine law enforcement officers from the Eleventh District of Illinois. After 32 years of service to the community and local law enforcement, Beecher, Illinois Police Chief Ray Wroblewski has decided to retire from the force.

Thirty two years ago Chief Wroblewski started his career in law enforcement as a deputy in the Will County Sheriff's Office. After serving with the sheriff's office for over a year, Ray joined the Crete Police Department and served the citizens of Crete, Illinois as a patrolman for twelve years before moving on to the Beecher Police Department. Starting out as a patrolman in Beecher, Ray worked his way through the ranks to the position of Chief, where he helped make the Beecher Police Department one of the best law enforcement agencies in Illinois.

During his twenty years of service in Beecher, Chief Wroblewski implemented a number of new programs and techniques that made the streets safer for his fellow officers and the residents of Beecher. Chief Wroblewski ushered in a new age of technology at the Beecher Police Department with the installation of onboard computers in the Village patrol cars, while, returning the force to a Community Oriented Police Department that works side by side with local residents. Chief Wroblewski was also instrumental in the formation of the department's new bike patrol, which will further the goals of the community policing program.

Mr. Speaker, while Chief Wroblewski would say little has changed in Beecher over the last twenty years, I think all of the citizens of Beecher would agree that their community has changed, and for the better, thanks to the efforts and hard work of Chief Wroblewski. Respected by law enforcement officers throughout the State of Illinois, Chief Wroblewski's leadership, caring and ingenuity will be missed by the people of Beecher and the officers of the Beecher Police Department.

Mr. Speaker, Chief Wroblewski chose a career in law enforcement because he enjoyed helping people, and throughout his 32 years of service he did just that. I know I speak for all of my colleagues and the folks back home in Beecher when I say, thank you Chief Wroblewski for all your years of service, and best wishes in your retirement.

**TRIBUTE TO COLONEL AARON
BANK**

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 1998

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to honor Colonel Aaron Bank on his birthday. Colonel Bank is one of our great military leaders and one of our great Americans.

Colonel Bank helped found, organize and train the United States Army's elite Special Forces group which is known today as the Green Berets. He was hand-picked to organize and develop the Army's Special Forces division because of his depth of knowledge and experience in unconventional warfare.

Colonel Bank served his country through several wars. In 1942 he was recruited for the newly-formed Office of Strategic Services (OSS). In 1944, he parachuted as part of a three man team into occupied France to promote resistance there. While in France he sabotaged the Germans' efforts by blowing up railroad lines, bridges and electric networks. He gathered resistance fighters which had increased to 3,000 and turned back the Germans in a series of fire fights.

At the end of World War II, Colonel Bank was sent to train Vietnamese troops. In an extraordinary feat, Bank parachuted into Laos to search for missing prisoners of war. After serving in Vietnam he was sent to Europe again and assigned to Army counterintelligence to catch Soviet bloc agents. By 1952 he was formally designated commander of the 10th Special Forces Group, the Green Berets.

Throughout his career Colonel Bank has demonstrated his keen intelligence, his compassion and his patriotism. He has engendered the utmost respect for his fellow mankind. His devotion and love of country form the foundation upon which he has built his beliefs.

Colonel Bank was a hero yesterday and is a hero today. His bravery, his devotion to freedom and his love for his country fill us with pride and admiration. Happy birthday and best wishes!

**THE EQUITABLE CHILD CARE
RESOLUTION**

HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 1998

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Equitable Child Care Resolution. The purpose of this concurrent resolution is two fold. First, to point out that 70% of families with preschool children do not pay for child care. Second, that any quality child care proposal should also provide financial relief to families where there is an at-home parent.

Many of the child care proposals that are garnering attention merely expand commercial child care and do not also address the needs of the vast majority (70%) of families who struggle to provide child care at home or in the home of a close relative or neighbor.

The 70% of families who come up with creative solutions for their child care needs should not be ignored. Many of these families sacrifice a full-time income. We should also focus on providing them with financial relief.

As we debate the merits and problems of various child care proposals, this resolution will serve to remind us that any quality child care initiative should provide assistance to parents regardless of how those parents choose to care for their children, be it by an at-home parent, grandmother, uncle, close neighbor, or child care enter. No child care proposal that discriminates against families based on their particular choice of child care should be actively considered.

I hope my colleagues will join me in making sure that at-home parents will not be forgotten in the child care debate. And, I urge my colleagues to not forget the 70% of American families who provide child care in the home, by supporting the Equitable Child Care Resolution.

**AHCPR'S STUDY SUPPORTS PETE
STARK'S BILL**

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 1998

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I introduced H.R. 2726 which directs the Secretary to contract with certain hospitals for the provision of certain surgical procedures and related services under the Medicare Program. The Agency for Health Care Policy and Research's (AHCPR) October 1997 article, "Study Reaffirms Link Between Angioplasty Outcomes and Hospital and Physician Experience," adds to the list of reasons why the bill should become law.

The article states that: "In the largest study of its kind to date, researchers have once again found that elderly patients undergoing coronary angioplasty are well advised to have the procedure done in hospitals that perform 200 or more angioplasties each year and by physicians who perform 75 or more angioplasties each year. These patients suffer fewer complications and deaths than similar patients who undergo angioplasties at hospitals and physicians who perform the procedure less often"

The article confirms that Medicare contracting with certain high volume, high quality hospitals will save money and deliver better health care. One could say it is a two-for-one: saves money while improving quality.

Mr. Speaker, the sooner we pass H.R. 2726, the sooner we start saving lives and saving dollars.

**FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE:
CALUMET CITY LODGE NO. 1**

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 1998

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the hard work and dedication of the Fraternal Order of Police, Calumet City Lodge No. 1. This lodge was founded on November 29th, 1937 and on Tuesday, January 13th 1998 they celebrated their 60th Anniversary.

The Calumet City Lodge was the first Lodge organized in Illinois. Sixty years ago, there were 10 members. Today this organization boasts 78 members on active duty and 35 members who have retired from the police force. In fact, the oldest active member in the country of the Fraternal Order of Police organization, George Perniciaro, is a member of the Calumet City Lodge.

FOP Calumet City Lodge No. 1 has been dedicated to the community it serves in many ways. They sponsor a food and toy program for needy families in Calumet City during the holidays each year. They sponsor several Little League and Civic League Baseball teams.

System in the Arizona Superior Court in 1993, and the Governor's Committee on Child Support Guidelines.

Judge Silverman has shown his commitment to the United States Constitution and the rule of law by co-founding the Sandra Day O'Connor Prize for Excellence in Constitutional Law at the Arizona State University College of Law.

Judge Silverman's academic credentials are equally impressive. He graduated *summa cum laude* from the Arizona State University College of Law in 1976 and was subsequently honored by his alma mater twice, once in 1994, when the college of law presented him with its "Outstanding Alumnus Award," and again in 1997 when he received the prestigious "Dean's Award."

In short, Mr. President, I believe Judge Silverman meets the highest of standards required for our Federal judges, and I have been very privileged to support his nomination as it has proceeded through the process and come to the floor of the Senate. I urge all of my colleagues to support the nomination of Judge Barry Silverman for the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Allow me to conclude, Mr. President, with this observation. It has been a pleasure to work with the White House on this nomination. From the time that his name came forward, they worked diligently to conclude the FBI process, which does take some time. We received from the White House the Sunday before Congress adjourned in November the file for Judge Silverman and the committee was able to get that file in 1 day, the following Monday.

ORRIN HATCH, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, who has been criticized for holding up some nominees, I must say, deserves a great deal of credit here for personally conducting the hearing for Judge Silverman. And then the following day—this is now 3 days after we received the file—scheduling an executive session of the committee so that we could send his nomination to the full Senate floor.

Chairman HATCH and I then requested the majority leader on the last day of the session in November to clear this nomination so that the ninth circuit could receive him and have his services. Unfortunately, the democratic leader was not able to clear Judge Silverman on the democratic side and therefore about 2½ months, unnecessarily, the ninth circuit was without a judge in this particular position. But I am particularly pleased that he is before us today and that we will very soon have an opportunity to vote and to confirm Judge Silverman for the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am very glad that we are moving forward with judges today. We all hear, as we are growing up, that, "Justice delayed is justice denied," and we have, in many of our courts, vacancies that have gone on for a year, 2 years, and in many cases it is getting to the crisis level. So I am pleased that we will be

voting. I think, whether the delays are on the Republican side or the Democratic side, let these names come up, let us have debate, let us vote.

In that regard, I am looking forward to having our debate on the nominee I had recommended to President Clinton, Margaret Morrow, who has the strong support of Senator HATCH, many Republicans on the Judiciary Committee, and I am very hopeful we can get that nomination resolved.

I know that our leaders had agreed that vote would take place before the February recess and I will be speaking with both leaders to find out a date certain.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, at this time I ask unanimous consent that immediately following the vote at 2:15 and confirmation of the two additional nominations, there be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each. I further ask unanimous consent that at 3 o'clock p.m. today Senator COVERDELL be recognized as under the previous order for 90 minutes, to be followed by Senator DASCHLE or his designee for 90 minutes.

Mrs. BOXER. Reserving the right to object, will the Senator amend his request to give the Senator from California 5 minutes at this time?

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I have no objection. If under the previous order that is permitted, it's fine with me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WITHDRAWAL OF COSPONSORSHIP—S. 1028

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed from S. 1028 as a cosponsor of that legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you very much, Mr. President. This is a forest bill that is very controversial. After I placed my name on it a study came out that basically, in my opinion, led me to believe that the bill in its current form would not be good for the Nation's forests.

STATE OF THE UNION—1998 AGENDA

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, last night we learned from our President that the state of the Union is the strongest it has been in decades. The "misery index," that is inflation and interest rates combined, is at a 30-year low. Inflation is practically nonexistent. The Federal deficit is about to be eliminated. Over 14 million new jobs have been created in the last 7 years. We are seeing the lowest unemployment rate in a quarter of a century at 4.7 percent today. And we have seen the highest home ownership rate in his-

tory, nearly 6 million new homeowners since 1992.

The booming economy and the bright fiscal picture give us a wonderful opportunity to continue to support a balanced budget, but one with a heart and one that makes critical investments in important areas, many outlined by the President—education, health care, health research, the environment, anticrime efforts, child care and, of course, ensuring that Social Security will be fiscally sound well into the next century.

I am looking forward to working hard, on a bipartisan basis, with my colleagues as we write this budget. I am privileged to serve on the Budget Committee where we will take the first crack at crafting a Senate budget. I also sit on other committees that will carry through some of those priorities.

I want to point out just a couple of issues that the President talked about which are very near and dear, not only to my heart but, much more important, to the hearts of the people that I represent, the people of California.

This important issue is after-school care. It is a little-known fact that juvenile crime peaks up at 3 o'clock and begins to go down at 6 o'clock. So, between 3 and 6 our children need something to say "yes" to. They need mentoring. They need help with their homework. The after-school hours are an opportune time for business to come in and teach our young people about business, teach them computers and the many skills that they need to succeed.

I have written a bill that would set up some model after-school programs. I was debating, should I offer it in the context of education or should I offer it in the context of juvenile crime reduction. After-school programs both improve education and reduce juvenile crime.

The President is launching a huge initiative there. He is also calling for an end to social promotion, 100,000 new teachers to help our children, and something that is important, reducing class sizes in the early grades. We need to implement voluntary national standards and we must rebuild our crumbling schools and build the new schools of the 21st century. This President is on his way to being the true education President. I want us to be the true education Senate, and I very much look forward to the time we will spend on this Senate floor debating education.

The President is calling our attention to the current health care crisis. We took a giant step in helping our young people last year, by giving a block grant to the States. They are going to work on making sure our children are insured.

There is a big gap between the ages of 55 and 65, while people are waiting to get into Medicare, and the President proposes a pay-as-you-go system to handle some of those people, to allow

rates, serious drug problems and disciplinary problems. This gives kids at risk a chance to attend a public, charter, private, or sectarian school where the emphasis is on learning, not survival.

Madam President, I just think it is unconscionable policy to order children to go to schools that are certifiably unsafe and drug ridden.

Title IV. Testing and merit pay for teachers. It allows States to use Federal funds to reward good teachers and weed out the bad, and it will make it easier for States to carry out performance assessments of teachers and establish merit pay programs. Americans across the board agree with these concepts. Reward good teachers, weed out the bad, and make it easier for States to carry out performance assessment of teachers.

Title V. Reading excellence. This is similar to Chairman BILL GOODLING's bill in the House which passed the House by a voice vote on November 8, 1997.

Madam President, it would provide \$210 million for teacher training and individual grants for K through 12 reading instruction. It requires funds to be spent on programs demonstrated by scientific research to be effective, like phonics. It gives parents of kids at risk the ability to purchase additional tutoring assistance through grants.

President Clinton's America Reads program which cost \$2.7 billion over 5 years proposed sending semitrained volunteers into the classroom. This is a flawed concept, when you would send a semitrained volunteer into a classroom that has already demonstrated that it is not teaching a student to read. So you would send an unprofessional volunteer to help the student read better—that is not logical. The reading excellence title requires funds to be spent on programs proven effective by scientific research to enable the teacher to improve his or her skills so that she or he can teach the student to read.

Title VI is the teacher and student safety title. This title allows the use of Federal funds to move victims of violence to safe schools. They could be a public, private or sectarian schools. The key here is if the student has become a victim, there should be nothing in the way of that school board's ability to move the student to a safe place. It allows use of noneducational funds—Victims of Crime Act administered by the Department of Justice—for innovative programs to help victims and witnesses of crime on school property. And it encourages the use of immediate notification and annual report cards to parents and teachers about incidents of violence and drugs at schools.

Title VII is the Charter Schools Expansion Act title. This is similar to Congressman RIGGS' bill which passed the House 367 to 57 on November 7. This provision of the legislation ensures charter schools are eligible for their fair share of Federal funding, whether it is title I, IDEA, or title VI block

grants. Charter schools are public schools freed of many of the regulations in turn for increased accountability in terms of student outcomes. Without excessive regulation these schools are better able to design programs tailored to the needs of students and communities.

Madam President, I see we have been joined by my good colleague from Nebraska. I am going to turn to the Senator in just a minute or so here.

Under title VIII, the last title, we say the Federal Government should honor its agreement, which it made when it imposed special education requirements on local education, to fund a sizable portion of it. We agreed to fund up to 40 percent but we have never done it. You know, it's one of those stories, "The check is in the mail." It never quite gets there.

Senator GREGG deserves a lot of credit for this. He started the process last year but this would finish it with \$9.3 billion over the next 6 years to fully honor our commitment to fund special ed; which we call IDEA. That would free up \$9.3 billion for local communities to assess and take care of their own specific needs. That is the general description of the proposal our conference announced on January 20.

I now turn to my colleague and good friend from Nebraska, Senator HAGEL, for up to 7 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska is recognized.

Mr. HAGEL. Madam President, I would like to make a couple of observations about last night, the agenda for the second session of this 105th Congress; what is ahead of us, what is ahead for the American people, the challenges that lie ahead for the world.

As I listened intently and seriously last night, as I am sure all my colleagues did, to the President's message, questions came to me like, "Isn't the definition of the debate for this year and the defining of the debate that the Congress will have into the next century about the role of Government?" That is the issue. What is the role of Government in our lives? How much Government do we want? How much Government can we afford? What do we want Government to do for us? And how much are we willing to pay for Government?

The President—and I have all eight single-spaced pages of the text of his speech last night—gave a good speech. But the speech was about new programs, the federalization of America. This is the same President who said 2 years ago in a State of the Union Message that the era of big Government is gone. No more big Government. And then the President said last night, early on in his text, that we, today, have, "the smallest Government in 35 years." I don't know how the President measures that, but this body is going to debate this year a \$1.7 trillion Federal budget to keep this small little Government going.

He talks about federalizing education. I don't find the responsibility of

the Federal Government to be education anywhere in the Constitution. I don't find it in any document that education is in the purview and the province of the Federal Government. Yet this President says we, the Federal Government, representing the people who pay the taxes, are going to hire 100,000 new teachers. We are going to federalize new teachers. We are going to build new schools across America, federalize our schools. But yet, of course, he fails to tell us how he intends to do that. Where are those resources coming from?

At the same time he boasts, rightfully so, that we in fact have moved toward balancing our budget. So he takes credit for that on this side. And then on this side we have page after page, line after line, of new Government spending proposals.

Medicare has been running a deficit the last couple of years. Yet this President is proposing that we add more people onto Medicare. This is at the same time the President and the Congress have come together and said we need a Medicare commission, a bipartisan Medicare commission to take a look at the seriousness of the problem, of the issue, of the challenge, and report back to the President next year. But, no, he decides not to wait for that.

Child care—we are going to federalize child care? These are all important, critical issues for our country, for our people. Of course they are. But I think we might be better off if we would essentially continue this effort to cut Government, cut spending, cut programs, cut taxes, and take the responsibility of governing ourselves back to where it should be; back to the cities, the school boards, the counties. Who best understands the problem? I trust school boards. I trust teachers. I trust parents. I don't trust bureaucrats. We are rapidly developing into this monolithic centralization of bureaucratic rule. People in the Department of Education and all these areas are good people, family people, but we just, year after year, load more on them.

I ask this question when I hear a report from my friends on the other side, or from the President, that Medicare, for example, and all these new programs, will pay for themselves; there will not be an increase in spending; we don't need to find more taxpayers' money: Is there anyone out there who can show me any time we have had a Federal program that has gotten smaller? Do Federal programs and agencies and bureaucracies and departments vanish after a few years? Oh, no, no; they get bigger. And who has to pay for it? My children and your children. And it gets bigger and bigger. Where have we cut Government in the 1990s? We have cut it in one department. What department? Defense. Our national security has been cut over the last 10 years in real dollars by 40 percent. How many other departments and agencies have been cut? None.

So my point is this. Before we rush into all these new programs and new

Government and new federalization, we better sober up for a moment. This is not a time for campaign rhetoric. This is not a time for campaign speeches. This is a time for clear-headed, strong, dynamic, smart, realistic leadership, gutsy leadership. That is what America demands. That is what America will get.

I say these things not because I am opposed to the President or trying to complicate the President's life. But we, too, have a constitutional responsibility in this body. We have accountability to the people we represent. And this is one U.S. Senator who is going to ask some very tough questions about every one of these new programs.

I yield the floor.

Mr. COVERDELL. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Nebraska for his remarks and the contribution he made here this afternoon. I am going to now turn to our distinguished colleague, Senator HUTCHINSON from Arkansas, and yield up to 10 minutes to the Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. I thank the Senator from Georgia for yielding. First, I want to associate myself with the remarks of the Senator from Nebraska and his excellent analysis of the efforts by our government to federalize not only education, but many other programs as well. And I applaud Senator COVERDELL from Georgia for his efforts in the area of education, and in particular, his leadership on the Better Opportunities for Our Kids and Schools Act, the BOOKS Act. I believe this bill demonstrates that we, as Republicans, have a deep concern about education in this country. We have a deep concern about improving education for our children, who are precious to us. And we recognize that this is best done at the local level, where teachers know the names of our kids, and can pick up the phone and call the parents when the need arises. These decisions are better made at the local school district level, the State level, and not by a greater and bigger Federal bureaucracy.

Last evening, in his State of the Union Address, the President proposed "the first ever national effort to reduce the class size in the early grades . . . by hiring 100,000 new teachers." So I ask, is this really a genuine effort to reduce the size of our children's classes? Or is it just another exercise of ever bigger Government, and a move in that gradual effort toward federalizing education in this country?

Why are new teachers, mandated from Washington, the ticket to smaller class sizes? It is well-documented that many States across this Nation have taken on the responsibility of reducing the size of their classrooms; namely, California, Virginia, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Wisconsin. The Governors of these five States have proposed hiring thousands of new teachers using, not Federal dollars, but State dollars. This makes sense, allowing individuals closest to our children to make these kinds of decisions.

Madam President, I trust those individuals in the thousands of cities and towns across this country who know your child's name, to make the important decisions that impact the very classrooms in which our children learn much more than I trust bureaucrats in our Nation's capital. In an effort to allow States and localities to make these decisions, I, as part of the BOOKS legislation, will be introducing the Dollars to the Classroom Act, that will redirect about \$3 billion of K-12 education dollars to the States, requiring only that 95 percent of that money actually reach our children's classrooms. This money can be for books, it can be for teachers, it can be for computers—whatever the local education officials deem necessary and important to the education of our children.

While no one can deny the importance of providing the best possible education to our children, we also must implement these programs in the most responsible manner: by returning control over the education of our children to the place that it belongs, the parents and teachers and local communities and local school boards. By doing that, we will ensure that education dollars are spent wisely on programs and activities which really benefit our children in the classroom.

Currently, the vast majority of all Federal education funding does not go to school districts or classrooms. In fact, in 1995, of the \$100 billion the Federal Government allocated for education programs, only about 13 percent actually got to the local level from the Department of Education. That is a travesty, and a national nightmare.

Madam President, the current system of Federal bureaucrats attempting to administer hundreds of education programs to our children is, to say the least, highly inefficient, as reflected in falling test scores and increased illiteracy rates.

Many students are not adequately prepared to meet the challenges of life beyond high school, whether they go on to college, take a job, or attend a trade school. In fact, last year alone, 43 percent of high school seniors scored below the basic level in science, while 29 percent of all college freshmen were required to take at least one remedial course. Most alarming is that 68 percent of employers say that high school graduates are not prepared to succeed in the workplace. These statistics paint a very sad picture in a country which prides itself on having the best education system in the world. When limited Federal funding is spread so thin over such a wide area, the result is ineffective programs that fail to provide students with the basic skills they need to succeed.

So I ask my colleagues to join Senator COVERDELL and my good friend from Nebraska, Senator HAGEL, and I, in asking hard questions. Which do our constituents really prefer? In whom do the citizens of America really place their confidence? The real question is—

is it going to be BOOKS, or is it going to be bureaucrats? So why not let those on the State level, why not let those on the local level, who best know the needs of our children, make those decisions, make those determinations? Perhaps it is books, perhaps it is computers, or perhaps it will be a need for more teachers so that children will have smaller class sizes. But I truly believe that those decisions must be made at the local level.

I believe the alternative, the Dollars to the Classroom Act, demonstrates not only our commitment to the education of our kids, but also proves that there is a better way to implement this commitment rather than creating an ever-growing Federal bureaucracy and appropriating ever-larger sums of money which are failing to provide for the real needs that our schools have.

So, once again, I applaud Senator COVERDELL for his leadership in education, his leadership on our efforts to improve education for all of the children in this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. COVERDELL. I commend the Senator from Arkansas. I think he very adroitly draws the distinction between our proposal, which frees these local communities to make decisions about what they need, in distinction to the last 30 or 40 years where more and more and more we have somebody, as you say, who couldn't recognize one of the students, trying to set the priorities, and all the assistance we send is with a mandate to shackle the local school boards.

Everywhere I go—I don't know about yourself—but it is over and over I am being told that you all are going to have to decide. "You all have to let us teach these kids." Or, "Are you going to keep mandating us and throttling us down with all of your agendas?" And while we have been doing that, we, each year, have more and more data suggesting that the children cannot do the basics, cannot read right, they cannot understand the basic science, and they cannot add and subtract.

If they cannot do that, they cannot succeed in our society. I think you have adroitly hit it. And I appreciate your work on dollars to these local systems.

We have now been joined, Madam President, by the distinguished Senator from Florida, Senator MACK. I yield Senator MACK up to 10 minutes.

Mr. MACK addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. MACK. Thank you, Madam President.

I thank the Senator from Georgia for this opportunity. I want to again commend the Senator for the leadership he provided last year in focusing us on this issue, leading the debate and the effort to try to pass the A-plus education savings account with great leadership. We appreciate what the Senator is doing.

a school board does not like an individual. We ought to say there ought to be competence testing. Part of this plan, known as BOOKS, calls for competency testing and for merit pay.

Before I conclude, I would like to point out that in the State of Florida, 70 percent of the community college freshmen require remedial education. We have to change that. The cost to the State of Florida is \$50 billion a year to handle this problem. Let's improve our K-12 education system.

With that, I yield the floor and again thank the Senator from Georgia for tackling this initiative. I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Mr. COVERDELL addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. COVERDELL. I commend the Senator from Florida. It is an absolutely fascinating story. There are many of these around the country.

Just to make a point, of late when you read the statistics of 4 in 10 are all that can pass in urban city schools' basic standards tests, 3 in 10, 4 in 10 go to college, as you have noted, and have to go back and learn these skills again. We are beginning to hear an echo that these students were not educable, that there was something wrong someplace else, something wrong at home, something wrong with society.

What kind of community was this? What was the surrounding like around this school? Was this a very wealthy suburb?

Mr. MACK. No. As I indicated, it was in the riot area in Los Angeles.

Mr. COVERDELL. Would you surmise that those students could not have possibly all come from very stable, two-parent families that you might find in some communities?

Mr. MACK. I could suspect you could draw the conclusion they were somewhat different than, say, what most people think of as the traditional family in America. But I would be careful about drawing too many conclusions on that because I think there are some things about what was going on in this school that also sends a message to moms and dads.

I think that one of the reasons for success was because mom and dad were involved. They made the determination. I mean, this was a private school, so they have to pay to go to that private school—some of them at great sacrifice. Some of them, frankly, from outside the community.

But the point there is, if you go back to the charter school, for example, one of the things that most charter schools require, as you know, is that they want parent involvement. In fact, when I was at the school in Liberty City, in Miami, mom and dad parents came into the classroom, as I was talking with the teacher, to discuss with him the problems of their student. What was the problem? Or what should they be doing more at home to help?

Again, I think one of the messages that we do get is that in the charter schools—I guess there are others who are much more knowledgeable at these things than I am, but because it is a very focused school, it understands the importance of mom and dad being engaged. The teacher understands the importance of moms and dads being engaged, and, clearly, the parents understand if they are going to be able to keep their children in this charter school, they have to be part of it.

Again, I would make the case, whether it be a mother and a dad or single mom or single father, that if you can engage them in the education process, regardless of that background, in probably 9 out of 10 cases—I am just saying this from my feeling; I do not have the statistics—but 9 out of 10 times, if you, the parent, one or both, are engaged in your children's education, you are going to improve the ability of your child to learn. And, again, I think you are going to find that you are going to create that environment, something different than we are doing today.

There is just so much we can learn from this experience. Again, the answer that kept coming back, "It is the teacher. It is the teacher. It is the teacher." I think people ought to recognize that what Republicans are saying is we value teachers. They are the ones who really make a difference.

Again, if my grandsons are going to succeed, they need to be exposed to good teachers. We have to help create an environment in which people, (a) want to come into the teaching profession and, (b) once they are there, want to remain and experience the excitement of seeing young children learn. Teachers help children realize how important knowledge is to them and their future. Again, teachers are the ones who really make a difference.

Mr. COVERDELL. The Senator makes an excellent point. Who does not remember the teacher that affected them? There is no one that does not remember that teacher.

Mr. MACK. I can name my first-grade teacher.

Mr. COVERDELL. I thank the Senator for the presentation.

I turn to our distinguished colleague from Wyoming, Senator THOMAS, and yield up to 10 minutes to the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

Mr. THOMAS. I appreciate the Senator from Georgia arranging for an opportunity to talk about our agenda. After all we have just returned now from recess, just returned from a time to talk with our constituents. I spent all this time in Wyoming doing a number of town meetings, talking to people about various things they are interested in.

It is time for us, of course to talk about agendas, to talk about priorities, to talk about what it is that we intend to do during what is already a relatively short work year, during an election year. The thing, of course,

that is on our minds today, I suppose, is the President's State of the Union Address last evening in which he laid out his agenda, not a surprise agenda, and talked about the issues he has been talking about now for several weeks, with a new proposal each week, all put together in a State of the Union Message which had, I think, about 30 different proposals of things to do.

It seems to me that what we have to do now as a responsible Congress is to decide on those items that we think are priorities to this country, that we think are priorities for success in families in this country, economically, from a freedom standpoint, how-to-govern standpoint, and really press for those. I must say that I feel rather strongly about that.

I felt last evening that—the President, of course, is certainly free to have his own agenda—that was an agenda that had been put together by pollsters, an agenda that had been put together to enumerate all those things that would sound good to everyone that was listening, an agenda that I think, clearly, again the President is perfectly free to move his position, move his position back toward the more liberal Democrat Party from which he has departed in the last several years somewhat to establish more support for AL GORE when the time comes. I think that is legitimate. I don't happen to agree with that.

I think we ought to be moving forward to continue to do the things that we have begun to do over the last several years, some of the things that I am particularly proud of, frankly, that this Congress has been able to do, to bring forth a balanced budget. That, after all, is the responsibility of the Congress. We have done that. We need to continue to do that. We need to continue to try and control spending so that we can move toward this idea of a balanced budget and beyond, to begin to work on the debt that is there, to begin to do something about that \$280 billion we spend on interest every year to service a \$5.5 trillion debt. That, it seems to me, ought to be the real focus of what we do.

Our responsibility now, I believe, in the Congress is—we shall meet on Friday, our friends across the aisle will meet I am sure next week—to come to grips with those kind of things we think are the priorities for our agenda. I don't think our agenda can be a laundry list of 30 or 40 things that appeal to the polls but rather ought to be the kinds of things that are terribly important to us.

I think we ought to talk about ISTEAs, for example. We ought to get out into the country to do the highway maintenance, the highway building. We didn't get that done last time because we got diverted talking about something else. ISTEAs need to be there. I think we need to continue to work on the budget. There is probably nothing more important than being responsible in the spending that we do. Again, I am

pleased with what has happened with the budget over time. I am pleased for what has happened in the last couple of years on welfare reform. The Congress has moved forward, with the cooperation of the President, after a couple of vetoes. That is OK. But we need to continue to do that, to provide the opportunity to help people move off of welfare into work, which is what most people want to do, of course. We have made some progress in moving away from the entitlement program that we have had. We have made some progress in terms of moving Government closer to people, where Government is more responsive at the State level, and do those things at the State level that we should do there.

As I listened last night to the enumeration of things that might be done it seemed to me at least one of the considerations that has to be made is where do you do these things most efficiently? Child care—everybody is for having quality child care. Everybody wants to strengthen the child care program. The question first we ought to ask is, where is that best done? What is the role of the Federal Government in child care? What is the role of the State government in these kinds of things?

I happened to have the privilege last night of having my Governor accompany me to the State of the Union Message. I could sense as we went through last night's State of the Union Message him saying to himself, "We can do that better at the State level. We can really make those things work." I agree with that.

There are a number of other things that I personally would like to see us move forward on. One of my personal areas of interest is the national parks. National parks are a national treasure for all of us. More and more people go to visit national parks. More and more people are interested. Yet we have less resources for national parks than we need. National parks, some claim, are as much as \$8 billion in arrears on infrastructure. We need to work at that. That happens to be something that I am most interested in.

I think most of all we need to be sure that we are responsible, finally. Spending continues to go up. If we are going to balance the budget—why balance the budget? Because revenues have gone up. I think the President's proposal goes far beyond what is going to be available for dollars. The President says we want to keep a balanced budget and then lists 30 items that will cost billions of dollars plus additional tax deductions there that will reduce revenue. So we find ourselves I am sure with spending far beyond our income if we do those things.

Those, I believe, have to be the constraints. That is what I heard from my people. That is what I heard from the people of Wyoming. They said, look, stay with that business of balancing the budget. We not only want to balance the budget, we would like to see

you begin to reduce spending. This idea of the era of large Government being over is a good idea.

I was disappointed the President had done a complete reversal from 2 years ago when he announced that would be his objective. This certainly was not an effort to reduce and to change the era of big Government.

Spending continues to go up, 16 percent last year, 24 percent on entitlements. Over a period of time, entitlements continue to grow. Many of these programs that we talked about inevitably will become entitlements. These young people that are here on the floor as pages won't see those benefits because they will not be sustained if we continue to grow at 24 percent a year.

Madam President, I think we have a real opportunity. As I said, I enjoyed the President's State of the Union Message. That is his agenda. Now it is our responsibility to have an agenda and to put our priorities there, put our philosophy there, our philosophy of a responsible Government, our philosophy of a financially accountable Government, one in which we limit size and move as close as we can to people to solve people's problems.

The educational program that Senator COVERDELL has recommended is one that puts the responsibility in the hands of local people, parents. That is what we need to do. Those are the kinds of things we can do here to assist in those problems. So I am excited about this year. I think we have an opportunity to do a great deal. I am very proud of having been in this Senate since 1994. I think we have made some real changes in direction. It is my hope and my desire to help ensure that we continue to move in the direction of a more responsible Government, responsive to the folks that we represent, the folks I have had a chance to visit with for 2 months and have come back with some renewed dedication to the idea that this Congress, this Government, is responsible to the people, to the taxpayers, responsible for protecting liberty, responsible for being financially responsible, responsible for reducing taxes as much as we can, to leave the money to the people it belongs to. I am excited about the opportunity.

So my friend, Mr. COVERDELL, I appreciate very much what you are doing in this time to talk. I think we should continue to talk about our agenda and talk about the reasons we are doing what we are doing. I look forward to that happening this year.

Mr. COVERDELL. As always, Madam President, I enjoyed the remarks of the distinguished Senator from Wyoming. He brings that clear Western thinking to the Senate.

If I might add a thought, it is a little hard to believe, but this Congress passed the first balanced budget in the 104th Congress. That was vetoed by the President. We did it again. So we passed two. The President signed it. It is the first one in 30 years. In 30 years Washington has never developed the

will to balance its budget. It passed the first tax relief in the last Congress. That was vetoed. A modified tax relief was passed last year. That was signed. That is the first tax relief in 16 years.

Now, I don't know what the situation is in Wyoming but that tax relief proposal leaves \$750 million every year in Georgia checking accounts of working families, businesses, people sending kids to school and college, trying to make ends meet. It left \$750 million in those accounts. It was not a particularly large tax reduction. But it means a lot. It puts about 2,000 additional dollars in the checking account of an average family.

Now, the point I am making is this, and I would like to get the Senator's comment, don't you find it interesting that once the United States balanced its budget, once it has become more engaged in managing its financial affairs, how much more optimistic the people are, how many more of them of working, how interest rates have stayed somewhat down, and how we are talking about surpluses for the first time? Pretty remarkable, very remarkable. It ought to be a lesson to every Congress and every President. This is a good idea. We better keep doing it.

Mr. THOMAS. If I might, I certainly agree with the Senator. It isn't that difficult.

In other words, this is what our system is all about. Our system of private enterprise, our system of limited Government, our system of allowing as much money as possible to stay in the hands of the citizens so they can invest it and create jobs, that is what our system is all about. Through the years it has been tested against socialism and big government and the government doing all these things, and throughout the world this system is the success. It is being copied everywhere. Sometimes it is scary when we see ourselves moving away from our own system that has been so successful, that everybody else has adopted.

So the Senator is exactly right. That certainly is what creates this kind of an economic environment is the ability to take the risk, to invest, to work, to earn, to keep and to do things for yourself and your family.

Mr. COVERDELL. Madam President, I appreciate the remarks of the Senator from Wyoming. I see we have been joined by the distinguished Senator from New York. I welcome his presentation and yield up to 10 minutes to the Senator from New York.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York is recognized.

Mr. D'AMATO. Madam President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Georgia for his leadership on this most important issue. I believe that education is the most important issue facing our country.

We have focused a majority of our attention on the need to give assistance to those of our students who are college bound, and that is important. We have done, I think, a good job in expanding, for example, the Pell grants

the country are facing similar problems.

I was disappointed when I saw the list of the 19 priority items that the majority leader has placed before us in this brief session that child care is not on that list of 19. Child care is not on that list. We went through the debate on welfare reform a year or so ago. One of the promises made in this Chamber was that as we moved people from welfare to work, we would do something about caring for the children of these people who have been on welfare. What we are being told now, with this priority list of 19, is that child care is not on that list; that working families who are trying to make ends meet in caring for their children are not going to be a part of this agenda in the next 70 or 120 days of a legislative process. I am hopeful that agenda can change, that it is not written in concrete, that there will be an opportunity to make the case that we ought to be able to come up with a compromise bill if need be between Republicans and Democrats that takes out the partisanship on this issue and says that we ought to be able to come up with some idea here that can assist these working families.

I know my colleague from Utah, Senator HATCH, with whom I wrote the child care block grant program 13 years ago, and my colleague from Kansas, Senator FAT ROBERTS, care very much about this issue. Senator JEFFORDS cares about this issue, and had his own bill up earlier. Obviously, Senator CHAFEE does. He has a bill in. I know my colleagues from Maine, Senator COLLINS and Senator SNOWE, and Senator SPECTER have an interest in this. I am just disappointed. I can't hide it—that having invested 6 weeks of staff time and effort to try to come up with a compromise bill that it all falls apart literally in the last few days after we pretty much had a work product.

So I am going to continue to raise this issue. I am glad the President did last night. I am glad he highlighted it. I think a lot of people in this country understand in very graphic ways how important this issue is to them for their neighbors and their coworkers. They understand it. They see every day what goes on, how difficult this is, how costly it is, and how worried people are. After-school care is a big issue in this context. We put over \$3 billion over 5 years in after school care. 5 million children every day are home alone between 3 o'clock and 6 o'clock and 7 o'clock. Any police chief in any town will tell you the problems that kids get into is not after 11 p.m. at night when people want to put in curfews. Where kids get in trouble is in the afternoon between 3 o'clock and 8 o'clock. That is when trouble occurs. Seventy percent of our schools in this country have no after-school care programs at all. It seems to me that we ought to do something about that. I am not just talking about infants but young children in elementary schools. Try and dial a phone in a relatively small community be-

tween 3 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. in the afternoon. There is a delay between the last digit you dial and when the phone actually clicks in. That is because the phone system is overloaded with parents calling their homes to make sure their kids have gotten home safely.

So after-school care is a part of our effort and a part of this proposal that we will put before this body.

So with those thoughts I am urging our colleagues to see if we can't find some common ground. Hopefully the majority leader will change that agenda to include child care on it with the recommendation of the administration. We are not arguing now with an executive branch over whether or not we ought to do this.

There are two bills here that it seems to me we should move on. I am going to raise this issue at every opportunity I can in the coming weeks to see to it that before this session of this Congress adjourns that this U.S. Senate will address child care, after-school care, and care for parents who want to stay at home, and that these parents are going to get some relief before we call it quits. I think it is a critical issue and one that ought to be one of our top priorities rather than not a priority at all.

With that I yield the remainder of my time, if any of my colleagues want to take a few minutes before the time expires. I see my colleague from New Jersey.

Mr. TORRICELLI. I thank the Senator from Connecticut for the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, the State of the Union Address last evening reminds me of the words of President KENNEDY who in 1962 came before the Nation and he said, "It is my responsibility to report on the state of the Nation but it is all of our responsibility to improve it."

Increasingly that is a responsibility that is being met. It is incredible now to remember that when President Clinton assumed office 5 years ago there was projected to be in 1998 a Federal budget deficit of \$357 billion. Indeed, in the budget that the President is about to submit there is a \$10 billion deficit. And the reality is within a year the U.S. Government for the first time in 30 years will be conducting its affairs in a fiscal surplus.

For 3 decades, six Presidents of both political parties in their State of the Union Addresses have had it incumbent upon them to distribute pain—not to challenge the Nation to meet problems but to distribute sacrifice because of mounting deficits that left the U.S. Government with no choice.

There have indeed been many victims of the deficit. It is common to talk about them in terms of taxpayers having to pay an ever larger share of their income in Federal tax with an ever-larger share of their taxes going to interest on the national deficit. The taxpayers were not the only victims. The

Federal deficit made victims out of children who never got the education they required. Students were never able to continue with assistance into higher education because of programs we could not pass; young families that could not get day care, and people, mothers and fathers, who could not follow opportunities because of it. There were many victims of the Federal deficit, and we each now need to be reminded that the country's budget evolved into a surplus.

Alan Greenspan may have said it best when he said we cannot just balance the Federal budget and think that our work is complete for if there is no investment in the Nation's future then we have still failed. That, Mr. President, is where we find ourselves tonight. Part of our national mission is accomplished. There will be a Federal budget surplus. Now the question is are we wise enough to recognize where the sacrifices have been? Are we smart enough to plan for the future to assure that the economic growth that we are now experiencing can continue?

Last night in the State of the Union Address the President outlined several specific investments that go to the core of this question, each in a way addressing an aspect of the national infrastructure. The first was Social Security.

There are in our Nation 80 million members of my generation born in the years after the last world war. They have worked hard. They are saving diligently. They have participated in building this high-growth economy. Soon they begin to face retirement. The Social Security trust fund through their savings and participation will continue to run a surplus through the year 2014. The current projections are that the same trust fund will expire by the year 2031.

Last night the President left us with a simple challenge. In facing the Federal budget surplus let's deal with Social Security first. Let this generation of Americans now retire. My generation who will be facing it in all too few years know the trust funds will be secure, permanent. Let's begin that planning now.

Second, the President recognized that in the 21st century the foundation of our Nation's economy and perhaps its principal national infrastructure will be our educational institutions. As certainly as in the 17th century it may have been the construction of canals, as certainly as in the 18th and 19th century it may have evolved into railroads to most certainly what now are institutions of higher learning in our schools.

As part of the program to deal with this reality, the President challenged us to create a Federal program to hire 100,000 new teachers to enable the Nation to reduce the class size for first, second, and third graders to 18 students, an extraordinary challenge with everything that it could mean for expanding the quality of American schools. But it did more.

substantial number of people used to say education is not an appropriate issue for the Federal Government to concern itself with.

Clearly, it is a great concern for the people I represent in New Mexico, and it is a great concern for working families all over this country; but "it should not be a concern for people who come to Washington to make the laws or to appropriate funds or to allocate tax dollars because this is not a national responsibility." That was the argument that we always heard. I think one of the great legacies that this President will leave and this Congress will leave is that there is a change in that attitude. There is a recognition here in Washington, finally, that just as every other industrial nation in the world considers education a national concern as well as a State and local concern, here in America we need to consider it a national concern as well as a State and local concern as well. So I think that is a major change and a change for the better.

Last year, Congress and the President agreed on some very significant initiatives in the area of education—a new HOPE scholarship for 2 years of college, a \$3 billion overall increase in education funding was included last year, and funding for a new \$210 million reading initiative. There were various other initiatives in the education area that were agreed upon by Democrats and Republicans alike. So we have made progress so far in the 105th Congress, and in the second session we can make more progress. I have heard some speeches today and some comments today by my colleagues, particularly on the other side of the aisle, and they go along two lines. Number one is the old argument that this is not a national concern, education is not a national concern, we should not be doing more in this area. We ought to leave it up to local school districts if they want to do it. Second, there is no money. We may have the largest economy in the world, and we may be in a period where the Union is strong and where the economy is strong and where we are finally getting to a balanced budget, or very near to it, but there is no money. "We now spend less than 2 percent of our Federal budget on education and that is too much. We can't afford to spend any more." That is the argument I hear.

I don't think the American people agree with that. When I go to my State and have town hall meetings and visits with people around New Mexico, I hear them say they are shocked to find that the Federal Government commits so little in resources relative to what the Federal Government spends in other areas. So I think we are expected by the people who sent us here to do better by education. The President is showing us the way to do that.

There are three areas in particular I want to highlight today where I think he is showing some leadership, and we need to follow that leadership and try

to make a difference. One is in the very important area of lowering the dropout rate in our schools, reaching those at-risk students who historically have left high school before they graduate. We have oversized schools in this country. We have low expectations of many of our students. We have inadequate involvement of parents in the education of their children. As a result of all of these factors, over 500,000 students each year in this country drop out of school before they complete high school. Thirty percent of the young Hispanic adults in this country lack a high school degree because of that very problem. This is a national tragedy, in my opinion, and we at the Federal level can do some things to try to assist with this problem.

I hope very much we will take the lead of the President in doing that. He has proposed key programs such as title I, the TRIO program, bilingual education, and several new initiatives to make schools more conducive to learning, to raise expectations and lower dropout rates. He has proposed \$12 billion for class size reduction and teacher training and a mentoring program for at-risk middle school students. He has proposed \$150 million for comprehensive reform. Now, that funding would go to schools with a serious dropout problem that want to focus on restructuring those schools and coming up with ways to give attention to the at-risk student, to keep them in that school, prevent them from dropping out. That is an initiative that is worth our effort and support.

A second area, in addition to the dropout problem that the President is providing leadership on and that we here in Congress have done a substantial amount on in recent years, is providing computers and access to the Internet for the students in our schools today. Technological literacy is an essential part of being educated today. We need to ensure that the schools throughout this Nation are equipped so that students who come through those schools have access to that technology. The President is proposing significant fiscal year 1999 increases for key technology programs. For the formula grants to States there is \$425 million in fiscal 1997. For competitive grants, \$76 million for technology training for teachers. And all of us understand that you have to train the teachers to use the technology in order that it can be used effectively by the students as well in the classroom. The President is proposing increases in each of these areas. I believe it is in the best interest of this country for us to follow his lead in that area.

The President's \$10 billion school construction initiative will also help to provide access to fully-wired, technology-ready facilities for computers, and the Internet can be readily integrated into classrooms. Schools are the last area of our society where technology is really having an impact. It is more prevalent in our homes and in our

offices than it is in our schools, and it is time that we fix that problem.

The final area I want to mention is where I believe the President has made some progress and this Congress has made some progress and we need to keep moving forward in, which is the area of world-class academic standards. Too many schools still offer watered-down academic programs, general education tracks, and low expectations that will not meet the demands of local competition. The President has proposed \$200 million in incentives to help districts to set high academic standards, to eliminate the problem of social promotion which he spoke about very eloquently last night, and to take other measures to upgrade the quality of education in our schools. He requested roughly \$13 million to pilot and field test a new voluntary national test in reading at the fourth grade level and math at the eighth grade level. This test would be developed by the National Assessment Governing Board, which is not part of the Department of Education.

Mr. President, these three initiatives—the effort to reduce dropout rates, the effort to provide technology for our schools, and the effort to assist our local schools to achieve world-class academic standards—are all worthy goals for us in this second session of the 105th Congress. I hope very much that we will follow the lead of the President and support these efforts with real resources. We will recognize that our constituents do not want to have us debate and debate and debate about whose responsibility it is to improve the schools. They want to see progress, they want to see improvement, they want to see their children receive a better education. We have the power to do that by continuing what we started in the last session of this Congress—that is, putting more resources into education, giving the priority to education that the President talked about last night. I hope very much we will do that. I believe the President has shown a direction that the American people want to see us follow. And I hope very much we will have the good sense to follow that direction.

Mr. President, I know there are others who intend to speak. So at this point I yield the floor.

Mr. DODD addressed the Chair.
The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAGEL). The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, let me, first of all, commend my colleague from New Mexico for the very thoughtful statement on education, on the importance of it. I did not hear all of the statements made earlier. I know my colleague from West Virginia, the senior Senator from West Virginia, Senator BYRD, discussed the issue of transportation and the importance of the ISTEA bill, the intermodal transportation system bill, which has to be brought up very quickly here. I heard our junior Senator from West Virginia

discuss the issue of Medicare and health care. So a number of these items the President discussed last evening in his State of the Union Message have been the subject of some discussion here today.

I think all of us were very impressed with the agenda the President has laid out for this session of this Congress, the remaining 70 to 120 days. The distinguished majority leader of the U.S. Senate, Senator LOTT, has indicated this will not be a long session. So we have a relatively short amount of time for an agenda that I think is important for the country. I hope many of these items will be considered in a strong bipartisan sense. Some will obviously provoke some disagreements. Minimum wage and family and medical leave are two items that come to mind immediately. But I hope on things like Medicare and Social Security and building our public schools and campaign finance reform, we can find some common ground here and get the business of the country done.

Mr. President, I would like to focus some remarks, if I could, on a subject that is I think critically important. The President spent some time discussing it last evening. It is one that I had worked on for about a month and a half here, during the month of December and a good part of the month of January, with a bipartisan group of Republicans and Democrats, and that subject is child care.

Unfortunately, in the last week, I received some correspondence from our colleagues on the Republican side who decided to pull out of the effort basically to come up with another bill. I understand Senator CHAFEE of Rhode Island has introduced a bill that, in many ways, reflects the work product of those 6 weeks, where I had tried to see in that quiet time if we could come out with a proposal that we could rally around here. Unfortunately—and this happens—these things break apart. I hope at some point we will come back together again. This is important. We have introduced a bill on our side, so there are two bills out there. The President laid out some thoughts and ideas on it. Let me say to you, Mr. President, how important this issue is. We are talking about millions of families in this country that are either single parents raising children, or two-income parents that need both incomes. They may have children and have to pay the tremendous cost of child care because, obviously, you can't leave them home alone. Maybe they don't necessarily have grandparents or aunts and uncles around to take care of them on a daily basis. It poses a serious problem for parents. When schools close down for snow days during the winter. What do you do with your children when you have to go off to work? You have the job you need and the children you love. How do you reconcile these issues?

In the past, many of us grew up in a situation where you had neighbors and

friends and you would accommodate an occasion when a crisis like that emerged. Today, it is a daily effort, if a family is to make ends meet and fulfill these obligations. The average cost of a child care setting is between \$4,000 and \$9,000 per child per year. If you are making, as the average family does, \$30,000, \$35,000, \$40,000 a year, with two children that need some care because they are minors or infants, you immediately get a sense of how difficult a situation people can be placed in financially.

What we have proposed is to expand the block grants, to come up with some tax credits—by the way, tax credits not just to families who have children they want to place in care, but to families who decide they are going to try and get along with one income. Some parents are going to stay home. We provide the credits for them as well. We make it refundable, too, Mr. President, because people who make that \$30,000 and below don't pay taxes. Yet, many of them are out there just barely getting along. If they don't have a refundable tax credit, they don't get any benefit at all. So we refund the tax credits for those families that either want to stay home with their child or place that child in a child care setting, because they need that extra help to get along. On the stay-at-home parent idea—and I am delighted to see more and more coming to this issue—I authored something called the Family and Medical Leave Act, which was a source of some controversy back in the 1980's. It took me 7 years. It went through 2 vetoes, and as the President said, it was the first bill he signed into law in 1993. That was basically a stay-at-home parent idea. The idea was that if your child is facing a medical crisis or serious problem that could be documented, that a parent could make the choice to take 12 weeks away from their job, up to 12 weeks, without pay, without losing their job. We were the only country that I could find among industrialized nations that didn't permit a family and medical leave policy, giving parents the ability to stay at home and care for their children without losing the job that they need.

So the idea of providing some assistance for parents, who want to stay at home and care for their children, I think, is a very sound idea. I hope we don't get into the situation where we cause stay-at-home parents and those who must work to be pitted against each other, to cause a quarrel, if you will, between parents who don't have that choice. If you are raising 2 or 3 kids on your own, the idea that you have a choice to stay home and watch them is nonexistent. You don't have that choice. Or if you are a two-income family barely getting by or you want to invest money that you are earning for their education, or to buy a better home, or to plan a vacation, you should not be branded somehow as an uncaring parent because you made that choice. I don't want to see us get into

a debate here and suggest somehow that parents who need that second income are less caring about their children because they make that choice, any more than I want to see us deprive parents who make that choice to be at home by not providing them with help so that they can do that.

So I am hopeful that we can come to some common ground here. We have begun Welfare to Work. We have a lot more people in the work force. We don't have the child care vacancies, and we don't have the high-paying child care workers, as the average income is \$12,000 a year. I don't know anyone who can now get along on that income. How do you attract good people to care for our children in this society?

There have been studies done recently about the quality of child care programs around the country. Some 17 States now have certification processes. Yet the Ziegler Child Study Center at Yale University would tell you that even in the States that have certification and accreditation processes the quality of child care is embarrassing. It is mortifying.

So for States that do not have that certification process you can imagine what it is like. In fact, if you pick up almost any daily newspaper in any city or any State in the country, you will find a case almost on a daily basis of parents who placed their child in what they thought was a safe, quality child care setting only to discover, of course, that child is not safe, and lost its life as we have seen in numerous cases. So we need to be far more conscientious.

We don't deal with quality here in Washington. We don't set standards. I realize that is too high a hurdle to probably overcome. So we let the States set the standards. There is nothing in our Federal bill that mandates what standards are. But we do think there ought to be at least health and safety standards. We require that for our pets. If you leave them at a vet or in one of these weekend kennels, you get a State requirement of safety and health standards for your puppies. It seems to me, if we are going to require that minimum standard for animals that we might try it for our own children in this country.

So our bill provides assistance to employers and providers of child care, and to parents who want to have the security of knowing their children are in safe places.

To give you an idea of how serious this problem is, in the State of Florida today, there is a need of 40,000 spaces for child care that are nonexistent in the State. We are told with Welfare to Work that number will increase by 440,000 in the coming year. So you are going to have an explosion, I guess, of child care providers. What will be the quality? How much will the cost be? Is it accessible to people? The State of Florida may be an example where the vacancy rate is particularly high. But it is not unique. Other States across

the country are facing similar problems.

I was disappointed when I saw the list of the 19 priority items that the majority leader has placed before us in this brief session that child care is not on that list of 19. Child care is not on that list. We went through the debate on welfare reform a year or so ago. One of the promises made in this Chamber was that as we moved people from welfare to work, we would do something about caring for the children of these people who have been on welfare. What we are being told now, with this priority list of 19, is that child care is not on that list; that working families who are trying to make ends meet in caring for their children are not going to be a part of this agenda in the next 70 or 120 days of a legislative process. I am hopeful that agenda can change, that it is not written in concrete, that there will be an opportunity to make the case that we ought to be able to come up with a compromise bill if need be between Republicans and Democrats that takes out the partisanship on this issue and says that we ought to be able to come up with some idea here that can assist these working families.

I know my colleague from Utah, Senator HATCH, with whom I wrote the child care block grant program 13 years ago, and my colleague from Kansas, Senator PAT ROBERTS, care very much about this issue. Senator JEFFORDS cares about this issue, and had his own bill up earlier. Obviously, Senator CHAFEE does. He has a bill in. I know my colleagues from Maine, Senator COLLINS and Senator SNÖWE, and Senator SPECTER have an interest in this. I am just disappointed. I can't hide it—that having invested 8 weeks of staff time and effort to try to come up with a compromise bill that it all falls apart literally in the last few days after we pretty much had a work product.

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With that I yield the remainder of my time, if any of my colleagues want to take a few minutes before the time expires. I see my colleague from New Jersey.

Mr. TORRICELLI. I thank the Senator from Connecticut for the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, the State of the Union Address last evening reminds me of the words of President KENNEDY, who in 1962 came before the Nation and he said, "It is my responsibility to report on the state of the Nation but it is all of our responsibility to improve it."

Increasingly that is a responsibility that is being met. It is incredible now to remember that when President Clinton assumed office 5 years ago there was projected to be in 1998 a Federal budget deficit of \$357 billion. Indeed, in the budget that the President is about to submit there is a \$10 billion deficit. And the reality is within a year the U.S. Government for the first time in 30 years will be conducting its affairs in a fiscal surplus.

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Federal deficit made victims out of children who never got the education they required. Students were never able to continue with assistance into higher education because of programs we could not pass; young families that could not get day care, and people, mothers and fathers, who could not follow opportunities because of it. There were many victims of the Federal deficit, and we each now need to be reminded that the country's budget evolved into a surplus. Alan Greenspan may have said it best when he said we cannot just balance the Federal budget and think that our work is complete for if there is no investment in the Nation's future then we have still failed. That, Mr. President, is where we find ourselves tonight. Part of our national mission is accomplished. There will be a Federal budget surplus. Now the question is are we wise enough to recognize where the sacrifices have been? Are we smart enough to plan for the future to assure that the economic growth that we are now experiencing can continue?

Last night in the State of the Union Address the President outlined several specific investments that go to the core of this question, each in a way addressing an aspect of the national infrastructure. The first was Social Security.

There are in our Nation 80 million members of my generation born in the years after the last world war. They have worked hard. They are saving diligently. They have participated in building this high-growth economy. Soon they begin to face retirement. The Social Security trust fund through their savings and participation will continue to run a surplus through the year 2014. The current projections are that the same trust fund will expire by the year 2031.

Last night the President left us with a simple challenge. In facing the Federal budget surplus let's deal with Social Security first. Let this generation of Americans now retire. My generation who will be facing it in all too few years know the trust funds will be secure, permanent. Let's begin that planning now.

Second, the President recognized that in the 21st century the foundation of our Nation's economy and perhaps its principal national infrastructure will be our educational institutions. As certainly as in the 17th century it may have been the construction of canals, as certainly as in the 18th and 19th century it may have evolved into railroads to most certainly what now are institutions of higher learning in our schools.

As part of the program to deal with this reality, the President challenged us to create a Federal program to hire 100,000 new teachers to enable the Nation to reduce the class size for first, second, and third graders to 18 students, an extraordinary challenge with everything that it could mean for expanding the quality of American schools. But it did more.

Recognizing that smaller school classes is going to mean the need for more classrooms and facing the reality that fully two-thirds of all American schools are now substandard, two-thirds have at least one serious construction problem that must be addressed, potentially \$100 billion worth of necessary construction to bring America's schools up to standards, the President recommended a program whereby the Federal Government would not build the schools; that responsibility would remain local. But we could reduce the cost of the construction by the Federal Government paying the interest on the loans of local governments and State governments to build those schools.

Third, the President challenged this Congress to continue progress on access to quality health care in America. Two years ago, this Congress assured that Americans could change their jobs without losing their health care. This Congress assured that if a member of a family was taken ill, they would not lose their health care because they made use of it. Two years ago, we did right by the American people in expanding our health care opportunities. And a year ago we did so again, adding 5 million American children, previously uninsured, without access to the system. We brought them into health care insurance through the Government.

Now the question is even larger. The President challenged us in the State of the Union Address to deal with the reality of 160 million Americans who now have their health care delivered through managed care systems. I know something of this issue because only a week ago in New Jersey, meeting with 100 individuals, many of whom had had difficulties with their managed care systems, I heard the stories that Americans are experiencing every day—members of managed care systems who could not get the truth of their own files, people who needed to see specialists but were denied, people whose privacy had been violated, people who traveled needing access to emergency rooms and could not get it because care would not be received through their managed care program.

The President's challenge last evening was we can make managed care work, and, indeed, in reducing costs it has worked. We have gone from 12 and 13 and 14 percent annual increases in the cost of health care to 2.5 percent last year. But saving money is only half the equation. The remainder is assuring that what has been the finest quality care system in the world in the United States is maintained and that managed care complements that system and does not frustrate it.

Fourth, the President recognized the reality that fully 60 percent of American women today with children, with homes to maintain, are also in the work force—not always by choice, certainly not usually by luxury. But with the cost of raising children and main-

taining a home today, two family incomes are often a necessity, and yet in modern America the ambitions of these women, the needs of these families are frustrated because they cannot get affordable child care. It is hard to imagine any higher priority today for young working families in America than assuring quality, safe, affordable child care. Indeed, America remains almost alone in the world in not helping our families meet this urgent need and responsibility.

Through tax credits for businesses, through a larger child care tax credit for working families, the challenge has been laid before the Congress. More directly, the President said, "Not a single American family should ever have to choose between the job they need and the child they love." Exactly, Mr. President, and that is the challenge before this Congress.

And yet, finally, I recognize that having fought all of these years to balance the Federal budget, to reach the point where an American President could honestly predict a surplus in our finances, we achieve nothing if we meet these responsibilities but require higher taxes on American families that cannot afford the increased burden. It is notable that this balanced budget has been achieved and some of these social objectives already met while the country has the lowest tax burden on middle-income families in 20 years. But it is important still to recognize that that burden can still be eased more through targeted, responsible tax cuts that do not add to the deficit but help meet some of these social objectives—tax cuts to encourage and expand child care, targeted tax cuts to help with the cost of financing education, tax cuts that encourage savings and investment to maintain this rapid economic growth that is producing these extraordinary revenues.

Mr. President, this is an extraordinary time in the life of our country. We can do good and great things but not by resting on what we have achieved. This economy has not grown, our people are not productive, our industries are not competitive, we are not leading the world in finance and industry, no less in diplomacy, statesmanship and military power because we have learned to rest but, rather, because we have learned to challenge—not because we live off the growth of previous years, the investments of other generations but because we invest and save ourselves. That challenge remains with us tonight, not to accept things as they are but to invest, to educate, to build.

There is a quote that I have through the years always admired from an architect in Chicago, Daniel Burnham, who said in 1909 to his colleagues, "Make no little plans, for they have no magic to stir men's blood and will probably never be realized. Make big plans." Last night, in his State of the Union Address, President Clinton made before the Nation an ambitious agenda.

It is a big plan worthy of a big and a great nation.

I hope and trust in this final year of the 105th Congress our vision will be as big, our action will be as bold as the State of the Union Address this Congress heard last night from President Clinton.

Madam President, with that, if I could, I should like to yield to the Senator from Oregon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. WYDEN. I thank the Chair.

Madam President, by focusing on Social Security reform, educational quality, and strengthening the rights of health care patients, last night's speech zeroed in on the issues that I have been hearing Oregonians talk about during the course of 12 town meetings this month. Certainly a budget surplus, no matter how you count to create that surplus, is not going to bring us into some sort of budget nirvana if it is followed by more years of deficits. And I thought what was especially constructive about last night's speech was it zeroed in on the critical questions of retirement and health care that clearly drive the budget and the deficit for the long-term. The fact is you cannot have long-term budget discipline unless you deal with Social Security and health care, and I think last night we heard a call to arms, to dig in on a bipartisan basis on those key issues.

Now, with respect to Social Security—and I am sure it is the case for all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle—I can report that in my State more young people think that they are going to have a date with an extraterrestrial than think they are going to get a Social Security check. They look at these whopper payroll taxes that they are paying today, more than 6 percent for the worker, more than 6 percent for the employer, millions of Americans paying more in payroll taxes than they pay in income taxes, and they see that essentially their retirement contribution in the past has gone to a great extent to operate the budget.

I think it is fair to say—and there has been a considerable amount of discussion of this in the last few weeks—that the budget surplus in America is to a great extent the Social Security surplus in America. I think last night we learned that the real challenge ahead—the President essentially called for what amounts to a year-long national teach-in on retirement finance in America—is to be straight with people. We are going to have to talk about the tough choices and in particular how we protect the millions of Americans for whom Social Security is a lifeline, vulnerable folks who every month are balancing their food costs against their medical bills and medical bills against their pharmaceutical bills, and the question is, how do we take care of those vulnerable folks and still get

ready for this demographic tsunami—75, 80 million baby boomers that are going to retire early in the next century.

But it seems to me that if we spend the next year working on a bipartisan basis to dig into these issues, look at a variety of different approaches—I am particularly attracted to the idea of trying to stimulate more private saving; I think there are a variety of ways in which that can be done—we will have said on our watch, on our watch, Madam President—and I have enjoyed serving with you on the Senate Committee on Aging—we will be able to say that on our watch we did not duck the tough and difficult questions. And certainly they are just as difficult with respect to health care as they are to retirement finance.

I come from a part of the United States where we have perhaps the highest concentration of managed care in the country. In fact, in my hometown of Portland, more than half of the older people are in HMOs, are in managed care, and the challenge always is, even in a hometown like mine where we have a lot of good managed care, how do you hold the cost down while still protecting the rights of patients in those health plans.

I am of the view that a lot of those folks feel powerless today. Frankly, they feel powerless throughout the health system, whether they are in an HMO or a fee-for-service plan or one of these hybrids that is a little bit of each. And I think that we as a body differ on lots of aspects about health care. Certainly you can differ on the role of the Federal Government, State government, tax policy, and a variety of issues, but I, for the life of me, cannot understand why any of us would not support what we heard last night with respect to patients being told about all their options in the health care system. Disagree all you want about the kind of services that ought to be part of a health plan but let us not disagree on the fundamental right to know what treatment might be available to you and what your options are. The same with the right of appeal, the right to make sure that if you felt you did not get a fair shake from the health care system you would have an opportunity to be heard and you could have another chance to make sure that your claim for services was addressed in a fair way. This issue, the question of protecting the rights of patients in health plans while holding costs down, is the essence of our challenge in health care. Of course you can hold costs down if you don't give people any care. That is a walk in the park. Anybody can do that. That is not the kind of health care system we want. We want one that both holds costs down and protects the quality of health care in our country. We have been able to achieve some of that success in my home State. I am convinced we can do it in every community in Oregon and across the country, but it is going to mean, as we

heard last night, stepping forward, stepping up to the key issues.

Madam President, what I was especially pleased about with respect to last night's speech was the call for bipartisanship. I think that is critical to taking on these key issues such as retirement and health care. Again, in our home State, that's the kind of government that we are trying to practice. I can tell you that my colleague in the U.S. Senate, Senator GORDON SMITH and I, after we ran against each other for the seat to replace Bob Packwood—of all people, we could probably have come here and quarreled about all kinds of issues. We have not wanted to make that part of our service. We wanted to make part of our service tackling these issues on a bipartisan basis, in a way that makes sense for Oregon and our country. That is why, as new members of the Budget Committee, we joined in the last session in terms of Medicare reimbursement reform.

As the Presiding Officer of this body knows, regarding much of the Medicare reimbursement system, since its inception the program has actually rewarded folks for being inefficient and penalized States for holding costs down. Senator SMITH and I thought that was particularly unfair to our constituents, who have done so much heavy lifting to get the health care system back on track. We worked with other Senators, leaders on both sides, and were able to make some very dramatic changes in that reimbursement system. It has an eye-glazing name called the AAPCC, the Average Adjusted Per Capita Costs, but it's the guts of reimbursement. And I am convinced that when, on a bipartisan basis, colleagues can work for those kinds of changes, and we were successful last session, we can certainly rise to the challenge that we were given last night and move ahead with respect to reform as it relates to health maintenance organizations—consumer rights, like the right to full information and the right to appeal.

So I am optimistic, as we go forward in the days ahead to tackle these issues, Madam President. I think we have an opportunity on our watch to say that we did not duck, that we understand that these issues, with respect to retirement and health care financing, are the biggest issues that in the past folks in politics ducked. We cannot afford to do that any longer. I look forward to working on a bipartisan basis with my colleagues on those questions in the days ahead.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota is recognized.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Madam President, I do want to say to my colleague from Wyoming that I shall stay within 10 minutes. He is here on the floor. We have had a chance to speak as Democrats for a while. So I will try and stay relatively brief. When I say 10 minutes I mean by clock time, not by Senate time. So I really will try to do this.

I thank my colleague from Oregon for his fine statement.

Mr. WYDEN. I thank my colleague.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Madam President, I want to talk about the President's speech last night. Let me start out with where I disagree with some of what he had to say, and then let me talk about what I think were some of the sharp differences between Democrats and Republicans. That is not to say I am not interested in bipartisanship, but I think, frankly, if there are differences between the parties that make a difference, and people see a real debate and it is important to their lives, that will be all to the good.

I think the President is dead wrong in what he had to say about welfare reform. I never called it reform because I think that takes for granted the very question in doubt, as to whether or not it is really reform. That there are a million or 2 million or 3 million fewer women and children—those are the welfare recipients on welfare today—than several years ago does not necessarily represent reform. A reduction of the caseload, reduction of people who are receiving assistance, has nothing to do with whether or not you have reduced poverty. It is reform when we have reduced poverty.

I will just say for the record that, as I have had a chance to travel around the community, and a lot of poor communities in our country, there are several things which I found which are very troubling. I do not believe I do any damage to the truth when I say this, and think all Senators need to take note of it. First of all, it is simply true that there are 3- and 4-year-olds at home alone. It is simply true that there were long waiting lists for affordable child care, long before welfare reform, and many of these children are not receiving nurturing, important developmental care at the most critical years of their lives.

This is wrong.

It is also true, as I said the other day, that there are first and second and third graders who, when they go home, there is no parent there. I think it is poignant. I think it is wrong that there are fewer children playing outdoors now because when many of these kids go home they go into a housing project and they are told to go inside, not take any phone calls, not answer the door. That is happening in the United States of America. We need to take note of that.

I think the President is also wrong because we don't know where these mothers are. We don't know what kind of jobs they have. And what is really astounding to me, Madam President, is at the State level we are not collecting the data. I think, as responsible policymakers, since 4 years, 3 years, 2 years from now, depending upon the State, all of these women and children are going to essentially be receiving no assistance, they are going to be cut off from all assistance, don't we need to know whether or not they have reached

economic self-sufficiency? These parents, mainly women—do they have jobs that pay a decent wage? Do they have health care coverage? Can they afford child care? Where are their children? We need to know that. That is where I disagree with the President's analysis. And I will have some amendments almost on the first piece of legislation that comes to the floor of the Senate where I will try to get the Senate to address these problems.

Second, I think we have to do much better in higher education. I was a college teacher for 20 years and I believe that we didn't expand assistance gaining the best bang for the buck. The way of targeting the assistance to those students in most need would have been to dramatically expand the Pell grant program. And if you are going to have tax credits, they have to be refundable. If you don't have tax credits that are refundable and you have a student from a family earning less than \$27,000, \$28,000 a year—which, by the way, is the income profile of many, many community college students—it doesn't do you any good. You have no tax liability. You can't cash flow paying your tuition because you get it too late to pay your tuition, and you are not eligible anyway. So if we are going to talk about making higher education more affordable let's, for gosh sakes, talk about these working families.

That is disagree.

Agreement: I think the President's focus on education, on early childhood development, affordable child care, on health care, was extremely important. Let me make but a couple of points for my Republican colleagues. As I listened to some of my Republican colleagues talk about the President's speech last night, I felt like what they were saying is: Oh, this is just Government all over again. Americans, when it comes to these pressing issues of your lives, there is nothing the Government can or should do.

Madam President, if you own your own large corporation and you are wealthy, then that's fine. But for most of the working families in this country, affordable child care is a huge issue. For most of the working families in this country, making sure that your children get a good education and a commitment to public education and lowering class sizes and having more teachers and having more teaching assistance is hugely important to you. If you are from a working family in our country, you want to make sure, vis-a-vis an increasingly corporatized and bureaucratized health care system—listen, managed care can be good or bad. It depends upon who manages the managed care. But the fact of the matter is, the nine largest insurance companies own and control well over 60 percent of the managed care plans, and for them the bottom line has become the only line.

So of course we want to make sure that people have access to the care

they need. Of course we want to make sure that nurses and doctors can provide that care. Of course we want to make sure there are some independent appeals processes for ordinary people in our country. Of course we want to make sure that there are some basic consumer protections. And I think the President is right on the mark. What I am worried about, it is a challenge to colleagues on both sides of the aisle, is that the Congress will sure enough pass a bill. It will have a great acronym. It will sound great and it will have that made-for-Congress look, because there will not be any teeth in it, enforcement teeth.

By the way, one way in which I would love to amend some of what the President was talking about last night, and I think we could get bipartisan support for this, is we ought to think about—Families USA has talked about ombudsmen, you know, through non-government organizations, through nonprofits, where people would have somewhere to go so they can have basic information about what their rights are as consumers. We absolutely ought to do that. We absolutely ought to do that. It's a simple proposition. Either we are here to represent big insurance companies or we are here to represent doctors, nurses, nurse's assistants, other caregivers, and consumers.

The third point I want to make has to do with jobs. I said it the other day on the floor of the Senate. I will summarize. I will say it again. No matter where I go, whether it be low-income communities, poor communities, middle-income communities, it doesn't matter—and for that matter upper-income communities. People are focused on how to earn a decent living and how to give their children the care they know they need and deserve. I am going, for a moment, to talk about low-income, since we don't talk that much about low-income, poor people. I will tell you that there are two challenges here. One: the President talked about raising the minimum wage. Senator KENNEDY and I have been out on the floor. We talked about the legislation we have introduced, 50 cents a year for 3 years and then indexing it. I will tell you that is extremely important. Because it is wrong when people work full-time, all year round, and they are still poor in America. That should not be the case. When people work, play by the rules of the game, they ought not to be poor.

My second point, however, is different. It doesn't do any good to raise the minimum wage if people live in communities where there is no work at all. We have communities in our country, ghettos and barrios in rural areas, where there is no work. And we really do need to figure out ways of combining our initiatives while at the same time providing some job opportunities for people to build up some skills and then be able to transition to private sector employers. If we are going to rebuild crumbling schools—and we

should, God knows, when students go into schools that are so uninviting, with ceilings falling in. Imagine, could we do our work if the heating didn't work? If the plumbing didn't work? If the air conditioning didn't work during the summer? If we didn't have access to Internet? If we didn't have access to the best books? Could we do our work? A lot of students are going to school in decrepit buildings, unsafe, that tell those students we don't value them.

If we are going to rebuild crumbling schools, invest some money in that infrastructure, I think we ought to also make sure that a certain percentage of the jobs go to the adults, the fathers and mothers of those children who live in these communities. Because these are communities that are ravaged by high levels of unemployment. Let's combine rebuilding the schools with some job training and jobs for some of the parents in the community.

If we are going to reduce class size we can talk about 100,000 more teachers, but there is also a role for teaching assistants that can help a teacher in a classroom. That could provide employment for people who live in these communities without any jobs at all. So I would like to see us have more of a focus in this area. To a certain extent I am talking about people who all too often are faceless and voiceless here, but I think it is extremely important, as a matter of elementary justice, that we focus in this area.

Finally, Madam President—I hope I have stayed within 10 minutes—an issue that you care a great deal about, an issue that I wish all of us would care a great deal about, even if we disagree on the specifics. I do not know what other people find, but I tell you I think an awful lot of people in our country, I am sorry, I think it is well over 50 percent, are just disillusioned and disaffected with politics. It is terrible. I think people think that both parties are owned and controlled by the same investors.

I think that people think that when it comes to their concerns and their hopes about themselves, their families, their communities, their loved ones, these concerns are of little concern to those of us in the Congress. I hate that.

I have two Republican colleagues on the floor with me from Wyoming and from Colorado, both of whom I respect. It does not matter if we disagree on issues, this is one thing we do not want to have happen. I mean, we do not want people to just kind of become so disillusioned that participation becomes less and less. We lose our democracy.

So, Madam President, the final issue the President talked about—I hope we can move some campaign finance reform. We cannot get all the big money out of politics. I wish we could. But if we could at least pass some reforms that would give people some confidence we are serious about trying to get some of the money out of politics and make politics more responsive to the concerns and circumstances of their lives, we would be taking a big step forward.

**MTBE CONTAMINATION OF CALIFORNIA
GROUNDWATER**

This legislation will allow refiners to address the problems that have occurred with the use of MTBE as it has leaked into groundwater supplies.

Such problems were certainly not anticipated during the drafting of these amendments, and therefore only exempts the need for a California exemption to this requirement.

MTBE is a highly soluble organic compound which moves quickly through soil and gravel, therefore posing a more rapid threat to aquifers than the other constituents of gasoline when leaks occur. MTBE is easily traced, but very difficult and expensive to clean up.

Higher quantities of MTBE in drinking water has a smell similar to turpentine and a taste like paint thinner.

Although we do not have all of the data we need to determine the potential damage of MTBE to our water and our health, we do know that it is increasingly a problem for California:

MTBE has been detected in drinking water supplies in a number of cities including Santa Monica, Riverside, Anaheim, Los Angeles and San Francisco;

MTBE has also been detected in numerous California reservoirs including Lake Shasta in Redding, San Pablo and Cherry reservoirs in the Bay Area, and Coyote and Anderson reservoirs in Santa Clara;

The largest contamination occurred in the city of Santa Monica, which lost 75% of its ground water supply as a result of MTBE leaking out of shallow gas tanks beneath the surface;

MTBE has been discovered in publicly owned wells approximately 100 feet from City Council Chamber in South Lake Tahoe;

In Glennville, California, Near Bakersfield, MTBE levels have been detected in groundwater as high as 190,000 parts per billion—dramatically exceeding the California Department of Health advisory of 35 parts per billion; and

250 underground fuel tank sites have leaked MTBE in Santa Clara County not far from water wells used by the residents of San Jose.

In the face of mounting evidence of extensive MTBE contamination in California groundwater, several gasoline manufacturers, including Chevron and Tosco (Union 76), have made it clear they would like to have the flexibility to use only the amount and type of oxygenate necessary to continue to meet the environmental specifications of clean burning gasoline.

Many manufacturers believe that it is possible to meet California's more stringent clean air standards using reduced amounts of, or in some cases, no oxygenate in their gasolines.

In a recent letter to me, Chevron chairman Ken Derr expressed his belief that while he believes MTBE is safe if handled properly, his company is exploring other options. He says:

(Chevron has) taken another look at the extensive body of data that relates to fuel

composition to vehicle emissions and have concluded that it may be possible to make more gasoline without MTBE and still meet California's cleaner burning gasoline standards.

If California refiners can meet the stricter state clean air standard while reducing or eliminating the use of a chemical that is contaminating California water, it makes good sense to give them the flexibility they need to solve the problem.

By amending the Clear Air Act to waive the requirement for oxygenates in California, which already has in place its own stricter standards, this legislation does not detract in any way from the gains in emission reductions mandated in the Clear Air Act. It will simply allow for companies like Chevron to meet Clean Air Act requirements, while maximizing the advantages of increased flexibility in order to respond more efficiently and effectively to any unforeseen problems encountered in the production of California cleaner burning gasoline.

If exempting California from the oxygenate requirement meant weakening the Clear Air Act in any way, I would be the first person to stand up and lead the battle against such an effort.

This bill does not weaken the Clear Air Act, but instead is a step in the right direction, towards sound environmental policy.

This narrowly-targeted legislation simply makes sense. With this bill, California is once again taking the initiative to lead the way in ensuring the protection of the air we breathe, and the water we drink.

By allowing the companies that supply our state's gasoline to utilize good science and sound environmental policy, we can achieve the goals set forth by the Clear Air Act, without sacrificing California's clean water.

In short, when we pass this legislation, we will take another step forward in ensuring that protecting our air quality does not come at the expense of safeguarding our water.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1576

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CALIFORNIA REFORMULATED GASOLINE RULES.

Section 211(c)(4)(B) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7545(c)(4)(B)) is amended by adding at the end the following: "If any such State that has received a waiver under section 209(b)(1) promulgates reformulated gasoline rules for any covered area of the State (as defined in subsection (k)(10)), the rules shall apply in the area in lieu of the requirements of subsection (k) if the State rules will achieve equivalent or greater emission reductions than would result from the application of the requirements of subsection (k) in the case of the aggregate mass of emissions of toxic air pollutants and in the case of the aggregate mass of emissions of ozone-forming compounds."

By Mr. CHAFEE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SPECTER and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 1577. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide additional tax relief to families to increase the affordability of child care, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

THE CARING FOR CHILDREN ACT

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I am pleased today to introduce the Caring for Children Act, legislation to help all families with their child care needs.

I want to thank my colleagues who have worked so hard to put this bill together. Senator HATCH, who was a leader in the development of the child care block grant, and is always a stalwart supporter of children; Senator SNOWE, who has worked on this issue for many years; Senator ROBERTS, who has taken an active interest in this issue; Senator SPECTER, who made an enormous contribution to the development of this bill; and Senator SUSAN COLLINS, who we are very fortunate to have on our child care proposal.

Last night, in his State of the Union Address to the nation, President Clinton issued a challenge to Congress to develop child care legislation in a bipartisan manner with the Administration. Well, that is exactly what we are doing today.

Our proposal is straightforward and far-reaching. It makes the current child care credit more equitable for lower and middle income families. And, for the first time, makes the credit available to families where one parent stays at home to care for the children. That is a critical step and an important change for families across America.

Raising children in today's world is a true challenge. In many families, both parents must work in order to support the family. Often, the child care expenses consume all or most of one parent's income. How often do we hear the refrain, particularly from women, that after they pay for day care, there is little or nothing left of their wages.

Another common complaint is from parents who desperately want to stay home and raise their children themselves—especially in those very critical, early years of childhood—but who simply cannot afford to forego that second income.

The legislation we are introducing today responds to both of these concerns. We believe that parents should make their own decisions about who is going to care for their children. The government and the tax code should not be promoting one choice over another.

By making more of the existing child care tax credit available to lower and middle income families, and making it available also to families where one parent stays at home, we are sending the message that the choice is yours, and we support your choice.

Our bill makes several changes to the existing dependent care tax credit.

First, the maximum credit percentage is increased from 30 percent to 50 percent to provide more benefits to those most in need. Second, the income level at which the maximum credit begins to be reduced is moved from \$10,000 to \$30,000, so that more lower-income families will qualify for the maximum amount of assistance. Third, we propose to completely phase out the credit for wealthier families. Finally, families where one spouse stays at home to care for the children will be eligible for a credit similar to the one they would receive if both parents were working outside the home and the child was in daycare.

We also acknowledge that we cannot solve the entire child care problem through the tax code alone. Many low-income families do not have taxable income, and therefore cannot benefit from a tax credit. The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) provides critical funding to help these lower-income families—and I have been a strong supporter of the program. Recognizing the critical role CCDBG plays in subsidizing daycare for low-income families in the states, our proposal doubles the block grant over a five-year period.

Of course, the problem with child care is not limited to just affordability. Many parents cannot find an available child care slot. Our proposal addresses this issue of accessibility by providing a tax credit to businesses to build or renovate on or near-site child care centers for their employees.

Finally, there is the issue of quality daycare. Parents cannot be productive in the workplace if they are constantly worrying about the health and safety of their children in daycare. We have all read the horrifying stories in the newspapers about daycare facilities that are unsafe or unsanitary, about the poor record of enforcement of standards in many states.

While we acknowledge that the federal government should not be setting standards for daycare providers, we do believe the states should set at least minimum health and safety standards and enforce them rigorously. Our legislation beefs up this enforcement by rewarding states with a good enforcement record and penalizing those with poor records.

I am very proud of this legislation, and proud that this group was able to come together and produce this initiative. Child care is a problem that must be solved, and we are committed to doing that. I look forward to working with the President and my colleagues in the Congress to find workable, affordable solutions for all families.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

H. R. 1577

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Caring for Children Act".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—TAX RELIEF TO INCREASE CHILD CARE AFFORDABILITY

Sec. 101. Expansion of dependent care tax credit.

Sec. 102. Promotion of dependent care assistance programs.

Sec. 103. Allowance of credit for employer expenses for child care assistance.

TITLE II—ENCOURAGING QUALITY CHILD CARE

Subtitle A—Dissemination of Information About Quality Child Care

Sec. 201. Collection and dissemination of information.

Sec. 202. Grants for the development of a child care training infrastructure.

Sec. 203. Authorization of appropriations.

Subtitle B—Increased Enforcement of State Health and Safety Standards

Sec. 211. Enforcement of State health and safety standards.

Subtitle C—Removal of Barriers to Increasing the Supply of Quality Child Care

Sec. 221. Increased authorization of appropriations for the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

Sec. 222. Small business child care grant program.

Sec. 223. GAO report regarding the relationship between legal liability concerns and the availability and affordability of child care.

Subtitle D—Quality Child Care Through Federal Facilities and Programs

Sec. 231. Providing quality child care in Federal facilities.

TITLE I—TAX RELIEF TO INCREASE CHILD CARE AFFORDABILITY

SEC. 101. EXPANSION OF DEPENDENT CARE TAX CREDIT.

(a) PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYMENT-RELATED EXPENSES DETERMINED BY TAXPAYER STATUS.—Section 21(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (defining applicable percentage) is amended to read as follows:

"(2) APPLICABLE PERCENTAGE DEFINED.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the term 'applicable percentage' means 50 percent reduced (but not below zero) by 1 percentage point for each \$1,500, or fraction thereof, by which the taxpayer's adjusted gross income for the taxable year exceeds \$30,000."

(b) MINIMUM CREDIT ALLOWED FOR STAY-AT-HOME PARENTS.—Section 21(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to special rules) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(1) MINIMUM CREDIT ALLOWED FOR STAY-AT-HOME PARENTS.—Notwithstanding subsection (d), in the case of any taxpayer with one or more qualifying individuals described in subsection (b)(1)(A) under the age of 4 at any time during the taxable year, such taxpayer shall be deemed to have employment-related expenses with respect to such qualifying individuals in an amount equal to the greater of—

"(A) the amount of employment-related expenses incurred for such qualifying individuals for the taxable year (determined under this section without regard to this paragraph), or

"(B) \$150 for each month in such taxable year during which such qualifying individual is under the age of 4."

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 1996.

SEC. 102. PROMOTION OF DEPENDENT CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

(a) PROMOTION OF DEPENDENT CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.—The Secretary of Labor shall establish a program to promote awareness of the use of dependent care assistance programs (as described in section 129(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) by employers.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out the program under paragraph (1) \$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002.

SEC. 103. ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT FOR EMPLOYER EXPENSES FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart D of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to business related credits) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 45D. EMPLOYER-PROVIDED CHILD CARE CREDIT.

"(a) ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT.—For purposes of section 38, the employer-provided child care credit determined under this section for the taxable year is an amount equal to 20 percent of the qualified child care expenditures of the taxpayer for such taxable year.

"(b) DOLLAR LIMITATION.—The credit allowable under subsection (a) for any taxable year shall not exceed \$100,000.

"(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

"(1) QUALIFIED CHILD CARE EXPENDITURE.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualified child care expenditure' means any amount paid or incurred—

"(i) to acquire, construct, rehabilitate, or expand property—

"(I) which is to be used as part of a qualified child care facility of the taxpayer,

"(II) with respect to which a deduction for depreciation (or amortization in lieu of depreciation) is allowable, and

"(III) which does not constitute part of the principal residence (within the meaning of section 1034) of the taxpayer or any employee of the taxpayer,

"(ii) for the operating costs of a qualified child care facility of the taxpayer, including costs related to the training of employees,

"(iii) under a contract with a qualified child care facility to provide child care services to employees of the taxpayer, or

"(iv) under a contract to provide child care resource and referral services to employees of the taxpayer.

"(2) EXCLUSION FOR AMOUNTS FUNDED BY GRANTS, ETC.—The term 'qualified child care expenditure' shall not include any amount to the extent such amount is funded by any grant, contract, or otherwise by another person (or any governmental entity).

"(3) QUALIFIED CHILD CARE FACILITY.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualified child care facility' means a facility—

"(i) the principal use of which is to provide child care assistance, and

"(ii) which meets the requirements of all applicable laws and regulations of the State or local government in which it is located, including, but not limited to, the licensing of the facility as a child care facility.

Clause (i) shall not apply to a facility which is the principal residence (within the meaning of section 1034) of the operator of the facility.

"(B) SPECIAL RULES WITH RESPECT TO A TAXPAYER.—A facility shall not be treated as a qualified child care facility with respect to a taxpayer unless—

"(i) enrollment in the facility is open to employees of the taxpayer during the taxable year.

"(ii) the facility is not the principal trade or business of the taxpayer unless at least 30 percent of the enrollees of such facility are dependents of employees of the taxpayer, and

"(iii) the use of such facility (or the eligibility to use such facility) does not discriminate in favor of employees of the taxpayer who are highly compensated employees (within the meaning of section 414(q)).

(d) RECAPTURE OF ACQUISITION AND CONSTRUCTION CREDIT.

"(1) IN GENERAL.—If, as of the close of any taxable year, there is a recapture event with respect to any qualified child care facility of the taxpayer, then the tax of the taxpayer under this chapter for such taxable year shall be increased by an amount equal to the product of—

"(A) the applicable recapture percentage, and

"(B) the aggregate decrease in the credits allowed under section 38 for all prior taxable years which would have resulted if the qualified child care expenditures of the taxpayer described in subsection (c)(1)(A) with respect to such facility had been zero.

(2) APPLICABLE RECAPTURE PERCENTAGE.

"(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this subsection, the applicable recapture percentage shall be determined from the following table:

If the recapture event occurs in:	The applicable recapture percentage is:
Years 1-3	100
Year 4	85
Year 5	70
Year 6	55
Year 7	40
Year 8	25
Years 9 and 10	10
Years 11 and thereafter	0

"(B) YEARS.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), year 1 shall begin on the first day of the taxable year in which the qualified child care facility is placed in service by the taxpayer.

"(3) RECAPTURE EVENT DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'recapture event' means—

"(A) CESSATION OF OPERATION.—The cessation of the operation of the facility as a qualified child care facility.

"(B) CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the disposition of a taxpayer's interest in a qualified child care facility with respect to which the credit described in subsection (a) was allowable.

"(ii) AGREEMENT TO ASSUME RECAPTURE LIABILITY.—Clause (i) shall not apply if the person acquiring such interest in the facility agrees in writing to assume the recapture liability of the person disposing of such interest in effect immediately before such disposition. In the event of such an assumption, the person acquiring the interest in the facility shall be treated as the taxpayer for purposes of assessing any recapture liability (computed as if there had been no change in ownership).

"(4) SPECIAL RULES.—

"(A) TAX BENEFIT RULE.—The tax for the taxable year shall be increased under paragraph (1) only with respect to credits allowed by reason of this section which were used to reduce tax liability. In the case of credits not so used to reduce tax liability, the carryforwards and carrybacks under section 39 shall be appropriately adjusted.

"(B) NO CREDITS AGAINST TAX.—Any increase in tax under this subsection shall not be treated as a tax imposed by this chapter for purposes of determining the amount of

any credit under subpart A, B, or D of this part.

"(C) NO RECAPTURE BY REASON OF CASUALTY LOSS.—The increase in tax under this subsection shall not apply to a cessation of operation of the facility as a qualified child care facility by reason of a casualty loss to the extent such loss is restored by reconstruction or replacement within a reasonable period established by the Secretary.

"(e) SPECIAL RULES.—For purposes of this section—

"(1) AGGREGATION RULES.—All persons which are treated as a single employer under subsections (a) and (b) of section 52 shall be treated as a single taxpayer.

"(2) PASS-THRU IN THE CASE OF ESTATES AND TRUSTS.—Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, rules similar to the rules of subsection (d) of section 52 shall apply.

"(3) ALLOCATION IN THE CASE OF PARTNERSHIPS.—In the case of partnerships, the credit shall be allocated among partners under regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

"(f) NO DOUBLE BENEFIT.—

"(1) REDUCTION IN BASIS.—For purposes of this subtitle—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—If a credit is determined under this section with respect to any property by reason of expenditures described in subsection (c)(1)(A), the basis of such property shall be reduced by the amount of the credit so determined.

"(B) CERTAIN DISPOSITIONS.—If during any taxable year there is a recapture amount determined with respect to any property the basis of which was reduced under subparagraph (A), the basis of such property (immediately before the event resulting in such recapture) shall be increased by an amount equal to such recapture amount. For purposes of the preceding sentence, the term 'recapture amount' means any increase in tax (or adjustment in carrybacks or carryovers) determined under subsection (d).

"(2) OTHER DEDUCTIONS AND CREDITS.—No deduction or credit shall be allowed under any other provision of this chapter with respect to the amount of the credit determined under this section.

"(g) TERMINATION.—This section shall not apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2003.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(1) Section 38(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) by striking out "plus" at the end of paragraph (1),

(B) by striking out the period at the end of paragraph (12), and inserting a comma and "plus", and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(13) the employer-provided child care credit determined under section 45D."

(2) The table of sections for subpart D of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

"Sec. 45D. Employer-provided child care credit."

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 1998.

TITLE II—ENCOURAGING QUALITY CHILD CARE
Subtitle A—Dissemination of Information About Quality Child Care

SEC. 301. COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.

(a) COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, directly or through a contract awarded on a competitive basis to a qualified entity, collect and disseminate—

(1) information concerning health and safety in various child care settings that would assist—

(A) the provision of safe and healthful environments by child care providers, and

(B) the evaluation of child care providers by parents; and

(2) relevant findings in the field of early childhood learning and development.

(b) INFORMATION AND FINDINGS TO BE GENERALLY AVAILABLE.

(1) SECRETARIAL RESPONSIBILITY.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall make the information and findings described in subsection (a) generally available to States, units of local governments, private nonprofit child care organizations (including resource and referral agencies), employers, child care providers, and parents.

(2) DEFINITION OF GENERALLY AVAILABLE.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the term "generally available" means that the information and findings shall be distributed through resources that are used by, and available to, the public, including such resources as brochures, Internet web sites, toll-free telephone information lines, and public and private resource and referral organizations.

SEC. 302. GRANTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CHILD CARE TRAINING INFRASTRUCTURE.

(a) AUTHORITY TO AWARD GRANTS.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall award grants to eligible entities to develop distance learning child care training technology infrastructures and to develop model technology-based training courses for child care providers and child care workers. The Secretary shall, to the maximum extent possible, ensure that grants for the development of distance learning child care training technology infrastructures are awarded in those regions of the United States with the fewest training opportunities for child care providers.

(b) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—To be eligible to receive a grant under subsection (a), an entity shall—

(1) develop the technological and logistical aspects of the infrastructure described in this section and have the capability of implementing and maintaining the infrastructure;

(2) to the maximum extent possible, develop partnerships with secondary schools, institutions of higher education, State and local government agencies, and private child care organizations for the purpose of sharing equipment, technical assistance, and other technological resources, including—

(A) sites from which individuals may access the training;

(B) conversion of standard child care training courses to programs for distance learning; and

(C) ongoing networking among program participants; and

(3) develop a mechanism for participants to—

(A) evaluate the effectiveness of the infrastructure, including the availability and affordability of the infrastructure, and the training offered the infrastructure; and

(B) make recommendations for improvements to the infrastructure.

(c) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a grant under subsection (a), an entity shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require, and that includes—

(1) a description of the partnership organizations through which the distance learning programs will be disseminated and made available;

(2) the capacity of the infrastructure in terms of the number and type of distance learning programs that will be made available;

(3) the expected number of individuals to participate in the distance learning programs; and

(4) such additional information as the Secretary may require.

(d) **LIMITATION ON FEES.**—No entity receiving a grant under this section may collect fees from an individual for participation in a distance learning child care training program funded in whole or in part by this section that exceed the pro rata share of the amount expended by the entity to provide materials for the training program and to develop, implement, and maintain the infrastructure (minus the amount of the grant awarded by this section).

(e) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed as requiring a child care provider to subscribe to or complete a distance learning child care training program made available by this section.

SEC. 203. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subtitle \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 1999 through 2003.

Subtitle B—Increased Enforcement of State Health and Safety Standards
SEC. 211. ENFORCEMENT OF STATE HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS.

(a) **IDENTIFICATION OF STATE INSPECTION RATE.**

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 658E(c)(2)(G) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858(c)(2)(G)) is amended by striking the period and inserting “, and provide the percentage of completed child care provider inspections that were required under State law for each of the 2 preceding fiscal years.”

(2) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by paragraph (1) applies to State plans under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) on and after September 1, 1998.

(b) **INCREASED OR DECREASED ALLOTMENTS.**—Section 659(b) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9859(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “, subject to paragraph (5),” after “shall”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) **INCREASED OR DECREASED ALLOTMENT BASED ON STATE INSPECTION RATE.**—

“(A) **INCREASED ALLOTMENT FOR FISCAL YEARS 1999, 2000, AND 2001.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to clause (iii), for fiscal years 1999, 2000, and 2001, the allotment determined for a State under paragraph (1) for each such fiscal year shall be increased by an amount equal to 10 percent of such allotment for the fiscal year involved with respect to any State.

“(i) that certifies to the Secretary that the State has not reduced the scope of any State child care health or safety standards or requirements that were in effect in calendar year 1996; and

“(ii) that, with respect to the preceding fiscal year, had a percentage of completed child care provider inspections (as required to be reported under section 658E(c)(2)(G)), that equalled or exceeded the target inspection and enforcement percentage specified under clause (ii) for the fiscal year for which the allotment is to be paid.

“(1) **TARGET INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT PERCENTAGE.**—For purposes of clause (i)(ii), the target inspection and enforcement percentage is—

“(I) for fiscal year 1999, 75 percent;
“(II) for fiscal year 2000, 80 percent; and
“(III) for fiscal year 2001, 100 percent.

“(ii) **PRO RATA REDUCTIONS IF INSUFFICIENT APPROPRIATIONS.**—The Secretary shall make pro rata reductions in the percentage increase otherwise required under clause (1) for a State allotment for a fiscal year as necessary so that the aggregate of all the allotments made under this section do not exceed

the amount appropriated for that fiscal year under section 658B.

“(B) **DECREASED ALLOTMENT FOR FISCAL YEARS 2000 AND 2001.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The allotment determined for a State under paragraph (1) for each of fiscal years 2000 and 2001 shall be decreased by an amount equal to 10 percent of such allotment for the fiscal year involved with respect to any State that, with respect to the preceding fiscal year, had a percentage of completed child care provider inspections (as required to be reported under section 658E(c)(2)(G)) that was below the minimum inspection and enforcement percentage specified under clause (1) for the fiscal year for which the allotment is to be paid.

“(ii) **MINIMUM INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT PERCENTAGE.**—For purposes of clause (1), the minimum inspection and enforcement percentage is—

“(I) for fiscal year 2000, 50 percent; and
“(II) for fiscal year 2001, 75 percent.

“(iii) **REQUIREMENT TO EXPEND STATE FUNDS TO REPLACE REDUCTION.**—If the allotment determined for a State for a fiscal year is reduced by reason of clause (1), the State shall, during the immediately succeeding fiscal year, expend additional State funds under the State plan funded under this subchapter by an amount equal to the amount of such reduction.”

Subtitle C—Removal of Barriers to Increasing the Supply of Quality Child Care

SEC. 221. INCREASED AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT.

Section 658B of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858) is amended to read as follows:

***SEC. 658B. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

“There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subchapter—

“(1) for each of fiscal years 1996 through 1998, \$1,000,000,000;

“(2) for fiscal year 1999, \$1,500,000,000;

“(2) for fiscal year 2000, \$1,750,000,000;

“(2) for fiscal year 2001, \$2,000,000,000;

“(2) for fiscal year 2002, \$2,250,000,000; and
“(2) for fiscal year 2003, \$2,500,000,000.”

SEC. 222. SMALL BUSINESS CHILD CARE GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”) shall establish a program to award grants to States to assist States in providing funds to encourage the establishment and operation of employer operated child care programs.

(b) **APPLICATION.**—To be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a State shall prepare and submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including an assurance that the funds required under subsection (e) will be provided.

(c) **AMOUNT OF GRANT.**—The Secretary shall determine the amount of a grant to a State under this section based on the population of the State as compared to the population of all States.

(d) **USE OF FUNDS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—A State shall use amounts provided under a grant awarded under this section to provide assistance to small businesses located in the State to enable the small businesses to establish and operate child care programs. Such assistance may include—

(A) technical assistance in the establishment of a child care program;

(B) assistance for the start up costs related to a child care program;

(C) assistance for the training of child care providers;

(D) scholarships for low-income wage earners;

(E) the provision of services to care for sick children or to provide care to school aged children;

(F) the entering into of contracts with local resource and referral or local health departments;

(G) care for children with disabilities; or

(H) assistance for any other activity determined appropriate by the State.

(2) **APPLICATION.**—To be eligible to receive assistance from a State under this section, a small business shall prepare and submit to the State an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the State may require.

(3) **PREFERENCE.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In providing assistance under this section, a State shall give priority to applicants that desire to form a consortium to provide child care in geographic areas within the State where such care is not generally available or accessible.

(B) **CONSORTIUM.**—For purposes of subparagraph (A), a consortium shall be made up of 2 or more entities which may include businesses, nonprofit agencies or organizations, local governments, or other appropriate entities.

(4) **LIMITATION.**—With respect to grant funds received under this section, a State may not provide in excess of \$100,000 in assistance from such funds to any single applicant.

(e) **MATCHING REQUIREMENT.**—To be eligible to receive a grant under this section a State shall provide assurances to the Secretary that, with respect to the costs to be incurred by an entity receiving assistance in carrying out activities under this section, the entity will make available (directly or through donations from public or private entities) non-Federal contributions to such costs in an amount equal to—

(1) for the first fiscal year in which the entity receives such assistance, not less than 50 percent of such costs (\$1 for each \$1 of assistance provided to the entity under the grant);

(2) for the second fiscal year in which an entity receives such assistance, not less than 66% percent of such costs (\$2 for each \$1 of assistance provided to the entity under the grant); and

(3) for the third fiscal year in which an entity receives such assistance, not less than 75 percent of such costs (\$3 for each \$1 of assistance provided to the entity under the grant).

(f) **REQUIREMENTS OF PROVIDERS.**—To be eligible to receive assistance under a grant awarded under this section a child care provider shall comply with all applicable State and local licensing and regulatory requirements and all applicable health and safety standards in effect in the State.

(g) **ADMINISTRATION.**—

(1) **STATE RESPONSIBILITY.**—A State shall have responsibility for administering the grant awarded under this section and for monitoring entities that receive assistance under such grant.

(2) **AUDITS.**—A State shall require each entity receiving assistance under a grant awarded under this section to conduct an annual audit with respect to the activities of the entity. Such audits shall be submitted to the State.

(3) **MISUSE OF FUNDS.**—

(A) **REPAYMENT.**—If the State determines, through an audit or otherwise, that an entity receiving assistance under a grant awarded under this section has misused the assistance, the State shall notify the Secretary of the misuse. The Secretary, upon such a notification, may seek from such an entity the repayment of an amount equal to the amount of any misused assistance plus interest.

(B) APPEALS PROCESS.—The Secretary shall by regulation provide for an appeals process with respect to repayments under this paragraph.

(b) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) 2-YEAR STUDY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which the Secretary first provides grants under this section, the Secretary shall conduct a study to determine—

(i) the capacity of entities to meet the child care needs of communities within a State;

(ii) the kinds of partnerships that are being formed with respect to child care at the local level; and

(iii) who is using the programs funded under this section and the income levels of such individuals.

(B) REPORT.—Not later than 28 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prepare and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the study conducted in accordance with subparagraph (A).

(2) 4-YEAR STUDY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 4 years after the date on which the Secretary first provides grants under this section, the Secretary shall conduct a study to determine the number of child care facilities funded through entities that received assistance through a grant made under this section that remain in operation and the extent to which such facilities are meeting the child care needs of the individuals served by such facilities.

(B) REPORT.—Not later than 52 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prepare and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the results of the study conducted in accordance with subparagraph (A).

(i) DEFINITION.—As used in this section, the term "small business" means an employer who employed an average of at least 2 but not more than 50 employees on business days during the preceding calendar year.

(j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, \$60,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 1999 through 2001. With respect to the total amount appropriated for such period in accordance with this subsection, not more than \$5,000,000 of that amount may be used for expenditures related to conducting evaluations required under, and the administration of, this section.

(k) TERMINATION OF PROGRAM.—The program established under subsection (a) shall terminate on September 30, 2002.

SEC. 223. CAO REPORT REGARDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEGAL LIABILITY CONCERNS AND THE AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF CHILD CARE.

Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall report to Congress regarding whether and, if so, the extent to which, concerns regarding potential legal liability exposure inhibit the availability and affordability of child care. The report shall include an assessment of whether such concerns prevent—

- (1) employers from establishing on or near-site child care for their employees;
- (2) schools or community centers from allowing their facilities to be used for on-site child care; and
- (3) individuals from providing professional, licensed child care services in their homes.

Subtitle D—Quality Child Care Through Federal Facilities and Programs

SEC. 231. PROVIDING QUALITY CHILD CARE IN FEDERAL FACILITIES.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term "Administrator" means the Administrator of General Services.

(2) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term "Executive agency" has the meaning given the term in section 105 of title 5, United States Code, but does not include the Department of Defense.

(3) EXECUTIVE FACILITY.—The term "executive facility" means a facility that is owned or leased by an Executive agency.

(4) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term "Federal agency" means an Executive agency, a judicial office, or a legislative office.

(5) JUDICIAL FACILITY.—The term "judicial facility" means a facility that is owned or leased by a judicial office.

(6) JUDICIAL OFFICE.—The term "judicial office" means an entity of the judicial branch of the Federal Government.

(7) LEGISLATIVE FACILITY.—The term "legislative facility" means a facility that is owned or leased by a legislative office.

(8) LEGISLATIVE OFFICE.—The term "legislative office" means an entity of the legislative branch of the Federal Government.

(b) EXECUTIVE BRANCH STANDARDS AND ENFORCEMENT.—

(1) STATE AND LOCAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall issue regulations requiring any entity operating a child care center in an executive facility to comply with applicable State and local licensing requirements related to the provision of child care.

(B) COMPLIANCE.—The regulations shall require that, not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act—

(i) the entity shall comply, or make substantial progress (as determined by the Administrator) toward complying, with the requirements; and

(ii) any contract for the operation of such a child care center shall include a condition that the child care be provided in accordance with the requirements.

(2) EVALUATION AND ENFORCEMENT.—The Administrator shall evaluate the compliance of the entities described in paragraph (1) with the regulations issued under that paragraph. The Administrator may conduct the evaluation of such an entity directly, or through an agreement with another Federal agency, other than the Federal agency for which the entity is providing child care. If the Administrator determines, on the basis of such an evaluation, that the entity is not in compliance with the regulations, the Administrator shall notify the Executive agency.

(c) LEGISLATIVE BRANCH STANDARDS AND ENFORCEMENT.—

(1) STATE AND LOCAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS.—The Architect of the Capitol shall issue regulations for entities operating child care centers in legislative facilities, which shall be the same as the regulations issued by the Administrator under subsection (b)(1), except to the extent that the Architect may determine, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulations, that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the requirements and standards described in such paragraphs.

(2) EVALUATION AND ENFORCEMENT.—Subsection (b)(2) shall apply to the Architect of the Capitol, entities operating child care centers in legislative facilities, and legislative offices. For purposes of that application, references in subsection (b)(2) to regulations shall be considered to be references to regulations issued under this subsection.

(d) JUDICIAL BRANCH STANDARDS AND ENFORCEMENT.—

(1) STATE AND LOCAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS.—The Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall issue regulations for entities operating child care centers in judicial facilities, which shall be the same as the regulations issued by the Administrator under subsection (b)(1), except to the extent that the Director may determine, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulations, that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the requirements and standards described in such paragraphs.

(2) EVALUATION AND ENFORCEMENT.—Subsection (b)(2) shall apply to the Director described in paragraph (1), entities operating child care centers in judicial facilities, and judicial offices. For purposes of that application, references in subsection (b)(2) to regulations shall be considered to be references to regulations issued under this subsection.

(e) APPLICATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, if 3 or more child care centers are operated in facilities owned or leased by a Federal agency, the head of the Federal agency may carry out the responsibilities assigned to the Administrator under subsection (b)(2), the Architect of the Capitol under subsection (c)(2), or the Director described in subsection (d)(2) under such subsection, as appropriate.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to join my colleagues in introducing the "Caring for Children Act," which will ease the financial burden of child care for American families—for those parents who work, and for those who choose to stay home to raise their children for a period of time. The sponsors of this legislation recognize the importance of affordable quality child care to the successful development of our children.

Our bill would expand the Dependent Care tax credit to make it more accessible to families who need it, double the authorization for the Child Care Development Block Grant, and provide grants to small businesses to create or enhance child care facilities for their employees. This bill also includes provisions from the proposal I introduced last year with my colleague, Congressman Jon Fox, "The Affordable Child Care Act," which provides a tax credit for employers who provide on-site or site-adjacent child care to their employees in order to reduce the child care expenses of the employee.

Not all families choose the same option for child care. Many families rely on relatives, centers operated by churches and other religious organizations, centers at or near their workplace, or make other arrangements to provide care for their children while they work. In light of the diverse needs for child care in America, this bill represents a good start toward expanding the choices for American parents. And, any such legislation must recognize that there is a need to provide some relief to families where one parent stays at home.

The need for affordable and accessible day care is critical given the increasing numbers of working parents and dual-income families in the United States. According to the Bureau of the Census, in 1975, 31 percent of married

mothers with a child younger than age one participated in the labor force. By 1995, that figure had risen to 59 percent. Almost 64 percent of married mothers and 53 percent of single mothers with children younger than age six participated in the labor force in 1995.

The cost of child care for families is also significant. Licensed day care centers in some urban areas cost as much as \$200 per week, and the disparity in costs and availability of child care between urban and rural grows greater every day. For families which need or choose to have both parents work outside the home, the burden of making child care decisions is great. These figures serve to underscore the need for action on the part of the Federal government to provide the necessary assistance to our nation's working families.

As Chairman of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee, I am pleased that this legislation would build on an existing federal child care program by authorizing an additional \$5 billion over five years to the Child Care Development Block Grant program, bringing total spending for this program to \$2.5 billion annually by FY2002. The CCDBG program which works well in assisting low-income families acquire child care and helped over 93,000 Pennsylvania families last year. By increasing the authorization, we can help even more families without creating a new entitlement program.

Our legislation will also require States to create and enforce safety and health standards in child care facilities, and provide money for the Department of Health and Human Services to disseminate information to parents and providers about quality child care, through brochures, toll-free hotlines, the Internet, and other technological assistance.

The "Caring for Children Act" complements my recent efforts to assist working families in the context of welfare reform and children's health insurance. When Congress debated welfare reform in 1995 and 1996, I worked to ensure that adequate funds were provided for child care, a critical component for welfare mothers who would be required to work to receive new limited welfare benefits. I am pleased that the welfare reform bill that became law provides \$20 billion in child care funding over a six year period. Similarly, I was pleased to participate in the bipartisan effort in 1997 to enact legislation to provide \$24 billion over the next five years for States to establish or broaden children's health insurance programs.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I believe that it is critical that the 105th Congress not adjourn without enacting legislation to assist families in their ability to afford safe, quality child care for their children, either at home with a parent or another arrangement. Our legislation will provide peace of mind to millions of American families strug-

gling to balance career and child raising. I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this important legislation, and I urge its swift adoption.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, eight years ago, Congress passed and President Bush signed the landmark Child Care and Development Block Grant Act. I was proud to have helped lead the effort, and I am proud of what our states have been able to accomplish since its implementation.

But, it is also clear that we must do more to help families. In my home state of Utah, more than half of the children under age 6 have either their only parent or both parents in the workforce.

The "Child Care Connection," a four-county resource and referral program, reported last year that there were five major Salt Lake area zip codes that had zero openings for infants.

Utah child care officials have reported that there are too few slots generally for infants and toddlers and for special needs children.

It is my pleasure to be here today with Senators CHAFFEE, SNOWE, ROBERTS, and SPECTER, each of whom has a long track record of involvement in child care issues. We believe that we have developed a comprehensive, yet realistic, child care proposal that will augment the ability of the child care block grant to serve families in each state.

Of particular note, this proposal recognizes the choice that many families make to have one parent remain at home as primary caregiver. As important as it is to assist low- and middle-income families with necessary out-of-home child care expenses—and our proposal will increase the Dependent Care Tax Credit for such families—it is also important for us to realize the value of a parent in the home and that the sacrifice of a second income is also a child care expense.

Additionally, our proposal will not create major new programs in need of permanent funding. We do not intend to spend federal dollars on bigger bureaucracy in the name of expanding child care. We want available resources to be put directly in the hands of parents through tax credits and in the hands of states to address specific gaps in availability and enforcement of health and safety standards.

Our bill takes a very balanced approach to the issues of affordability, availability, and quality.

Child care costs, of course, are a significant part of a family budget. The average cost of child care has been estimated at over \$4000 per child. This is a substantial increase from the \$3000 average it was when we enacted the Child Care and Development Block Grant eight years ago. Clearly, low- and middle-income taxpayers devote a larger share of their earnings to child care.

And, at a time when we are trying to move families off of public assistance and into employment, child care has to be a key element of transitional support.

Our bill increases the Dependent Care Tax Credit (DCTC) for working parents. Our bill raises the maximum credit from 30 percent to 50 percent. And, it raises the maximum income level for the maximum credit from \$10,000 to \$30,000. No change is made in the maximum allowable expenses of \$2400 for one child and \$4800 for two or more children.

Thus, a family in St. George, Utah, earning \$30,000, with two children, would receive a tax credit of \$2400. Under current law, this family's credit would be \$960.

Both our bill and the proposal made by the Clinton administration begin to gradually reduce the percentage of the credit at \$30,000, but the "Caring for Children Act" reduces the credit at a slower rate. Thus, families earning between \$30,000 and \$75,000 will receive a bigger tax benefit than under either President Clinton's proposal or current law.

We can afford to provide larger benefits for this income group because we have recommended a phase-out of the credit entirely for families with incomes of \$105,000 or more. Under current law, there is no income limit for eligibility for the DCTC. This is one tax credit that wealthy taxpayers do not need.

But, our bill, the "Caring for Children Act," goes one step further. The bill I have developed along with Senators CHAFFEE, SNOWE, ROBERTS, and SPECTER would, for the first time, recognize child care provided by a parent.

Our bill would extend eligibility for the Dependent Care Tax Credit to families with young children in which one parent remains at home as caregiver. How would this work? The bill would impute monthly child care expenses of \$150 to families with children age 3 and under. For example, a family in Morgan, Utah, earning \$30,000 a year and having one or more children under age 3, would receive a \$900 tax credit. It works this way: 50% credit × \$150 monthly imputed expenses × 12 months = \$900.

I would like to see this tax break be even more generous. I will work toward that end. But, given our budget realities, this ground-breaking extension of the DCTC is feasible. And, I believe it is an essential component of the "Caring for Children Act."

It is high time we recognize the value of stay-at-home parents. This tax credit in no way offsets their work or their monetary sacrifices; but it does, at last, give a mother or father in the home standing in our tax code. It transforms the Dependent Care Tax Credit from an employment-based credit to a child-based credit.

These two changes to the DCTC will put money—their own money I might add—back into the pockets of America's families.

The "Caring for Children Act" also deals with the issue of availability. As I mentioned, there are areas where child care—particularly infant care,

after school care, or care for special needs children—is tough to find. The substantial increase we are recommending for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) will provide states with the ability to address shortages as well as to increase support to low-income families.

President Clinton has recommended solving the availability problem by creating two new programs, one for after school care and one geared to early childhood. While I can appreciate the President's concern that there may be few choices out there for parents who depend on out-of-home care, I do not believe it makes sense to create new programs when the CCDBG already permits such programs. I think the answer is not to second guess how the states have chosen to allocate their scarce resources under the block grant, but rather to give the states some additional resources so that they can better meet their own priorities.

We are proposing a \$5 billion increase in the CCDBG over five years. These additional resources will give states much more flexibility in their planning. States will be able to provide subsidies for a greater number of the eligible population; they will be able to finance child care programs in underserved areas of the state; they will be able to address particular shortages. And, they will be able to better enforce critical health and safety standards.

I am a firm believer that states should be able to set their own rules and regulations for child care providers. I do not believe that the federal government can or should interfere with child care affordability in our various states by setting national standards that are unrealistic. Moreover, to the extent that child care standards reflect the values as well as the economic conditions of any given state, the federal government has no business micromanaging them.

But, I also believe that states that participate in the block grant program—and that would be all of them—have an obligation to ensure that children are in safe and healthy environments. And, they have an obligation to see that such standards are adequately enforced. A sanitary standard is no standard at all if it is unenforced.

It may not matter where you have your car washed, but it absolutely matters who is taking care of your child.

Therefore, the "Caring for Children Act" puts some teeth into the requirement for inspections under the block grant. A state that inspects a threshold number of facilities subject to inspection will be eligible for a 10 percent bonus. After the second year, a state failing to inspect a minimum number of child care sites will be subject to a 10 percent penalty.

Additionally, our bill authorizes \$50 million a year for HHS to undertake two important quality enhancing activities. First, more information about child care can be made available to parents. Consumer information about

automobiles, credit cards, and well-baby care are available. I believe parents would welcome more information on what to look for in a child care center or family-based care setting. I also believe that parents are the best form of accountability in child care. Second, to assist providers and child care workers enhance the quality of their services, the bill would enable HHS to award grants for the development of a technology infrastructure for distance learning.

Many child care providers are in rural areas. Traditional training in the form of workshops and college classes are not practical. Programs for child care providers that could be developed and made available through distance learning, however, could prove a viable alternative as well as a valued help. My home state of Utah, I might add, has been a leader in the distance learning arena. I have no doubt that such a format would be eagerly received in my state.

The "Caring for Children Act" contains several other provisions of interest. In order to test the effectiveness of small business consortia as employer-based child care providers, the bill authorizes \$60 million over three years for demonstration grants.

To increase the awareness of the existing Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP), a tax provision that permits employees to authorize their employers to withhold up to \$5000 of the employee's salary in a DCAP account for child care expenses to be paid by the employer, the "Caring for Children Act" authorizes \$1 million a year for the next five years to the Secretary of Labor to conduct outreach to both employers and employees about this program and its benefits.

Finally, the bill would require that child care facilities located in federal buildings for federal employees be held to the same quality standards that apply to child care programs in the state in which the federal facility is located.

I believe the measure we have introduced is a balanced approach. It does not depend entirely on the tax code to address child care issues, nor does it depend solely on federal spending.

It does not concentrate benefits on only one income group. The DCTC expansion is geared particularly to assist the middle class. The increase in the CCDBG is targeted to subsidies for low-income families.

It recognizes that we have to make an investment in our children, but it does not propose new federal mandatory spending programs that can become wildly expensive.

Our bill gives careful attention to each of the three cornerstones of child care: affordability, availability, and quality.

And, for the first time, federal child care legislation will not ignore those families who choose to forego one income to have a parent remain at home.

I want to say again that I am proud to sponsor this bill with my colleagues,

Senators CHAFEE, SNOWE, ROBERTS, and SPECTER. I urge other senators to join us in this legislation.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I am pleased and honored to join with my colleagues to introduce legislation to help meet the child care challenges facing families around the nation. Our bill is entitled the "Caring for Children Act."

Child care, in the home when possible and outside the home when both parents work, goes right to the heart of keeping families strong. Unfortunately, finding quality, affordable child care is one of the most pressing problems for families in Kansas and around the country.

The "Caring for Children Act" takes the first steps to address this challenge through a responsible approach. This legislation expands child care opportunities without expanded government costs or intrusion in our lives. This legislation builds into the existing network without adding more government intervention or mandates. This legislation will help families that have two working parents and families that have a stay-at-home parent. This legislation will help to increase the supply of quality of child care.

First, in order to provide additional tax relief and increase affordability of child care, we expand the Dependent Care Tax Credit (DCTC) by raising the income level to \$30,000 at which families become eligible for the maximum tax credit. We also raise the maximum percentage of child care expenses that parents can deduct to 50 percent. These changes make the DCTC more realistic for families that face increasing child care costs.

Increasing the income level and the percentage of child care expenses that are deductible will help families where both parents work. But, we also recognize that families who choose to have one parent remain at home have child care expenses as well. Therefore, we extend eligibility for the DCTC to families with a stay-at-home parent. This provides greater options to more families and leaves child care choices where they should be—with the family. In order to target this credit to parents who need it the most and meet our fiscal responsibilities, the credit is phased out for higher income wage earners.

Small businesses play a critical role in providing child care options to millions of working parents. Unfortunately, small businesses generally do not have the resources required to start up and support a child care center. The "Caring for Children Act" includes a short-term, flexible grant program to encourage small businesses to work together to provide child care services for employees. This program is more of a demonstration project that will sunset at the end of three years. In the meantime, small businesses will be eligible for grants up to \$100,000 for start-up costs, training, scholarships, or other related activities. Businesses

must continue to meet state quality and health standards. Businesses will be required to match federal funds to encourage self-sustaining facilities well into the future.

"Caring for Children" also includes provisions to provide a tax credit of expenses up to \$500,000 for employers who choose to construct, renovate, or operate on- or near-site child care facilities for their employees. And, "Caring for Children" includes funding to promote greater availability of the Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP) for families with children. This will allow the Department of Labor to conduct outreach to businesses to promote awareness of the DCAP program.

All children deserve quality care. Although all states have health and safety standards in place, many times these regulations are not enforced. "Caring for Children" includes incentives for states to improve their inspection efforts and ensure that facilities are in compliance with their own state standards. The bill also authorizes funding for the Department of Health and Human Services to get more information in the hands of parents and help child care providers access child care training programs.

Finally, we authorize additional funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant. This program sends federal assistance to states, permitting them to allocate resources where they are most needed in the state. We maintain maximum flexibility and allow states to make decisions about how to address their own child care challenges.

Child care is an issue that impacts each and every one of us. While parents continue to struggle to meet the constant demand of work and family, we must continue to do our part to expand child care options and protect our nation's most valuable resource, our children. I look forward to working with all of my colleagues in this important effort.

Ms. SNOWE. Thank you, Mr. President, I am pleased to join with my colleagues, Senators HATCH, ROBERTS, SPENCER, and CHAFES to introduce a bill that I believe is an historic opportunity to help ensure the well-being of our children and by extension the very well-being of our nation: the Caring for Children Act.

I come before you as a veteran on child care issues who has worked to address child care throughout my political life, and was the lead Republican cosponsor on the Act for Better Child Care in 1989—the bill which set the stage for the bipartisan package that was adopted by the 101st Congress. Since that time we have advanced the ball in profound ways that reflect the changing nature of the American family, but our work must never cease when it comes to our children. We must build on our laurels, not rest on them; and that is precisely what this bill does.

Consider the challenge: In California alone in 1997, 500,000 children were al-

ready on waiting lists for federal child care in—half a million! Now, it is estimated that, as welfare reform proceeds, some 2 million parents across America will join the workforce and their children will require child care. A GAO report from May of last year determined that in Chicago, for example, the known supply of child care would only meet 14 percent of the need for infant child care in the first year of welfare reform implementation. And within three years, 3 out of 4 American women with children under 5 will be working and in need of child care.

With the perspective of years spent on this issue, I have come to the conclusion that what American parents need most are choices. The decision of how to care for a young child is a deeply personal and difficult one. Many feel handcuffed by economic concerns, others worry about the safety of child care, but all face different circumstances that make the decision making process unique.

Given the tremendous challenges of raising children today, and the extraordinary range of issues facing families, I believe the federal government should not be in the business of encouraging one choice over another. Instead the government's role must be to ensure that families have viable options and that the basis for decisions is the best interests of the child. If we are to care about children we must care about choices, and not politicize the issue with partisanship or ideology.

That is the spirit in which we crafted our bill. Because it is not about pitting one group against another. It is not about starting a "mommy war". It is about helping parents do the best they can for their children—no matter what choice they make.

The reality is that, despite our best efforts to date to make quality, affordable child care accessible, the myriad pressures facing American families today still imperil their ability to provide the best possible care for their children. In my home state of Maine, one out of every five Mainers are working multiple jobs. Across the country, 63 percent of women with children under age six are in the workforce, and as a result, over 12 million children are cared for by someone other than a parent during working hours. In Maine, there are 42,000 women in the labor force with children under 6, and 64,000 with children between the ages of 6 and 17.

At the same time, child care costs can range from \$4,000 to \$9,000 annually—with families earning less than \$14,000 per year paying more than one quarter of their income in child support. As a result, families are often forced to make a choice between two unacceptable options: find care for their children that may not be safe or appropriate, or stay home and hope that they can somehow still put food on the table.

Our bill respects parents' decisions and expands the choices available in a

number of innovative ways. By expanding the Dependent Care Tax Credit, we make it more affordable for parents to choose quality child care, but we also leave the door open for a parent to stay at home with their child. And we target our tax benefits to those who need them most: working American families.

For two-working parent families with child care expenses, we raise the income level at which parents can take the maximum credit from \$10,000 to \$30,000, allowing more parents to take advantage of the maximum tax credit. In addition, we raise the percentage of child care expenses that parents can put toward their credit to 50% (up from 40%, under current law) of expenses up to \$2400 for one child, or \$4800 for two or more children. The credit will phase down 1% for every \$1500 of income above \$30,000, phasing out completely for families earning over \$105,000 per year. Under this new scheme, the maximum tax credit will be \$1200 for one child (up from \$720), or \$2400 for two or more children (up from \$480).

For the first time, parents who forgo an income to stay at home to take care of a child between the ages of 0-3 will be able to take advantage of the Dependent Care Tax Credit. By attributing child care expenses to stay at home parents of \$150 per month, they will be eligible for a maximum tax credit of up to \$900 per year, depending on their income. Applying the tax credit to parents who wish to stay home for children ages 0-3 acknowledges that parents of infants and toddlers often face the toughest decisions between working or staying at home, particularly in light of recent research in the area of early childhood development which demonstrates that care from one or two consistent, loving and stimulating caregivers during these earliest years is crucial to brain development.

The Caring for Children Act will also help defray the considerable costs of child care for low-income families by doubling funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant, to the tune of \$5 billion. This will create more child care slots for low-income families and double the amount of money devoted to improving quality, again leaving more options for parents.

And we also address the issue safety, because parents are still rightfully concerned about safety. According to a US News and World Report article last August, a query of all 50 states and the District of Columbia revealed that 76 children died in day care in 1996. The causes included drownings, falls, and being struck by automobiles. And these numbers are low because, shockingly, some states do not even track day care deaths. In terms of oversight, the US News report revealed that in Virginia, for example, the state had failed to make mandatory twice-a-year inspections of 722 of its 4,200 licensed facilities in 1996; 156 centers were not visited even once.

No parents should have to fear for their child's safety—no parent should

ever get that dreaded call that their child was hurt at day care. Bringing a young child to day care in the morning should not be an act of faith—it should be an act of confidence. While states have the responsibility to set health and safety standards, states need to be held accountable for enforcing these standards by adhering to the inspection-schedule that they establish under state law. Accordingly, our bill provides a 10 percent bonus in CCDBG funding to states that meet targeted inspection rates, while penalizing those by 10 percent that don't meet their existing responsibility to ensure health and safety. This gives our bill "teeth" to ensure that child care is safe and children are protected.

Finally, we encourage more American businesses to become partners in child care by offering then tax credits for child care operation, construction and renovation expenses up to \$500,000. And recognizing that it is not always feasible for small businesses to assist with child care, we offer grants to small employers to provide such care. Businesses already have an incentive to provide child care in that parents who are confident in their child care arrangements are more reliable, productive workers. These initiatives will not only create more slots and make child care more affordable for parents and businesses alike, but it will help literally bring care closer to more parents.

In closing, let me emphasize that this bill is an investment in our nation's future. It is a statement by the federal government that there can be no greater cause—no more noble a purpose than providing for our children. How a nation raises its youth and the value it places on giving children a chance to grow up safe, happy, and healthy speaks volumes to its greatness. This legislation won't make decisions easier for parents but it will ensure that they have a full range of options available to them as they seek to do the very best they can for their children. That's why I'm proud to be here today and that's why I will work hard to ensure the passage of the Caring for Children Act. Thank you.

By Mr. McCAIN (for himself, Mr. COATS, Mr. FAIRCLOTH and Mr. ASHCROFT):

S. 1578. A bill to make available on the Internet, for purposes of access and retrieval by the public, certain information available through the Congressional Research Service web site; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE
LEGISLATION

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I would like to introduce a bill that will make Congressional Research Service Reports, Issue Briefs, and Authorization and Appropriations products available on a web site to the American people. Senator COATS, Senator FAIRCLOTH, and Senator ASHCROFT are original co-

sponsors to this bill. Additionally, Representative SHAYS will be introducing a companion bill over in the House.

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) has a well-known reputation for producing high-quality reports and issue briefs that are unbiased, concise, and accurate. Many of us have used these CRS products to make decisions on a wide variety of legislative proposals and issues, including Amtrak, the Endangered Species Act, the Line Item Veto, and U.S. policy in Zambia. Also, we routinely issue these products to our constituents in order to help them understand the important issues of our time.

This fiscal year, the American taxpayer will pay \$64.6 million to fund the Congressional Research Service, Newspapers, such as the San Jose Mercury News and the Austin American-Statesman, and watchdog groups, such as the Congressional Accountability Project, have recently asked the Congress to allow the public access to CRS resources. The American people have paid for these valuable resources and have a right to see that their money is being well spent.

Congress can also serve two important functions by allowing public access to this information. First, public access to these CRS products will mark an important milestone in opening up the federal government. Our constituents will be able to see the research documents which influenced our decisions and understand the trade-offs and factors that we consider before a vote. This will give the public a more accurate view of the Congressional decision-making process to counter the prevailing cynical view of Members of Congress selling their votes to the highest campaign contributor.

Also, these CRS reports will serve an important role in informing the public. Members of the public will be able to read these CRS products and receive a concise, accurate summary of the issues that concern them. As elected representatives, we should do what we can to promote an informed, educated public. The educated voter is best able to make decisions and petition us to do the right things here.

The Internet provides an ideal way to inform the public while not distracting CRS from its primary mission to serve Congress. The Director of CRS can simply post CRS products on a web site, and then voters can look up information without any extra effort by CRS researchers. The public will not be allowed to write responses or research requests to CRS, so that valuable CRS time will not be diverted from helping us to do our jobs. Confidential requests by Members of Congress will not be released to the public. It is my intent that CRS establish a separate web site that will serve the public without otherwise causing CRS to do anything drastically different from its current operations when it posts CRS products on the web site accessible to Members of Congress.

I recognize that there have been a few questions about this bill. There are concerns disseminating CRS material via the Internet will remove its protection under the Speech and Debate Clause. At present, no court case has directly addressed this issue. However, the Supreme Court acknowledged in its concurrence to *Doe versus McMillan* that a legislator's function in informing the public concerning matters before Congress should be protected by the Speech and Debate Clause, similar to communications which relate directly to the legislative process. Furthermore, my bill gives the CRS Director discretion to not release material that he determines is confidential. This aspect of my bill has been upheld in similar circumstances where the U.S. District Court maintained the confidentiality of the underlying research used to create reports by Congressional support agencies. I am including in the RECORD a letter by Mr. Stanley M. Brand, a former General Counsel to the House of Representatives, who agrees that my legislation will not threaten CRS' protection under the Speech and Debate Clause.

I am also aware of potential copyright concerns if the CRS information is made accessible to the public. For example, CRS has informed me that it does not have a copyright agreement that will allow it to make the maps used in CRS products available electronically. I believe we can work out an equitable solution to resolve any copyright concerns that would prevent any CRS Report, Issue Brief, or Authorization or Appropriations product from being electronically disseminated to the public.

Another concern has been raised about the 30 day delay between the release of CRS material to Members of Congress and their staff and its release to the public on the web site. This delay will make sure that CRS has carried out its primary statutory duty of informing Congress before releasing information to the public. Also, it will allow CRS to verify that its products are accurate and prepare them for public release in order to protect CRS from liability problems and the American people from being misinformed.

I would like to stress that opening up these select CRS products to the public will in no way compete with existing commercial information services. The public will have access to selected CRS products that are currently available only to Members of Congress and their staff. I firmly believe that the federal government should not be involved in competing with legitimate private industry.

This bill has received popular support from across the country, and I am including in the RECORD a letter of support from many concerned industries and groups including America On-Line, IBM, Public Citizen, and the League of Women Voters of the United States. I hope that my colleagues will join them

the nation. Along with her late husband John de Menil, who died in 1973, Dominique de Menil left indelible marks on the world of art and the cause of civil rights.

Dominique de Menil was born in Paris on March 23, 1908. Heiress to the Schlumberger Ltd. oil field service company fortune, she made Houston her home for more than 50 years and became its leading arts patron and benefactor. Mrs. de Menil received her bachelor of arts degree from the Sorbonne in 1927. At twenty-three she married Jean de Menil, a young baron from a French military family. In the early 1940s, they came to America with the expansion of Schlumberger and settled in Houston. They became American citizens in 1962.

In 1954, declaring that "art embodies the highest aspirations of humankind," the de Menils established the Menil Foundation to foster knowledge and understanding in the fields of art, architecture and philosophy. Its primary focus has been the visual arts. In addition, Mr. and Mrs. de Menil were among the founders of Houston's Contemporary Arts Museum and responsible for nurturing it during its infancy.

Mrs. de Menil and her late husband were internationally known for establishing Houston's Rothko Chapel in 1971. Mrs. de Menil called the Rothko Chapel, which houses an ensemble of large paintings by the abstract artist Mark Rothko that were commissioned for the chapel, a place "dedicated to meditation and peace." The chapel is ecumenical, open to all religions, belonging to none. Outside the chapel is a reflection pool with Broken Obelisk, a Barnett Newman sculpture dedicated to the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose civil-rights work was close to the heart of Mrs. de Menil. She hosted many distinguished visitors for special programs, including Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, Tibet's Dalai Lama, and South African President Nelson Mandela.

A sense of the suffering and indignities heaped on humankind was of great concern to Mrs. de Menil. She founded the Rothko Chapel Awards, \$10,000 prizes presented annually to five recipients, often little-known individuals, who battled for human rights. She also joined with former President Carter to establish the Carter-Menil Human Rights Prize of \$100,000, awarded every other year in Houston or Atlanta. Mrs. de Menil also worked closely with the late Congressman Mickey Leland to further civil and human rights around the world.

After John de Menil died, Dominique de Menil continued the couple's projects, and she masterminded a large, many-pronged program in the art and human rights. In 1987, the Menil Collection museum in Houston opened to the public. Designed by architect Renzo Piano, it houses one of the greatest privately assembled collections in the world, numbering more than 15,000 works of art. Museums in New York and Paris wooed Mrs. de Menil in hopes of acquiring the collection. But Mrs. de Menil was determined to keep the collection in her adopted home of Houston.

In 1995, she presided over the opening of another building, also designed by Renzo Piano. The Cy Twombly Gallery houses a collection of sculptures and paintings by the prominent American artist. In 1997, she presided over opening the Byzantine Fresco Chapel, designed by her son Francois de Menil, containing two 13th-century Byzantine frescos from Cyprus.

Mrs. de Menil also played a pivotal role at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston. She gave generously to foster the arts at Rice University and the University of St. Thomas. She and her husband brought a young architect named Philip Johnson to Houston to design the modern campus at the University of St. Thomas. Mr. Johnson, of course, went on to establish himself as one of the nation's premier modern architects. In 1969, she and her husband established the Institute for the Arts at Rice. She had a great appreciation for the place of art in a strong community and worked to ensure that Houstonians from all walks of life could enjoy our city's many artistic and cultural treasures.

Whatever she did, Mrs. de Menil's intelligence, enthusiasm, and integrity served her and all those she encountered well. She brought a tireless energy, an unflagging drive and a passionate caring to each of her causes. Mrs. de Menil will be remembered for these qualities and her dedication to making the world a better place.

Mr. Speaker, Dominique de Menil was one of a kind. She was a person of strong opinions who cared greatly for justice and the welfare of others. She will be greatly missed but never forgotten by Houstonians, the many people throughout the world with whom she worked, and countless others who care about art and human rights. We are all infinitely richer for her legacy and were blessed with her wisdom, compassion, and dignity. As she intended, the artistic and humanitarian causes she championed will remain as her legacy.

CHILD CARE

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, December 3, 1997, into the Congressional Record.

CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

Finding high-quality, affordable child care is a common challenge for working parents, with profound consequences for the emotional and cognitive development of children, the workplace, and welfare reform. To choose where your children will be for long hours is to choose the people and the environment that will help shape them.

I find Hoosiers ambivalent about child care. Many accept that working mothers are a reality and want greater investments in improving the quality of child care. Others believe mothers should stay at home with their small children, or at least not be encouraged by government subsidies to leave their children in the care of others.

Child care has become an increasingly urgent issue for a number of reasons. First, 62% of women with young children work outside the home. Today, an estimated 13 million children under the age of 6 spend some or all of their day in child care. The effort to push welfare recipients into the workforce also adds to the demand for child care, since most of them are single women with young children. Second, recent research has indicated that the stimulation and attention children receive from infancy until the age of 3 has a critical impact on their ability to learn and grow throughout the rest of their lives. Third, child care is expensive: on aver-

age, \$3,800 per year for each pre-school age child. Employers, meanwhile, lose an estimated \$3 billion each year due to child-care related absences by workers. For low-income working parents, child care is a perpetual emergency.

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

The federal government has a few programs aimed at making child care better and more affordable: child care subsidies for low-income families and those receiving welfare benefits; a modest income tax credit for a portion of child care expenses; a tax exclusion for employer-provided child care benefits; low-cost, nutritious meals and snacks for poor children in child care; and Head Start, a part-day pre-school program for disadvantaged youngsters. These programs will cost the federal government about \$12 billion in 1997.

KEY ISSUES

Recently, President and Mrs. Clinton hosted a conference at the White House which focused on the three key child care issues:

Availability

The availability of care varies widely. Care is sometimes scarce for babies because of the lower child-to-adult ratio they require. Options are also limited for school age children; in Indiana, only 37% of public schools offer extended day programs.

Affordability

The expense of child care can place great strains on the family budget. The 1996 welfare reform law increased federal child care funding by \$4 billion over six years, yet only one in ten eligible families receives subsidies. Many communities have hundreds of parents on waiting lists for assistance. Low-income working parents are competing with welfare recipients moving into the workforce for limited child care funds. Some large employers have stepped up efforts to help employees meet their child care needs by building on-site child care centers, providing referrals, or giving employees pre-tax cash assistance, but only 4% of American workers are eligible.

Quality

Although there are many excellent child care facilities, too much of the child care in this country is unsafe at worst, mediocre at best. States are primarily responsible for regulating the health and safety of child care settings, and requirements vary widely. A 1995 study indicated that one in eight child care centers provided care that could actually jeopardize children's safety and development.

But it's not enough just to keep children safe. Because of the importance of early childhood experiences on later learning, child care needs to provide age-appropriate activities, a low child-to-adult ratio, and lots of attention from stable, nurturing adults who understand child development. Yet this is lacking in up to 6 out of every 7 child care centers by one estimate. One problem is that turnover among child care workers is about 50% annually, primarily due to low wages. The average salary for a worker in a child care center is just over \$12,000 per year—considerably less than the average bartender earns. With such low wages it is difficult to attract highly skilled and experienced individuals. Moreover, most states, including Indiana, do not require child care workers to have any training prior to beginning their jobs. But increasing wages for child care workers will drive up costs, making child care even less affordable.

SOLUTIONS

The question for government is what it can do to make the child care situation better. It

is easy to see how more money might help, but in this era of budget constraints, no large infusion of cash is going to come from Washington. In some respects, that's appropriate. Different communities have different needs, and my sense is that locally created solutions forged by partnerships among businesses, schools, churches, and government are probably going to be most successful. Nonetheless, we do have a responsibility as a nation to see that children are given the opportunity to prosper. Finding a way to pay child care workers a living wage and assure that they are professionally trained and supervised is crucial. Some suggest that greater government regulation of child care providers would improve care, but others worry that this would drive up costs and worsen the affordability problem.

President Clinton has proposed spending \$300 million to train 50,000 day care providers who promise to stay in the field at least one year. He also pledged to devote more Americorps volunteers to after-school programs. Others have proposed raising the Department Care Tax Credit, which has not been increased since 1981, and making the credit refundable for low-income families. Still others believe that more child care is a bad approach and favor providing incentives for parents to stay at home with children or utilize flexible work arrangements.

We need to place a higher priority on meeting the educational and emotional needs of young children. There are many difficult questions surrounding the availability, affordability, and quality of child care in this country, and plenty of room for argument on how best to achieve satisfactory arrangements. But all of us have a stake in giving every child a decent start. My strong sense is that not nearly enough child care is of the quality that all children deserve. I have the feeling that finding a way to improve child care is one of the next big challenges ahead.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT FRANCIS RITTER, JR.

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Robert Francis Ritter, Jr. who has served as the President of the Reseda Chamber of Commerce for the last two years.

One only has to look at the choices Rob has made throughout his life and his career to realize his commitment to family. He has worked in his family printing business for 16 years, alongside his mother, father, sisters and brothers-in-law. Working together as a team, the Ritter family has not only developed a successful business, they have maintained strong bonds out of the office as well. The Ritter family also adeptly demonstrated their strength and unity at the softball city semifinals last season.

As President of the Reseda Chamber of Commerce, one of Rob's priorities has been to create an environment in which the standard for families has been raised. He developed and maintained the Facade Improvement Program and the Business Improvement District, which were started by Councilmember Laura Chick. In addition, Reseda received \$310,000 from the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative. Rob worked to ensure that all of these programs have a positive and lasting effect on our community.

William James once said, "The greatest use of life is to spend it for something that outlasts it." Though Rob Ritter's term as president is over, the work he has done for Reseda will be appreciated for many years to come. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, please join me in honoring Robert Ritter, for his commitment to our community.

THE HAWAII FEDERAL MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PERCENTAGE ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 1998

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to adjust the Federal medical assistance percentage [FMAP] rate for Hawaii to more fairly reflect the state's ability to bear its share of Medicaid payments. I am pleased that my colleague, Representative PATSY MINK, has joined me as a sponsor of this measure. I am also happy to join our Senate counterparts, Senator DANIEL AKAKA and Senator DANIEL INOUE, in putting forth this legislation. In November 1997, a similar bill, S. 1376 was introduced by Senator AKAKA.

The Federal share of Medicaid payments for each state varies according to the state's ability to pay. Because per capita income is the determining factor for ability to pay, wealthier states bear a larger share of the cost of the program through lower FMAP rates. In Hawaii, per capita income is relatively high. Thus, the State's FMAP rate is 50 percent, the lowest level. Under this bill, Hawaii's FMAP rate would be increased from 50 percent to 59.8 percent.

The rationale for the FMAP rate change is quite simple. Hawaii's high cost of living skews the per capita income determining factor. Based on 1995 United States Census data, the cost of living in Honolulu is 83 percent higher than the average of the metropolitan areas. More recent studies have shown that for the state as a whole, the cost of living is more than one-third higher than the rest of the United States. In fact, Hawaii's Cost of Living Index ranks it as the highest in the country. Some government programs take the high cost of living in Hawaii into account and funding is adjusted accordingly. These programs include Medicare prospective payment rates, food stamp allocations, school lunch programs, housing insurance limits, Federal employee salaries, and military living expenses. These examples show a Federal recognition that the higher cost of living in noncontiguous states should be taken into account in fashioning government program policies. It is time for similar recognition of this factor in gaging Hawaii's ability to support its health care programs.

An excellent analysis of this issue is included in the twenty-first edition of "The Federal Budget and the States," a joint study conducted by the Taubman Center and Local Government at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and the office of Senator DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN. According to the study, if per capita income is measured in real terms, the State of Hawaii ranks 47th at \$19,755 compared to the national av-

erage of \$24,231. Thus, Hawaii's 50 percent FMAP rate is understated because cost of living factors are not considered. Per capita income is a poor measure of Hawaii's relative ability to bear the cost of Medicaid services.

In addition to the high cost of living, the Harvard-Moynihan study finds that Hawaii also has one of the highest poverty rates in the nation. The state's 16.9 percent poverty rate is ranked eighth in the country, compared to the national average of 14.7 percent. These higher cost levels are reflected in state government expenditures and state taxation. On a per capita basis, state revenue and expenditures are far higher in Hawaii, as well as Alaska, than in the 48 mainland states. The higher expenditure levels are necessary to assure an adequate level of public services which are more costly to provide in our states. Of the top 10 states with the highest poverty rates in the country, the Harvard-Moynihan study finds that only 3 others have an FMAP rate between 50 and 60 percent. The other six states have FMAP rates of 65 percent and higher. Even more revealing is that of the top 10 states with the lowest real per capita income, only Hawaii has a 50 percent FMAP rate.

During consideration of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, the Senate included a provision increasing Alaska's FMAP rate to 59.8 percent for the next 3 years. Setting a higher match rate as was done for Alaska would still leave Hawaii with a lower FMAP rate than a majority of the states, but would better recognize Hawaii's ability to pay its fair share of the costs of the Medicaid program.

I hope to make my colleagues in the House of Representative colleagues cognizant of the need for this legislation and to earn their support for its passage in the 105th Congress.

REGARDING THE ELECTIONS HELD IN GUYANA

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the people of the Republic of Guyana for holding multiparty elections on December 15, 1997. By most accounts, based on the observations of international organizations on the day of the elections, the process was free and fair.

I congratulate the Guyanese people for their strong belief in the democratic process as shown by an 88 percent voter turnout.

I regret that factions in the country called for civil disobedience and that there was mass looting and rioting for many days following the elections.

I encourage an audit of the elections by the Caribbean Community, (CARICOM) and call on all parties and opposition leaders to respect the outcome of the audit as the final decision and make a vow to peace and stability in Guyana.

I call on the newly elected President Janet Jagan, a native of Chicago, to respect the rule of law and human rights in this fledgling democracy.

Next we will convene a set of public forums around the country over the next several months to hear the concerns of journalists as well as other interested individuals. The forums should reiterate two simple messages: that journalists of all generations are concerned about the direction of the profession; and that they want to clarify their purpose and principles. We do not presume to enumerate those principles here, but hope to have them articulated through the forums. These sessions, will include the public. We will publish an interim report after each one. At their conclusion, the group will release a final report that will attempt to define the enduring purpose of journalism, along with its principles, responsibilities and aspirations.

We see this as a beginning, a catalyst forging new ideas and a renewed spirit of conviction. We plan to carry the dialogue forward with a web site, videotapes of the forums and through other means. We do not intend to propose a set of solutions; this is an attempt to clarify our common ground. Nor is our motive to develop a detailed code of conduct; if journalism is a set of aims, how we fulfill them should change with changing times and be left to each news organization to decide. But if journalism is to survive, it falls to individual journalists, especially in each new generation, to articulate what it stands for.

CHILD CARE CRISIS

HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, it is a sad reality that today's headlines are filled with stories that spring from the everyday struggle of working families to secure safe and dependable child care. The startling reality is the daily struggle of working women and men to secure affordable and safe child care.

The trends in society and the American workforce are clear. More families have both parents working. In today's society, many families need to have two parents working just to make ends meet. A 1995 study by the Families and Work Institute found that 55 percent of the women interviewed contributed half or more of their household income. Three out of five women with children under age 6 are working, and must find someone to care for their children.

That burden is a heavy one and becomes even more burdensome when reliable, quality child care is not available.

Mr. Speaker, President Clinton has correctly identified child care as a growing American crisis—a crisis that affects both the quality of our citizens' work and the quality of their lives. However, I regret that Mr. Clinton's broad prescription implies a centralized government solution to a problem that should be solved in each local community. At a time when this Congress is struggling to complete the task of balancing the budget, the President has proposed a laundry list of tax changes, subsidies, block grants and Washington-driven standards at a cost of nearly \$22 billion. Some of these proposals have merit and deserve extended analysis and debate.

Mr. Speaker, there is another way that is far more feasible and immediately affordable.

The legislation which I am introducing, legislation that will encourage a new public-private

partnership between local school districts and businesses to develop community-based solutions to meet local child care needs. This innovative legislative initiative will be in the form of grants to local education agencies that are able to show the community's needs and commitment to a new child care program.

This legislation does not mandate a Federal program for child care that imposes some Washington-based requirements on local communities. In fact, this bill combines the concept of state and local control of education with the time-tested concept of the public-private partnership. This bill makes it possible for local schools and businesses to work together to create their own program that meets the needs of their own community, whatever they may be.

Specifically, the legislation would create a competitive grant program, administered by the Department of Education. The program would provide one-time start-up grants directly to local school districts to explore and plan child care programs for children up to five years old. Schools would be required to match these grants with private funds. The "seed" money could only be used for planning and implementation of child care programs by local school systems and private businesses, not for construction or building renovation.

My legislation: (1) Creates a competitive grant program administered by the Department of Education; (2) provides a one-time start-up grant directly to school districts; (3) is available for programs providing care for children ages 0 to 5 (or age of compulsory school education); (4) expects a commitment of matching private dollars of 50% of the funding; (5) cannot be used for building construction or renovation.

This is not an untested concept.

My legislation is based on a model program, the "Infant, Toddler, Development Center," which has operated successfully for more than 15 years in my Congressional District.

It was initiated by Kathy Marino, a teacher/principal in Ridgewood, New Jersey and has attracted much-deserved praise. It is the prototype of the grant proposal I am introducing here today.

We need to help families solve the child care problem. And we need to give local communities the means to put their proposals to the test. If we want our children to get a head start in life, we must improve child care in this nation. Child care must be available and it must be affordable but most of all it must be of high quality, both in terms of safety and educational benefits.

IN MEMORY OF JAMES C.
KIRKPATRICK

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I wish to take a moment today to speak about a man of distinguished civic service and professional integrity. Missouri's "Mr. Democrat," James C. "Jimmy" Kirkpatrick, former Missouri Secretary of State, recently passed away at the age of 92.

A native of Braymer, MO, Kirkpatrick graduated from Northeast High School in Kansas

City and Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg, MO. After studying journalism at the University of Missouri, Kirkpatrick became interested in the news business. From 1954 to 1974, Kirkpatrick owned and operated several Missouri newspapers. He started his career at the Warrensburg Daily Star-Journal and rose to be editor of that newspaper. Later, he became editor of the Jefferson City News-Tribune, then purchased the weekly Windsor Review and later the weekly Lamar Democrat, in the town of Harry S. Truman's birth.

While editing the Jefferson City newspaper, Kirkpatrick was approached by then-Governor Forrest Smith to write a newspaper column and speeches for Missouri's chief executive. That is what really got him interested in politics, which became his legacy.

Jimmy Kirkpatrick first ran for statewide office in 1960, when he lost his bid to become Missouri Secretary of State to rising Democrat star Warren Hearnes. He won the job four years later, in 1964, when Hearnes was elected governor. Kirkpatrick was re-elected to his post as Secretary of State until his retirement in 1985. During his tenure, he received 8.4 million votes, making him Missouri's greatest statewide vote-getter since statehood. In his twenty year tenure, Kirkpatrick made over 1900 speeches which kept him very close to the constituents about which he cared so deeply.

In 1985, Kirkpatrick retired to Warrensburg, MO, whereupon he became the statehouse's most familiar booster of Central Missouri State University. In fact, he served for 12 years on the university's Board of Regents, including ten years as its president. Kirkpatrick was also a guest lecturer at CMSU in history, government, political science, and journalism classes. The university recently honored Kirkpatrick by naming its new library after him.

Kirkpatrick's first wife, Jessamine Elizabeth Young, passed away in 1985 after a 58-year marriage. He is survived by his second wife, Doris, one son, three grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and three stepchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Jimmy Kirkpatrick displayed honor and integrity throughout his civic career. His admiration for and dedication to the people of Missouri is unprecedented, and I am certain that the Members of the House will join me in honoring the legacy of Missouri's own "Mr. Democrat."

TRIBUTE TO MARGARET BROCK

HON. ALLEN BOYD

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, rarely in my lifetime have I come to know an individual with the character and qualities of my friend who recently passed away, Margaret Brock. My only regret is that I did not know her longer. She was quite a remarkable woman, headstrong and determined to succeed in every endeavor she chose to make her own. She was a self-made millionaire, not that money was what made her rich. It was her heart, her kindness, and her ability to make every stranger feel like family. Ms. Brock will probably be best remembered for giving an ailing hospital new life, in addition to building a much needed nursing home and reviving a children's clinic

TO: Eli Joseph
FROM: Jennifer Klein *J.K.*
CC: Cathy Mays
DATE: 11/17/98
RE: Congressional Correspondence

Attached please find a response to the 12/23/97 letter from Congresswoman Deborah Pryce and Congressman Tim Roemer. We received but sent back to Legislative Affairs the 3/13/98 letter from John Conyers because it is actually about Iraq sanctions. We have no record of the other two letters. Please feel free to call me at 6-2599 with any questions/concerns.

Cathy R. Mays

11/09/98 03:08:20 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc: Essence P. Washington/OPD/EOP, Teresa M. Jones/OPD/EOP, Chantell S. Long/OPD/EOP, Paul J. Weinstein Jr./OPD/EOP
Subject: Congressional Correspondence

Bruce received a memo today from the Office of Legislative Affairs. DPC has MANY outstanding congressional letters from the past year.

You will soon be receiving copies of your overdue correspondence in the mail. I have indicated on the tracking sheet when they were sent to you. Please respond **DIRECTLY** to Eli Joseph of the Office of Legislative Affairs on the status of these letters (with a copy to me). If the letters have been responded to, provide a copy of the response. If there was no action, you still need to close the action out.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Message Sent To:

Christopher C. Jennings/OPD/EOP
Jose Cerda III/OPD/EOP
Cynthia A. Rice/OPD/EOP
Tanya E. Martin/OPD/EOP
Michael Cohen/OPD/EOP
Jennifer L. Klein/OPD/EOP
Leanne A. Shimabukuro/OPD/EOP
Julie A. Fernandes/OPD/EOP

THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: FEBRUARY 10, 1998

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE DEBORAH PRYCE

SUBJECT: EXPRESSES CONCERN REGARDING CHILD CARE

ACTION DISPOSITION

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY	(STAFF NAME)	ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C D	COMPLETED YY/MM/DD
JOHN HILLEY		ORG	98/01/15	SB	A	98/01/15
BRUCE REED	REFERRAL NOTE: _____	RSA	98/01/15			<i>No record</i>
<i>J Klein</i>	REFERRAL NOTE: _____		__/__/__			__/__/__
	REFERRAL NOTE: _____		__/__/__			__/__/__
	REFERRAL NOTE: _____		__/__/__			__/__/__
	REFERRAL NOTE: _____		__/__/__			__/__/__

COMMENTS: ADDITIONAL SIGNEE WITH SUSAN BROPHY RESPONSE
ATTACHED DATED JAN 15 98
ENCLOSURE

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: 1 MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: 1240 _____
MAIL USER CODES: (A) R OH (B) _____ (C) _____

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|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---|
| *ACTION CODES: | *DISPOSITION | *OUTGOING | * |
| * | * | *CORRESPONDENCE: | * |
| *A-APPROPRIATE ACTION | *A-ANSWERED | *TYPE RESP=INITIALS | * |
| *C-COMMENT/RECOM | *B-NON-SPEC-REFERRAL | * OF SIGNER | * |
| *D-DRAFT RESPONSE | *C-COMPLETED | * CODE = A | * |
| *F-FURNISH FACT SHEET | *S-SUSPENDED | *COMPLETED = DATE OF | * |
| *I-INFO COPY/NO ACT NEC* | | * OUTGOING | * |
| *R-DIRECT REPLY W/COPY * | | | * |
| *S-FOR-SIGNATURE | | | * |
| *X-INTERIM REPLY | | | * |
- *****

REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE
(ROOM 75, OEOB) EXT-2590
KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING
LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS
MANAGEMENT.

#252397

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 23, 1997

JAN 5 PM 2:50

The Honorable William J. Clinton
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing to commend you for expressing your commitment to expanding access to affordable, quality child care for working families. We share this goal, and look forward to working with you to develop effective policies that will ensure our nation's children receive the care they need to develop into healthy, intelligent, and productive adults.

As you contemplate a variety of policies designed to help parents balance work and family, we thought you may want to consider legislation that we have sponsored in each of the past three Congresses. The Child Care Availability Incentive Act (H.R. 988) would provide tax credits to businesses that provide licensed on-site or site-adjacent dependent care to their employees. In our view, child care available at the work site offers benefits to be realized by both the employer and employee, including greater worker productivity, lower absenteeism, and happier, less-stressed parents and children. H.R. 988 addresses a growing concern of many parents in America, without creating another government program or placing new mandates on businesses.

Each year, since 1993, our bill has received broad, bipartisan support. In the 105th Congress, H.R. 988 has been cosponsored by 45 Members -- 15 Republicans and 30 Democrats. We have attached a copy of our legislation, as well as a cost estimate by the Congressional Budget Office, for your review. We welcome any comments and questions you may have.

Again, we stand ready to work with you on a bipartisan basis to provide a brighter future for our nation through the care of our children. Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

 R/04
DEBORAH PRYCE
Member of Congress

D/IN 
TIM ROEMER
Member of Congress

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 23, 1998

The Honorable Tim Roemer
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Roemer:

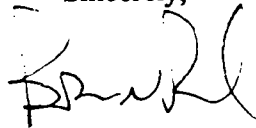
Thank you for your letter regarding your legislation, which promotes employer-provided child care through a business tax credit.

As you know, the President's child care initiative also includes a tax credit to businesses that provide child care services for their employees, by building or expanding child care facilities, operating existing facilities, training child care workers, or providing child care resource and referral services to employees. The credit covers 25% of qualified costs, but may not exceed \$150,000 per year.

In addition, the President's child care initiative will make child care more affordable by doubling the number of children receiving child care subsidies to more than two million by the year 2003, and by increasing tax credits for three million working families to help them pay for child care. It will also help improve the quality of care our children receive by enhancing early child childhood development through a new Early Learning Fund as well as by supporting enforcement of state child care health and safety standards. Finally, the President's child care initiative addresses the huge demand for care of school-age children by providing after-school programs for up to half a million children per year.

We look forward to working with you over the coming months to pass comprehensive child care legislation. The President believes that by continuing to work together on a bipartisan basis and by taking the best proposals from both sides of the aisle, we will achieve legislation that helps Americans fulfill their responsibilities as workers, and even more important, as parents.

Sincerely,



Bruce Reed
Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy

THANKS FOR PUSHING SO HARD ON THIS!

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 23, 1998

The Honorable Deborah Pryce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Pryce:

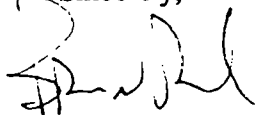
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Sincerely,



Bruce Reed
Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 15, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR BRUCE REED
Jennifer Klein

FROM: SUSAN BROPHY
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Enclosed please find a copy of a letter that was sent to the President from Reps. Tim Roemer (D-IN) and Deborah Pryce (R-OH).

I do not believe this letter requires a Presidential response at this time. Please review the attached material and respond directly to the Member(s) of Congress. Please forward a copy of the response to Chris Walker, Office of Legislative Affairs.

Thank you very much for your assistance in this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Chris at 456-7500.

Enclosure

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 23, 1997

JAN 5 4:25 PM

The Honorable William J. Clinton
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

DPC
Rudd & Klein

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing to commend you for expressing your commitment to expanding access to affordable, quality child care for working families. We share this goal, and look forward to working with you to develop effective policies that will ensure our nation's children receive the care they need to develop into healthy, intelligent, and productive adults.


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Again, we stand ready to work with you on a bipartisan basis to provide a brighter future for our nation through the care of our children. Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


DEBORAH PRYCE
Member of Congress


TIM ROEMER
Member of Congress

HOUSE
 ARCHER, TEXAS,
 CHAIRMAN
 HILP M. CRANE, ILLINOIS
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Congress of the United States

JOINT COMMITTEE ON TAXATION
 1015 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
 WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6453
 (202) 225-3621

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 CHIEF OF STAFF
 MARY M. SCHMITT
 DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF
 (LAW)
 BERNARD A. SCHMITT
 DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF
 (REVENUE ANALYSIS)

APR 04 1995

Honorable Deborah Pryce
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mrs. Pryce:

This letter is in response to your request for a revenue estimate of H.R. 881, the "Child Care Availability Incentive Act".

Specifically, this bill would grant employers a tax credit equal to 50 percent of the expenses paid or incurred by the employer during the taxable year in providing dependent care services for employees. No tax credit would be allowed for expenses paid by the employer which were reimbursed by the employee for such dependent care services. For purposes of this proposal the term "qualified day care center" means any day care center (1) which is operated by the taxpayer exclusively for purposes of providing dependent care services to employees, (2) which is located on the business premises of the taxpayer or on a site adjacent to such premises, (3) which complies with all applicable laws and regulations of a State or unit of local government, and 4) the operation of which is part of a dependent care assistance program.

As requested in your letter of March 29, 1995 we are estimating this bill as if it were included in H.R. 1215 as passed by the Committee on Ways and Means. It is assumed that this bill would be effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 1995. The effect on Federal fiscal year budget receipts is shown below.

Fiscal Years [Millions of Dollars]					
1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	1996-2000
-54	-120	-165	-219	-283	-841

I hope this information is helpful to you. If we can be of further assistance in this matter, please let me know.

Sincerely,


 Kenneth J. Kies

THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: APRIL 17, 1998

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE JOHN CONYERS JR.

SUBJECT: EXPRESSES CONCERN REGARDING THE RECENT CHILD
CARE FORUM IN HIS DISTRICT

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY (STAFF NAME)	ACTION		DISPOSITION	
	ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C COMPLETED D YY/MM/DD
LARRY STEIN	ORG	98/03/27	JM	A 98/03/27
BRUCE REED	RSA	98/03/27		98/04/03
<i>J Klein</i>		98/04/03		1/1
		1/1		1/1
		1/1		1/1

COMMENTS: ENCLOSURES

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: 1230
MAIL USER CODES: (A) D MI (B) (C)

- *****
- | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---|
| *ACTION CODES: | *DISPOSITION | *OUTGOING | * |
| * | * | *CORRESPONDENCE: | * |
| *A-APPROPRIATE ACTION | *A-ANSWERED | *TYPE RESP=INITIALS | * |
| *C-COMMENT/RECOM | *B-NON-SPEC-REFERRAL | * OF SIGNER | * |
| *D-DRAFT RESPONSE | *C-COMPLETED | * CODE = A | * |
| *F-FURNISH FACT SHEET | *S-SUSPENDED | *COMPLETED = DATE OF | * |
| *I-INFO COPY/NO ACT NEC* | | * OUTGOING | * |
| *R-DIRECT REPLY W/COPY * | | | * |
| *S-FOR-SIGNATURE * | | | * |
| *X-INTERIM REPLY * | | | * |
- *****

REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE
(ROOM 75, OEOB) EXT-2590
KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING
LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS
MANAGEMENT.

JOHN CONYERS, JR.
14TH DISTRICT, MICHIGAN

D/MS

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2426 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-2201
PHONE: 202-225-5126

COMMITTEES:
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON COURTS AND
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE
CONSTITUTION

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2201

DETROIT OFFICE:
669 FEDERAL BUILDING
231 W. LAFAYETTE
DETROIT, MI 48226
PHONE: 313-961-5670

#260440

March 13, 1998

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
President
The United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. , 20500

Dear President Clinton:

Greetings! Enclosed, please find a petition with signatures that spontaneously emerged during a Child care Forum which was convened by my office on February 21, 1998. As you will note, the self-described "Children Caregivers" who attended the Child Care Forum, in order to promote quality, affordable, accessible child care in the State of Michigan, began to engage in conversations and impromptu caucuses around the issues related to the Economic Sanctions which have been imposed against Iraq, and the negative impact which affects women, children and innocent families at the estimated rate of 4,500 per month.

As you know, the Southeastern Michigan community boasts the largest number of residents of Middle Eastern descent outside of the Middle East. Iraqi descendants, among other Middle Easterners , attended the Child Care Forum in significant numbers, and the issue of ending the Economic Sanctions against Iraq was supported by the width and breadth of the participants who hailed from all backgrounds.

In addition, please be advised that eight days later, on March 1st, my office also sponsored a Town Hall Meeting on Iraq which was attended by scores of constituents who represented the Metropolitan Detroit community, encompassing students, peace activists, African Americans, Iraqi Americans, Syrian Americans, Lebanese Americans, Chaldean Americans, Jewish Americans, Italian Americans, Irish Americans, Clergy representing varied denominations, including the Nation of Islam, and representatives from the YWCA, the NAACP, the Center for Democratic Renewal, and civic/business leaders. During that town meeting, during which I asked for dissenting voices, and multiple issues; the most dominant theme presented by all participants (for and against war with Iraq) was a unanimous sentiment opposed to the Economic Sanctions currently enforced against the Iraqi citizens. The citizens are seen as innocent victims who are already oppressed by the nation's ruler, and then further oppressed by the sanction

page two

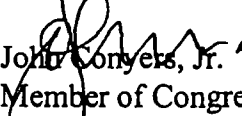
policies of the United States of America.

Finally, please note that efforts are also underway to facilitate a potential CODEL visit to Iraq to address humanitarian issues.

I would be pleased to discuss these and other related issues with you and your designates further, at your convenience.

Thank you for your cooperation, as we continue to work with you to promote peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all people.

Sincerely,


John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress

encl.

Original Petitions with signatures
from the Child Care Forum Sponsored
by Congressman Conyers

THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: MARCH 10, 1998

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE XAVIER BECERRA

SUBJECT: VOICES STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE RECENTLY
ANNOUNCED CHILD CARE PACKAGE AND THE
EXPANSION OF THE CHILD AND DEPENDENT CARE
CREDIT

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY	(STAFF NAME)	ACTION		DISPOSITION		
		ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C D	COMPLETED YY/MM/DD
JOHN HILLEY	REFERRAL NOTE:	ORG	98/02/12	JM	A	98/02/12
BRUCE REED	REFERRAL NOTE:	RSA	98/02/12			98/02/24
<i>J Klein</i>	REFERRAL NOTE:		98/02/24			1/1
	REFERRAL NOTE:		1/1			1/1
	REFERRAL NOTE:		1/1			1/1
	REFERRAL NOTE:		1/1			1/1

COMMENTS: _____

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: 3 MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: 1230 _____
MAIL USER CODES: (A) D CA (B) _____ (C) _____

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*ACTION CODES: *DISPOSITION *OUTGOING *
* * *CORRESPONDENCE: *
*A-APPROPRIATE ACTION *A-ANSWERED *TYPE RESP=INITIALS *
*C-COMMENT/RECOM *B-NON-SPEC-REFERRAL * OF SIGNER *
*D-DRAFT RESPONSE *C-COMPLETED * CODE = A *
*F-FURNISH FACT SHEET *S-SUSPENDED *COMPLETED = DATE OF *
I-INFO COPY/NO ACT NEC * OUTGOING *
*R-DIRECT REPLY W/COPY * * *
*S-FOR-SIGNATURE * * *
*X-INTERIM REPLY * * *

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REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE  
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KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING  
LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS  
MANAGEMENT.

CAPITOL OFFICE  
1119 LONGWORTH HOB  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
PHONE: (202) 225-6235  
FAX: (202) 225-2202

DISTRICT OFFICE  
1910 SUNSET BLVD., #560  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90026  
PHONE: (213) 483-1425  
FAX: (213) 483-1429



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

XAVIER BECERRA  
30TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

February 6, 1998

C COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

CHAIRMAN,  
CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS

255754

FEB 9 PM 2:07

The Honorable William J. Clinton  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We would like to voice our strong support for your recently announced child care package. As members of the Committee on Ways and Means, we hope to work in close concert with your Administration in crafting the tax portion of your plan.

The proposed expansion of the Child and Dependent Care Credit again demonstrates your Administration's strong commitment to improving our nation's child care system -- vitally important in this era of welfare reform. The mothers and families that most need financial assistance in procuring child care, however, are the working poor -- who often lack positive federal tax liability. As you well know, these working Americans pay a substantial amount in federal payroll taxes.

We hope that you consider submitting a refundable child care tax credit bill to the relevant tax-writing committees. Such well-deserved tax relief will help low-income American families to secure the child care they so desperately need.

Thank you for considering our views. We look forward to working with your Administration in crafting a strong Democratic agenda for 1998.

Sincerely,

12/30/CA

D/WA

THE WHITE HOUSE  
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: MARCH 10, 1998

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE MATTHEW G. MARTINEZ

SUBJECT: CONCERNS REGARDING CHILD CARE FOR CHILDREN  
WITH DISABILITIES

| ROUTE TO:<br>OFFICE/AGENCY | (STAFF NAME)         | ACTION      |                  | DISPOSITION  |        |                       |
|----------------------------|----------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|--------|-----------------------|
|                            |                      | ACT<br>CODE | DATE<br>YY/MM/DD | TYPE<br>RESP | C<br>D | COMPLETED<br>YY/MM/DD |
| JOHN HILLEY                |                      | ORG         | 98/02/11         | JM           | A      | 98/02/11              |
| BRUCE REED                 | REFERRAL NOTE: _____ | RSA         | 98/02/11         |              |        | 98/02/24              |
| <i>J. Klein</i>            | REFERRAL NOTE: _____ |             | 98/02/24         |              |        | 1/1                   |
|                            | REFERRAL NOTE: _____ |             |                  |              |        |                       |
|                            | REFERRAL NOTE: _____ |             |                  |              |        |                       |
|                            | REFERRAL NOTE: _____ |             |                  |              |        |                       |

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: 1 MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: 1230 1210  
MAIL USER CODES: (A) D GA \_\_\_\_\_ (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_

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*ACTION CODES: *DISPOSITION *OUTGOING *
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MANAGEMENT.

255752

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

February 3, 1998

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

FEB 4 PM 4:41

Dear President Clinton:

We are writing to applaud your leadership on the issue of child care. The proposal which you announced early last month is an important step forward in providing our nation's families with access to desperately needed high-quality child care. As the details of your proposal are being finalized, we would like to bring to your attention the importance of including a focus on children with disabilities.

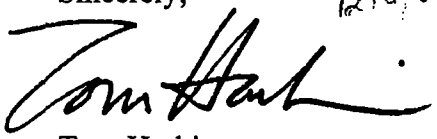
While all parents invest significant efforts in obtaining high-quality child care for their children, the difficulties encountered by parents of children with disabilities are enormous. Too often, existing child care providers do not have the facilities, training, or experience to care for children with disabilities. It is our hope that your child care proposal will take the steps necessary to decrease the difficulty encountered by parents and child care providers of both non-disabled and disabled children alike. We stand ready to work with you on this very important issue.

Should you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please have your staff contact Alex Nock at (202) 226-2068 or Sharon Masling at (202) 224-6201. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

1210/ST

1230/ST



Tom Harkin  
Member,  
Senate Committee on Labor  
and Human Resources



Matthew G. Martinez  
Ranking Member,  
House Subcommittee on Early Childhood,  
Youth and Families

cc: The Honorable Richard Gephardt  
Majority Leader