

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

MAKING A REAL DIFFERENCE

HON. NEWT GINGRICH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 1998

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage my colleagues to read the following article about a woman in my district who is making a real difference in our community. Deborah Wolf, an attorney and the president of a personnel placement firm, founded a non-profit organization called "Working Wardrobe." Working Wardrobe provides professional apparel for women facing domestic violence or victims of other economic hardships, thus enabling these women to feel confident and look their best for interviews which hopefully lead to fulfilling career opportunities. As we look for ways to shrink the size and scope of government, Working Wardrobe is a shining example of how individuals and community can effectively and more efficiently help those in need. By emphasizing work, personal responsibility and a helping hand, welfare caseloads will continue to plummet, thus strengthening families and children and enabling even the neediest to participate in the American dream.

HELPING NEEDY WOMEN DRESS FOR WORK SUCCESS

(By Ernest Holsendolph)

Dressing for success is no frivolous matter in the business world, and it remains a critical factor for many job applicants. It can be the difference between getting a job or not. Just ask Deborah L. Wolf.

Wolf, a lawyer turned medical personnel placement specialist, said that more frequently than she cares to recall, many qualified, typically female, job seekers fail to get a job simply because they do not have appropriate clothing to wear.

"It is absolutely heartbreaking to see that happen," she said.

An article in Good Housekeeping magazine recently told about organizations around the country that gather clothing for people who want to work but can't afford the proper attire. Wolf, a person of action, has launched Working Wardrobe Inc. in the greater Atlanta area, just in time to help state agencies and others seal the final preparation for female newcomers to the work force.

What Wolf is doing, with the assistance of a growing number of volunteers, is an encouraging sign that private efforts will certainly buttress other work to help people by the thousands move from welfare and other forms of dependency to the workplace.

Working Wardrobe formally will open its doors during the last week of this month, and here is what it will do:

Receive and sort donated clothing from various sources that range from individual donors such as local television personalities and others, to donors like Macy's department store.

Interview and consult with women as they are referred by the state Department of Family and Children's Services or the Labor Department, having been trained and cleared for work.

Get them attired for their initial job interviews and for the first weeks of the job.

Wolf, who has operated her own business, All Medical Personnel, for six years, said she believes this kind of assistance will boost the confidence level of the inexperienced job seekers.

The idea has gotten quick positive response from people who can help. Noteworthy is the offer of 2,500 square feet of space by the Apparel Mart in downtown Atlanta where Wolf and her helpers can launch May 27 or thereabouts.

"This has been a marvelous donation, and just what we needed," Wolf said. The offices will be right there within eyesight of many top apparel makers and distributors. And the downtown location will be reachable by a maximum number of people who need the service because of the proximity to bus lines and the MARTA rail system.

"We want shelters and other organizations whose clients may need this service to be aware of us," Wolf said.

As the volunteer effort grows, Working Wardrobe will need ever larger sources of garments and other apparel, as well as volunteers to process clothing. The items they seek include skirt and pants suits; skirts, blouses, jackets and dresses; as well as overcoats, shoes, pocketbooks, scarfs, belts, jewelry and new pantyhose and cosmetics. No used undergarments, cosmetics or pantyhose will be accepted, nor will men's clothing be accepted.

Wolf said she will also need more volunteers to step forward as consultants to work with the women.

The effort will also need some expertise, including speakers and fund-raisers, as well as people with sewing and tailoring skills to make some items for size 16 and larger, and also mend items needing small repairs.

Wolf, a trained commercial real estate attorney, who found herself beached during a business downturn in the late 1980s, turned entrepreneur in 1991 by launching her medical placement service.

She admits she knows nothing special about business attire, but then she knew nothing about medical careers until she launched her business and learned by doing.

"I'm most grateful for my own opportunity to succeed," Wolf said. "And my effort here to start Working Wardrobe is something I hope can partially pay back our community for the good fortune I have had."

Anyone who can help Working Wardrobe should call 404-320-9125, which currently is located in the offices of All Medical Personnel at 1961 North Druid Hills Rd. Suite 201-A.

BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION ACT OF 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. TIM ROEMER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 10, 1998

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the "Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1997" (S. 419). I strongly support this legislation, which responds to a very serious health care problem in the United States today.

Current medical research indicates that birth defects are the leading cause of infant deaths

in the United States. It is estimated that 150,000 babies will be born with a serious birth defect in 1998, and that one out of every five of these babies will die. In the United States, birth defects affect three percent of all births, and among the babies who survive, birth defects are a significant cause of lifelong challenges.

Depending on the particular type of problem and its severity, special medical treatment, education, rehabilitation and other services are usually required into adulthood, costing billions of dollars each year. A recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report indicated that the lifetime cost for just 18 common birth defects occurring in a single year is \$8 billion. However, only about 22 percent of those born with birth defects are included in these figures.

Birth defects can be reduced with a national strategy to direct the Centers for Disease Control to collect the information on birth defects, to provide funding and support in research at the State level and to set up regional centers to deal with birth defects as this legislation provides. We should strongly support the efforts of the Easter Seals Society, the American Hospital Association, and other organizations in developing and directing the Centers for Disease Control to work with States and local governments to survey birth defects and to bring together the information so that researchers can work to educate families about the challenges that are ahead for them. I know local groups, such as families with a child who has spina bifida can meet with other families and be a great source of strength and experience.

Mr. Speaker, S. 419 is good public policy and I encourage my colleagues to support the bill.

INTRODUCTION OF DISABLED CHILDREN'S FAIRNESS ACT OF 1998

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 1998

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Disabled Children's Fairness Act of 1998. My bill will offer technical amendments to Title XVI of the Social Security Act to lessen the adverse impact of provisions in the federal welfare reform law that affect low income disabled children receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. The SSI Coalition for a Responsible Safety Net, a national advocacy organization, has endorsed the bill. I also want to thank Representatives WAXMAN and MARTINEZ for their support as original cosponsors.

My bill will reinstate the medical improvement test protection for low-income disabled children turning 18 who are subject to mandatory review of eligibility for SSI benefits under the federal welfare reform law. The amendment would require that before the Social Security Administration (SSA) could terminate

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

benefits for this group of children, SSA would have to show evidence that the child's condition no longer existed, or that it had significantly improved and no longer impaired the ability to function. An estimated 30,000 children turning 18 have already been cut off all SSI benefits because of this loophole. The amendment leaves intact the new law's provision of a mandated review of all children turning 18.

The bill also proposes to expand allowable expenditures from Dedicated Savings Accounts (DSAs). Dedicated Savings Accounts are funds that are set up by parents or representative payees for disabled children who are eligible to receive past-due monthly SSI benefits (if the payment is six times or more the monthly benefit). Current law restricts the use of these funds for certain items. Consequently, many disabled children have gone without basic needs (e.g., food, shelter, clothing) while their SSI applications were pending. My bill expands the list to include items essential to maintaining a child at home with parents or guardians.

I hope that my introduction of the Disabled Children's Fairness Act of 1998 will call attention to the responsibility of this Congress to revisit the impact of federal welfare reform on low-income disabled children and their families.

CONGRATULATIONS TO JEFF GOLIMOWSKI

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 1998

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my congratulations and recognize the stellar achievement of Jeff Golimowski, a senior at Newport High School in Newport, Oregon. Jeff has been named the first place National winner of the Veterans of Foreign Wars "Voice of Democracy" essay competition.

In his winning essay he gave ample proof of his good citizenship, and he showed his concern for making his voice heard in our democracy. Out of over 100,000 students participating in this, the 51st year of the competition, his essay was singled out. I can see why.

Jeff embodies the ideals that we as a society try to teach our young. As a product of our public school system, he represents a commitment to patriotism and high-minded idealism. As an American, he displays a respect for our collective past and a shining enthusiasm for our future.

Jeff, if you ever want a job as a speech-writer, give me a call. Congratulations and good luck in all your future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF THE E-RATE POLICY AND CHILD PROTECTION ACT OF 1998

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 1998

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the E-Rate Policy and Child Protection

Act of 1998. Mr. Speaker, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 contained a provision that I had battled for and advocated for many years. The concept was straightforward: make America's schools and libraries eligible for universal service funding so that these educational entities could receive discounted rates for telecommunications services. During FCC implementation of this provision, I coined the term "E-Rate"—for "education rate"—to describe a system of discounts for telecommunications services that would allow schools and libraries to enter the digital age and better prepare our citizens for the knowledge-based economy of the future.

As a nation, we did the job of preparing previous generations to compete in the Industrial Era. From the founding of our republic, the common school movement and leaders such as Horace Mann provided the impetus for the ideal that each and every American should be entitled to an education, regardless of economic status.

America cannot leave kids from middle class working families out of the knowledge-based economy and still hope to retain its economic standing in a fiercely competitive global environment. At the turn of the 20th Century, 10 of the 12 largest companies in America were natural resource companies. As we enter the 21st Century, the 10 largest and most rapidly expanding industries in the world are brainpower industries; telecommunications, computer software, microelectronics, biotech, material-science, among others. The E-Rate is an essential program for our country's economic future.

Now that the E-Rate program is being implemented, some concerns have been raised about access to material on the World Wide Web that is inappropriate or unsuitable for children. I have long believed that technology can often offer a solution to some of the problems that technology creates. Software filtering technology and other blocking technology can help to provide some protection in schools to shield children from inappropriate online fare. Other solutions may also mitigate against minors gaining access to Web sites that parents and educators feel are indecent and want to shield from young children.

I believe that the digital age will present both promise and problems. I also believe that we can embrace technological change, use it to empower our citizens and also face the challenges that technology poses for us. The purpose of the legislation that I am offering today is to ensure that local school and library officials think through the many issues of online access, and implement a policy for addressing access by children. This legislation will ensure that before schools and libraries obtain E-Rate funding in the future that they establish some policy governing access by minors.

A TRIBUTE TO ALBERTO FIBLA

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 1998

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great Cuban who is now, also, a great American and a constituent of mine, Dr. Alberto Fibla, who is a true inspiration to all of us.

Dr. Fibla survived over 20 brutal years in jail as a political prisoner under the Castro dictatorship.

When Dr. Fibla recently became a United States citizen, one of his first acts was to seek to register with the Army and Navy. Dr. Fibla wanted to volunteer as a physician to serve this country to assist in America's efforts in the Persian Gulf region. Unfortunately, Dr. Fibla was turned away because he exceeded the age requirement. However, I believe that Dr. Fibla's efforts to join the armed forces should be applauded.

It is easy to take the personal privileges and great freedoms we enjoy in this great country, the United States of America, for granted. Often it is the patriotism shown by new citizens, such as Dr. Alberto Fibla, that remind us of the importance of our liberty and freedoms.

Thank you, Dr. Fibla, for your commitment to the defense of the United States. You are truly a great American.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 3440

HON. TIM ROEMER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 12, 1998

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce H.R. 3440, the Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification Act of 1998 which will help our local school districts recruit and license highly-qualified professionals with significant work experience to teach in our nation's schools.

Congress will reauthorize the Higher Education Act this spring, and an important part of the reauthorization is teacher training. We have the opportunity to restructure how our nation recruits, trains, and support teachers and we are not only faced with the challenge of maintaining the supply of teachers, but also with ensuring that our children have access to the highest quality teachers.

If current trends continue, American schools will need to hire more than two million teachers in the next decade to educate an increasing number of students and to replace teachers who retire or leave the profession.

In addition, there are too many teachers who do not know their subject matter well enough to teach it to our students. This is a real problem in our urban and rural areas, which face significant difficulties in recruiting qualified teachers. In high poverty schools, 40% of math teachers, 31% of English teachers, and 20% of science teachers are instructing in subjects in which they hold neither a college major or minor.

The recently released TIMMS scores in which our nation's 12th graders scored near the bottom internationally in math and science highlights the importance of having fully qualified teachers. We can and must do better.

There are highly qualified individuals who have already earned bachelor's degrees and serve in other occupations who are interested in pursuing a teaching career—in 1996, ten percent of all teachers at the elementary or secondary level worked in an occupation outside of education in the previous year.

I think that teaching is one of the most important professions in this country, and I support high standards for teachers, but I think that we should reduce barriers to getting these highly qualified individuals into the classroom.