

on Education and the Workforce and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit today for your immediate consideration and enactment the "Class-Size Reduction and Teacher Quality Act of 1998." This legislative proposal would help States and local school districts recruit, train, and hire 100,000 additional well-prepared teachers in order to reduce the average class size to 18 in grades 1 through 3 in our Nation's public schools. It is an essential part of our overall effort to strengthen public schools throughout the Nation.

As schools across the Nation struggle to accommodate a surge in enrollments, educators and parents have become increasingly concerned about the impact of class size on teaching and learning, particularly in the critically important early grades, where students learn reading and other basic skills. This concern is justified: rigorous research confirms what parents and teachers have long believed—that students in smaller classes, especially in the early grades, make greater educational gains and maintain those gains over time. These gains occur because teachers in small classes can provide students with more individualized attention, spend more time on instruction and less time on discipline, and cover more material effectively. Moreover, the benefits of smaller classes are greatest for poor, minority, and inner-city children, the children who often face the greatest challenges in meeting high educational standards.

Smaller classes will have the greatest impact on student learning if the new teachers brought into the classroom are well qualified to teach reading and to take advantage of smaller learning environments. For this reason, my proposal emphasizes not just class-size reduction but also professional development for educators, and it will give school districts adequate time to recruit and train staff while phasing in smaller classes. Furthermore, all new teachers hired under the program would be required to pass a State teacher competency test and would also have to be certified to teach or be making satisfactory progress toward full certification.

We can help all of our students learn to read independently and well by the third grade, get a solid foundation in basic skills, and reach high educational standards if we start them off with small classes and well-prepared teachers in the early grades.

Under my proposal, the Department of Education would provide \$20.8 billion in mandatory appropriations over a 10-year period (beginning with \$1.1 billion in fiscal year 1999) to States. The States would then distribute the funds to local school districts based on their relative class sizes in grades 1 through 3, as well as on their ability and effort to finance class-size reductions with their own resources. The bill would provide States with considerable flexi-

bility in distributing these funds, while ensuring that the most needy school districts receive a fair share.

Moreover, because my proposal would actually appropriate the funds needed to carry out the program, States and local communities could count on these funds without the need for separate congressional appropriations each year. This proposal is fully paid for within my Fiscal Year 1999 Budget, and therefore would not reduce the budget surplus.

School districts would use these funds to reduce class sizes in grades 1 through 3. Just as importantly, these funds would also be available for a variety of activities to ensure that students in the early grades receive sound and effective instruction, such as making sure that teachers know how to teach reading and other subjects effectively in small classes.

This proposal includes strong accountability for results. Participating school districts would produce "report cards" documenting reductions in class sizes and the achievement of their students in reading, based on rigorous assessments. Schools whose students fail to make gains in reading would be required to undertake corrective actions. In addition, the Department of Education would undertake a comprehensive national evaluation of this program and its impact on reading achievement and teaching.

I urge the Congress to take prompt and favorable action on this proposal. Its enactment would help school districts reduce class sizes in the early grades and improve instruction and achievement in reading, issues that are of major importance to parents and to the Nation.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, May 8, 1998.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

IN RECOGNITION OF CLYDE DREXLER ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE HOUSTON ROCKETS AND THE NBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in proud recognition of a great athlete and legend in the City of Houston, Clyde Drexler, on the occasion of his retirement from the Houston Rockets and the National Basketball Association.

Clyde "the Glide" Drexler had an impressive 15-year career in the NBA, but many people in Houston remember him first from his days with the University of Houston Cougars in the early 1980s. Under the leadership of head coach Guy

V. Lewis, Drexler and his future NBA teammate, Hakeem Olajuwon, took the Cougars to the NCAA's Final Four in 1982, with Clyde averaging 15.2 points and 10.5 rebounds per game.

In 1983, Drexler earned first-team All-America honors after leading the Cougars to their second straight NCAA Final Four in the first national championship game. The Cougars, known as Phi Slamma Jamma, ended the year 31-3 and won their first Southwest Conference regular season championship with a perfect 16-0 record, and were ranked atop the national polls. Drexler is the only Cougar to amass more than 1,000 points, 900 rebounds, 300 assists, and 250 steals in a career. His 268 career steals remain as a UH record.

A first round selection of the Portland Trail Blazers in 1983, Drexler led the team to two NBA finals and made the playoffs in each of his 15 seasons. A member of the original Olympic Dream Team, Drexler won a gold medal in Barcelona in 1992.

Clyde was reunited with Olajuwon when he was traded to the Rockets on February 14, 1995, and helped lead the Rockets to their second straight NBA championship. Drexler was named one of the NBA's 50 all-time greatest players in 1997 and made five all-NBA teams.

Drexler, Oscar Robertson, and John Havlicek are the only players in league history to post more than 20,100 points, 6,000 rebounds, and 6,000 assists. His 2,963 clear playoff points put him at number 15 on the all-time playoff scoring list. He also grabbed the 1,000th playoff rebound of his career on this past Sunday, when he finished his career in the NBA.

On May 18, 1998, Drexler announced his retirement plans as he accepted the job as the head coach for the men's basketball program at the University of Houston. While the Rockets' season ended on a disappointing note, I'm sure the City of Houston is extraordinarily proud of the career of one of their own, Clyde Drexler. As the next chapter of his career begins, what better place to share his talent, heart, and determination than with the Cougars and the City of Houston.

I know that I join with all sports fans in the City of Houston in looking forward to many more years of basketball excitement from Clyde Drexler, and wish him all the best in his new endeavor.

THE FREEDOM FROM RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a moment talking about the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act, H.R. 2431, which will be on the floor for debate at the end of this week. The bill is bipartisan, it has over 131 cosponsors, and it was reported out of

the Committee on International Relations by a vote of 31 for, only 5 against.

Why is this legislation needed?

In the past decade, the Government of Sudan has killed or allowed to starve over 1 million of its own people. Starvation is that government's weapon of choice, liberally spiced with high-altitude bombing and mass murder, and even selling Sudanese boys and girls as slaves.

In China, as we all know, Catholic priests and bishops are imprisoned, some for decades, simply for practicing their faith. Protestant pastors are thrown in jail just for holding house church services. Muslims suffer persecution, as do Buddhist monks and nuns.

My office adopted Bishop Zeng Jingmu. Sunday's Washington Post reported that the Bishop was released 6 months early by the Chinese Government in anticipation of President Clinton's June visit. Bishop Zeng is currently out of prison, yet remains not completely free, but under house arrest, and is allowed to see no one but his close relatives. Still, the fact that he is out of prison is a good development, and a sign that pressure on repressive governments works.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is supported by a large number of broad-based groups in the Nation. It is supported by the National Association of Evangelicals, by the U.S. Catholic Bishops Conference, by the Family Research Council, by the Anti-Defamation League, by the Southern Baptist Convention Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, by the International Campaign for Tibet, by the National Jewish Coalition, by the Christian Coalition, by the Religious Action Center for Reformed Judaism, by Empower America, by Prison Fellowship Ministries, by the Union of Orthodox Congregations of America, by Concerned Women of America, by Campus Crusade for Christ, by the Seventh Day Adventist Church, by the Christian Legal Society, by the Catholic Alliance, by the Ethics and Public Policy Center, by the National Religious Broadcasters, by B'nai B'rith, by the American Family Association, by the Salvation Army. So we can see this has broad-based support.

On Thursday the House will take up the bill, and this bill will set up a system to monitor religious persecution around the world; and when egregious acts are found, limited sanctions will be imposed unless waived by the President. Again, under this legislation, the President has total, complete ability to waive everything and anything in the bill.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, when this bill becomes law, America will reaffirm again, as it has so many times in the past, for all the world that we still honor those ringing words in the Declaration of Independence, authored by Thomas Jefferson, where he said, We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and women are created

equal, endowed by their creators with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

When this bill passes, in small villages in southern Sudan, people with their little crystal radio sets, people in villages in China with their crystal sets, when they hear that the United States Congress, the people's House, the House of Representatives, has voted for this legislation, it will send a message to the people who are being persecuted around the world that this Congress and this country stands with them.

TRIBUTE TO JIM ANDERSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentlewoman from Idaho (Mrs. CHENOWETH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, I lost a very good friend a little while ago, in a very, very tragic accident. Jim Anderson was a man that I have known for about 25 years. He was a good man, a good father to his two children, a good husband, a good steward of the land, and a heck of a horseman.

It was my honor to have known Jim Anderson, to be his friend, and it is my honor to tell you a little bit about Jim Anderson today. Jim Anderson was a rancher. It wasn't only what he did as a rancher, but it was who he was.

He was killed in a tragic accident on his ranch on the border of Malheur County in Oregon and Owyhee County in Idaho, in the southwestern edge of my congressional district in Idaho. Jim's grazing allotment was far, far out in the Owyhee Desert, in a wide-open, sweeping land of grasses, of sagebrush, a few hardy juniper trees, a whole lot of rattlesnakes, but a land that cut deeply into the Owyhee River Canyon. It is a rugged, beautiful, brutal country far, far from the nearest cities.

The grassland, the hills, valleys, creeks, are heartbreakingly beautiful. The Owyhee River Canyon is one of the most magnificent wonders of my district and of this Nation. It carves through this beautiful high desert for hundreds of miles, cutting a deep, straight-walled gorge into the desert. The Owyhee can appear benign to the casual observer, but it can suddenly change from a meandering stream to a raging torrent, and from a foot deep to a bottomless pit.

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Jim loved this country with his whole heart. It was in his blood. It was where he was born and raised, and where he had lived his entire life. It was where he wanted to raise his two sons, Patrick and Jeff.

Jim was riding the Owyhee River alone 3 weeks ago, gathering his cattle and pushing them onto spring range

when the accident occurred. While crossing the river and pushing a small group of cattle ahead of him, Jim's horse stumbled and fell, crushing him underneath it, under the water. The horse struggled back to its feet, waded to a nearby island, and turned back to wait for his master. The cows wandered on. Jim's dog waited near the horse, but their master did not emerge from the river.

The horse and the dog were still waiting there on the island a day later when family and friends came in search of the missing man. When they saw the dog and the horse, they knew what happened to Jim. They knew from that rugged country and the ways of that rugged country that you always believe the animals. Five days later, divers found Jim Anderson's body miles downstream in the river, drowned. Even though Jim was raised there beside the river and was a heck of a horseman, he never learned how to swim. I just pray that he did not die in pain. But he did die alone, far, far from the family he loved, from his friends and from any help. I pray that he died without knowing what happened.

Jim's death was very tragic and incomparably lonely and saddening to his family and friends and every one of us who knew him. Yet every one of the people who knew Jim had a tremendous respect for the man that he was, the life that he led and the way he died.

You see, Jim died doing what he loved. He loved his family but he also loved his work, and he loved the land that he worked. He always knew that if we are good to the land, the land will be good back to us. Many people do not understand this today, when we do not live on the land and when we try to live our lives as comfortably as possible and eliminate every danger, inconvenience and hardship; but inconvenience and hardship and danger was Jim's way of life.

That morning, like every morning, Jim had gotten up before the sun and he went outside into the cold morning and saddled up his horse, called his dog and loaded his animals into the truck for a long, bumpy rough drive out into his grazing allotment. Jim unloaded his horse at dawn and began a wide sweep of his range alone, through some of the most beautiful, most brutal and unforgiving country on God's earth. Physically the work is very hard, demanding, tiring and rough, but that was the life that Jim Anderson wanted and he accepted this hard work with it and did not complain. He was college educated and had a high intelligence.

Jim could have been anything he wanted to be, a teacher, a physician, a stockbroker, a lawyer. He certainly could have been a Congressman. But he chose the way of life of a rancher.

Jim never stopped learning nor did he stop teaching others around him. He read the Wall Street Journal every single day, and other magazines such as National Review and Forbes magazine