

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LAW ENFORCEMENT BLOCK GRANTS ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. MARTIN R. HOKE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 14, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 728) to control crime by providing law enforcement block grants.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Chairman, my amendment simply requires local governments to assess the impact of school security measures, crime prevention programs and juvenile crime prevention programs funded under this bill, and to submit their findings to the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

Much has been made of the effectiveness of prevention programs, however, Mr. Chairman there is little empirical evidence of their effect on crime. This amendment provides a mechanism by which Congress can assess such programs and make more informed decisions in future crime legislation.

While opponents might argue that this is another unfunded mandate, I believe that the legislative language is broad enough to assuage these fears. By merely requiring that localities have an adequate process, the amendment provides wide latitude in carrying out this directive.

I urge its adoption.

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 728, AS REPORTED OFFERED BY MR. HOKE OF OHIO

Page 12, line 4, strike "and".

Page 12, line 7, strike "101(a)(2)." and insert "101(a)(2); and".

Page 12, after line 7, insert the following:

"(10) the unit of local government—

"(A) has an adequate process to assess the impact of any enhancement of a school security measure that is undertaken under subparagraph (B) of section 101(a)(2), or any crime prevention programs that are established under subparagraphs (C) and (E) of section 101(a)(2), on the incidence of crime in the geographic area where the enhancement is undertaken or the program is established;

"(B) will conduct such an assessment with respect to each such enhancement or program; and

"(C) will submit an annual written assessment report to the Director.

MISSING SERVICE PERSONNEL ACT

HON. KAREN L. THURMAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 1995

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Speaker, because I proudly display a POW/MIA flag outside my office door, I am reminded on a daily basis of the importance and immediate need for the Missing Service Personnel Act. This bill is long overdue.

This legislation will provide a procedure for handling the difficult question of how and when a member of the Armed Forces who is considered missing in action can be declared legally dead.

Important provisions of this legislation include: bringing family members into the review process; giving families access to information gained during the investigation; and establishing a definite timeframe for the review process. Families will know what to expect from the process and would be spared years of waiting under this legislation.

The evidence is clear that soldiers from past wars were declared dead when they were very much alive. This act will assure that our military personnel will be accounted for without question.

There is strong bipartisan consensus in support of this bill. I look forward to working with my colleagues in assuring that this legislation quickly becomes law. Finally, the hard work of many fine people and veterans' groups have gone into creating this legislation. We should all be working for the welfare of the men and women in our armed services. By supporting this bill we are telling them that yes, the time has come to answer the tough questions that the families of missing members of the Armed Forces face every day.

TRIBUTE TO COL. ALBERT S. WYNOT

HON. JOHN JOSEPH MOAKLEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 1995

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to share with my colleagues some sad news from my district in Massachusetts. Retired Army Col. Albert S. Wynot passed away on January 27, 1995. Colonel Wynot, a resident of Walpole, MA, served in the Army from 1938 until his retirement in 1950, and then continued his service as a member of the Army reserves until 1980. A graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology [MIT], Colonel Wynot fought in World War II with the 329th Engineering Battalion and was intimately involved in the planning and execution of the D-day invasion in Normandy on June 6, 1944.

Colonel Wynot was the proud recipient of the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, the Bronze Star Cluster, the American Defense Medal, Distinguished Unit Medal, the Order of the French Army, and the United States Victory Medal.

I last saw Colonel Wynot during a district swing this fall when I visited him in the New Pond Village residences in Walpole, MA. Even then, during a question and answer session that I hosted with the residents, Colonel Wynot had strong opinions about national issues ranging from the collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire in Eastern Europe to the local sludge issue in the town of Walpole. Colonel Wynot loved debate and discussion and was, in every sense of the word, a colonel until the end.

I extend my sympathies to his wife Dorothy, his family and all of his friends and neighbors at New Pond Village.

CLARIFY THAT VETERANS' BENEFITS ARE TAX-EXEMPT

HON. G.V. (SONNY) MONTGOMERY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 1995

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing H.R. 972 to clarify that veterans benefits are not taxable. A number of members of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs have joined me as cosponsors of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, as far as we know, veterans' benefits have never been subject to taxation, either at the Federal or the State level. We have long had laws which prohibited these benefits from being taxed. However, over the course of the last several years, some doubt about the tax-exempt status of veterans' benefits has arisen. In 1992, the IRS Chief Counsel's office concluded that some benefits might be taxable under amendments made to the Internal Revenue Code in 1986.

To its credit, this administration responded to this possibility by proposing that new language be enacted exempting all veterans' benefits and allowance from taxation. The Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures of the Committee on Ways and Means received favorable testimony on a proposal which I introduced last Congress, H.R. 786, which would have done the same thing as the administration proposal. However, the committee failed to act on any technical tax bills last Congress.

I think that we should clear up any remaining confusion on this issue by enacting this legislation, and the administration has indicated its support for my position in the past. Since there is no tax now being collected on veterans' benefits, there shouldn't be any revenue loss from its enactment. I urge all my colleagues to support this measure.

BAN SMOKING ON INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 1995

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, today I have introduced the Airliner Cabin Air Quality Act of 1995, to prohibit smoking on international flights to and from the United States. Congress banned smoking on all domestic flights of 6 hours or less in 1990. However, smoking is still legal on U.S. carriers on international flights. Most foreign carriers serving the U.S. permit smoking as well.

To protect flight attendants and passengers, I introduced similar legislation last year—H.R. 4495. The bill passed the House on October 4, under Suspension of the Rules. The bill I introduce today is identical in intent to the one passed by the House last fall.

Briefly, the bill requires the Department of Transportation to issue regulations requiring U.S. and foreign air carriers to prohibit smoking in passenger cabins and lavatories on flights between points in the United States and foreign points, that is, the last point of departure prior to landing in the U.S., and the first