

Let's look at South Carolina, for example. Under this bill, federal childcare programs would be consolidated into a State block grant that would cut \$31 million in Federal funds to the State over five years—meaning that over 5,000 fewer children would receive Federal childcare assistance that year. When are they going to realize that affordable and reliable childcare is a major factor in a single mother's ability to find and keep a job?

Also, another crucial factor in getting welfare recipients to work and in keeping them working, is income. We can not realistically expect a working mother to be able to take care of a family while only earning minimum wage. If we are going to require welfare recipients to go to work, why not require that these jobs provide a liveable wage so that working moms may be able to sustain themselves and their families?

And although this is a separate issue, if you look at the fact that a single mom stands to lose Medicaid benefits for themselves and their children in lieu of a low-paying job with no health benefits, it would make more sense to stay on welfare.

Mr. Speaker, I have long been an advocate of welfare reform. But I support realistic and humane welfare reform—one that includes programs that will train current recipients for real jobs; one that addresses the real need for reliable and affordable day care; and one that take into consideration the need for real wages so that these recipients can become self-supporting, productive members of society.

ILLEGITIMACY AND REDUCTION OF POVERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOKE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, tonight we are talking about welfare, and the reason we are talking about welfare is that H.R. 4 is on the floor and for the first time in 40 years we are going to undertake to reform a failed system.

How do we know that this system has failed? Well, first of all, I suppose we know because there is acclamation on the point. I do not think anybody is arguing it. But, besides that, what we can do is look at certain indicia of whether or not it is a success. What have we done, what have we gotten after 35 years of great society?

Well, what we have gotten is we have spent about \$5.3 trillion on welfare since the early 1960s, \$5.3 trillion. Have we reduced poverty in that time? No, we have not reduced poverty. In fact, what we have found is that poverty was coming down year by year by year by year, right from the beginning of this century to the late 1950s and early 1960s, and since we have been throwing money at the problem in tremendous amounts poverty has leveled off and stayed flat.

But the amount of money that we have thrown at the problem has increased and increased and increased and increased by any measure, by measure of nominal dollars, current year dollars or by measure of percentage of Gross Domestic Product. In fact, when you measure by Gross Domestic Product, we have increased the amount from about less than 1 percent of GDP to nearly 4 percent of GDP that we are spending on welfare.

What have we gotten? Have we reduced poverty? No, we have not reduced poverty. What have we done? Well, we have found that we are in a situation with respect to illegitimacy that is truly alarming, truly alarming because it has more impact, it has more implications for what will happen in the 21st century than any other social challenge that we face.

Let us look at numbers for a minute. First of all, we know that in the minority community among blacks two out of every three births is now out of wedlock. For all those people that think this is a problem that is somehow only in the minority community, let me tell you that is absolutely wrong. One out of four white babies is now born illegitimate. Fully one out of three of all births in this country is now illegitimate.

What do we know will happen with respect to kids who grow up in single-parent homes? Well, we know that welfare has failed children more than anyone. It is the cruelest thing that we could be doing to our children.

□ 2030

We know it for a number of reasons. First of all, children in families which are dependent on AFDC for prolonged periods have more developmental problems than children dependent for shorter periods. Sixty-nine percent of children in chronically dependent welfare families score in the bottom third of all children on vocabulary and language skill tests. The source on that is the Life Circumstances and Development of Children in Welfare Families, a profile based on national survey data in the Child Trends Magazine.

We also know being raised in a family dependent on welfare dramatically reduces a child's intellectual abilities and life prospects. Researchers from Baruch College in New York City studied the effects of being raised in a welfare family on the intellectual abilities of children aged three to six. Children on welfare do worse in school, they tend to have other developmental problems, they are three times more likely to end up on welfare themselves. And teenage girls who grow up in fatherless families are far more likely to have early intercourse, pregnancies and abortions than those from two parent families.

What kind of perverse and cruel form of compassion would encourage children to have children? And then condemn them to a dead end cycle of government dependency? What could pos-

sible be more cruel to children than this failed system?

We could not have consciously designed a more destructive system than the one that we currently have. And that is what perplexes me the most about how it is that liberals are defending this system.

What you hear from my friends on the other side of the aisle is well, yes, we need reform, but. It reminds me of the "me too, but" disease, where you say "Yes, we are going to fix this now. We didn't bother for the past 30 years, even though we have been in control of this place for the past 40 years. But now we agree with you, we need to fix this, we need to have reform, but."

Then you start to equivocate and change and not come up with the real reforms that in fact will do the two things that we must do in order to restore some sort of confidence in a welfare system that will actually help people, to give them dignity. And those two things are to encourage marriage and to encourage work.

NUMBERS OF CHILDREN AND SCHOOL LUNCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, last night, we showed how the Republicans are playing a shell game with the Nation's child nutrition programs. We illustrated that the Republicans would rob Peter to pay Paul in order to support programs, such as school lunch, school breakfast, and WIC. Tonight, no games—just the sad, sorry truth.

The truth is if the Republican welfare reform proposal is enacted, thousands of children in this country will lose their access to a nutritious school lunch. The number I am placing on this map tonight represents the 3,600 children in my homestate of Connecticut who will be dropped from the School Lunch Program under the Republican proposal—and that's in the first year alone. The Republican plan cuts funding for school lunch and by doing so it cuts kids. The Republican plan takes money away from programs, like school lunch, which are efficient, effective, and working to keep our kids healthy and productive, for one reason and one reason only—to pay for tax cuts for the rich.

This is the truth. This is why the Republican welfare proposal must be defeated. I urge my colleagues to look at this map and contemplate the horror of these numbers. These numbers represent children—children who need our help and who are relying on us to do the right thing. I urge my colleagues to remember their needs when the time comes to cast this important vote.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from Puerto Rico [Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ].

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, we are witnessing an assault on the

children of this Nation. Many of our colleagues from the other side of the aisle know this and they still have time to address the draconian measures contained in the Republican welfare bill.

Good programs that work, that have bipartisan support, are being sacrificed under the guise of efficiency and savings. For example, the School Lunch Program has no guaranteed funding level in this bill, contrary to current law. Governors and State bureaucrats may assign only 80 percent of the funds of the block grant for school meals and will be able to divert up to 20 percent to other welfare programs. This may lead to the neglect of legitimate and vital nutrition needs for our children.

The concept of block grants is being sold as a panacea for all the ills related to welfare. The Republicans claim that administrative costs and bureaucracy will be cut by block granting programs. In fact, the Republican bill actually increases bureaucracy. Under current law, the administrative cap on the child nutrition programs—except WIC—is 1.8 percent. The proposed block grant increases such costs to 2 percent and adds another layer of State bureaucracy, charged now with even determining the immigration status of children.

The cuts to nutrition programs for children are real. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that this bill cuts \$7 billion in the next 5 years. To add insult to injury, the so-called savings will be used to finance tax cuts, subsidies, and perks for wealthy individuals and corporations. The Republican admit that these moneys are not geared toward deficit reduction but will go to pay for their special tax package, which will cost America over \$180 billion in the next 5 years. The cost is even higher when we take into consideration the harm this bill can inflict in programs that truly help our children.

Beginning in October, the start of the fiscal year, the School Lunch Program will suffer a cut of over \$140 million forcing approximately 503,000 needy children out of the program. This is only the tip of the iceberg, more children will be either forced out or underserved in years to come.

In my district, Puerto Rico, just as everywhere else in the Nation, the school breakfast and lunch programs have been excellent programs for many years. I assure you that healthy children equate with healthy minds. Feeding our students mean that they are ready and able to learn. As I have stated before, this is a simple premise, but it is a premise that has worked well since the original School Lunch Program was signed into law in 1946.

As a former mayor and Governor, I believe that it is a shame to destroy such a successful program. I have grave reservations about the effectiveness of a system of block grants where vitally necessary nutrition programs are forced to compete against each other

for increasingly scarce dollars. Local officials will have to juggle powerful local interests which will affect the distribution of the funds available under this massive block grant.

In Puerto Rico, for instance, the reduction of \$129 million less in Federal funding for nutrition assistance programs in the next 5 years, would limit our children's access to this important program, severely risking our children's nutrition and health.

There are many children in school in Puerto Rico who, unfortunately, must depend on the school nutrition program. Remember, Mr. Speaker, that these children can't vote and have no way to defend themselves in this welfare war. No student in Puerto Rico or elsewhere in the United States deserves to go to school hungry or suffer from malnutrition. Taking school lunches and breakfasts away from children will result in more children falling further behind because children simply don't learn as well when they are hungry.

Don't cut the school lunch program and other important nutrition programs. Don't continue expensive and inefficient corporate welfare programs and tax subsidies for wealthy corporations at the expense of our children's physical and emotional health. We need true welfare reform that helps people—not this mean-spirited Contract With America proposal that threatens our children, the handicapped, the poor, and the elderly.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. LOWEY].

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague.

Mr. Speaker, we all agree that reform of the welfare system is long overdue. The current system is costing billions and not solving the problem. It does not put people to work but instead has created an unhealthy cycle of dependency. But this bill does nothing to improve the welfare system so that children in poor families can themselves be successful and avoid a cycle of dependency. It does not make welfare work for children by moving their parents into work—rather, it would hurt children by moving their parents off the welfare rolls and onto the streets.

Let me outline the effect the majority's bill would have on children in New York: Over the next 5 years, 24,240 children would lose access to child care; 16,592 children would lose access to assistance and medical services under the SSI Program; 477,000 children living in poverty would lose cash assistance by the year 2000; in 1996, some 8,500 children would no longer receive assistance to buy school lunches.

Mr. Speaker, the majority's bill will not work for children and their families. That's why we support a bill that promotes work—and works for children.

Welfare to work—not welfare to nowhere.

WELFARE RESPONSIBILITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. GUTKNECHT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I simply want to quickly respond to two previous speakers. The gentlewoman from Connecticut made reference to cuts in the School Lunch Program in her State. Actually under our proposal Connecticut will receive more than \$3 million over what they received in this year's allotment.

The gentlewoman from New York also referenced reductions. We will actually increase funding under the Republican proposal by \$29.78 million in the State of New York. So this discussion of cuts in the School Lunch Programs is pure mythology.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to read a poem that I read earlier today, because we are hearing an awful lot about children in this discussion, and I think in some respects the children are being used in this debate as pawns in a much larger play.

But I would like to read a poem from Bill Bennett's "Book of Virtues." It is entitled "The Bridge Builder." I read it earlier today, and would like to read it again.

"An old man, going a lone highway,
Came, at the evening, cold and gray,
To a chasm, vast, and deep, and wide,
Through which was flowing a sullen tide.
The old man crossed in the twilight dim;
The sullen stream had no fears for him;
But he turned, when safe on the other side,
And built a bridge to span the tide.
"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim, near,
"You are wasting strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the ending day;
You never again must pass this way;
You have crossed the chasm, deep and wide—
Why build you the bridge at the eventide?"
The builder lifted his old gray head:
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,
"There followeth after me today
A youth, whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm, that has been naught to me,
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be.
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building the bridge for him.""

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about welfare reform, when we talk about reforming the way business has been done in Washington, when we talk about balancing the budget, what we are really talking about is saving the American dream for future generations. This is not some mean-spirited accounting exercise. It is serious business. Because right now when we talk about the children, what we are doing to the children, the truth of the matter is, and I think everyone here knows this, we are saddling our kids with a debt that they will not be able to pay off. The President's own advisors last year said if the Congress does not do