And third, we must be willing to face ourselves in the mirror and be honest with the American people about the failure of the Washington welfare system to help those who need it most. It is our responsibility as elected officials to acknowledge that Washington got it wrong, so that next time we can get it right.

The welfare trap in this country literally enslaves generations of Americans on Government assistance by depriving hope, diminishing opportunity, and destroying the lives of our precious children.

Just look at our inner cities. You will meet a generation fed on food stamps but starved of nurturing, hope, and basic education.

Yet every year Washington spends more money on more welfare programs, expanding the welfare trap from one child to another, from one generation to another. What the Democrats do not understand is that raising more taxes to expand a welfare system that does not work now will only make matters worse later.

And welfare is not the only problem facing children. Among industrialized nations at the start of this decade, we had the most murders, the worst schools, the most abortions, the highest infant mortality, the most illegitimacy, the most one-parent families, the most children in jail, and the most children on Government aid.

A Washington-based social policy does not help children. It destroys them. It does not keep families together. It tears them apart. Instead of turning urban areas of America into shining cities on a hill, it has made them into war zones.

We have spent $7 trillion on welfare-related programs, and yet we have more poverty, more crime, more drug addiction, more broken families, and more immoral behavior. The Washington welfare system is broken and needs to be shut down. We need to start over.

But there are alternatives that are less expensive and work better than the current system.

Why does Habitat for Humanity work so much better than HUD? Because Habitat for Humanity first requires recipients to learn the responsibility of home ownership, then requires them to build a home for someone else, and only then do they build their own home. What does HUD require? Absolutely nothing. Do you see the difference? The private charity requires something of the individual.

The current Washington-based welfare system demands no responsibility, no work ethic, no learning, no commitment, and in the end, no pride. What we need are local solutions that involve local citizens working with local children.

Spending more on the current Washington welfare system will not help children. We have to rebuild parents, families, and communities, but you cannot do it from Washington. It has to be done at home, in school, and at church.

But it is also time we tackle the problem of American culture.

Think of what your own children will be watching on television tonight. Think of what they will see at the movies this weekend. It is wrong, it's harmful, and we cannot tolerate it any longer. It's time to challenge the entertainment industry to end its decadent slide. What we tolerate today would have been unacceptable 25 years ago.

And so the question for America is whether we move into the future, or remain in the past. Do we demand more from parents, or do we leave it to Washington to solve all our ills? Do we return control of education to the local community, or do we run education from a Federal department in Washington? Do we change the welfare system and restore hope and optimism to the next generation, or do we continue to accept the welfare world of dependency, illegitimacy and despair?

And most importantly, do we make a real commitment to improve the lives of children across the country, or do we use children as political pawns in the upcoming election?

THE RETRAINING AND OUTPLACEMENT OPPORTUNITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Maryland [Mrs. MORELLA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced the Retraining and Outplacement Opportunity Act, legislation to help retrain Federal employees who are about to be separated by detailing them to the private sector or other agencies.

In light of the streamlining goals of the administration and the additional budget cuts proposed by the Congress, Federal workers are facing difficult times and are bracing themselves for more to come. Retirement and attrition will not add up to the 272,000 jobs mandated to be cut by the Workforce Restructuring Act of 1994. Agencies have been downsizing, and Federal workers know more reductions in force [RIF's] are imminent. Federal workers and Federal agencies are anxious about their future and the ramifications of further work force reductions.

I am a firm believer that loyalty must be repaid with loyalty. The Federal work force has provided outstanding services to this Nation, and now the Federal work force needs Congress' help. We must take this responsibility seriously and devise strategies that will help our Federal employees through this difficult transition.

Our strategies must center around two fundamental concepts: creating incentives for retirement and retraining displaced workers for jobs in the private sector.

Reform must allow for greater partnerships with the private sector, including extending the administration's idea of nonreimbursable details to the private sector. The legislation I introduced today would focus on retraining employees for the private sector through nonreimbursable details.

This legislation would permit an agency to allow an individual who has received a specific notice of separation or a certificate of expected separation to be placed on a nonreimbursable detail in another agency or private company for a period of up to 90 days while the Government pays his or her salary. After the 90-day period, the private sector would begin paying the salary. Unlike other details, the goal of this initiative is to place employees in these agencies and companies.

This bill would provide an employee and his or her agency to determine whether a potential match exists. The employee would have the opportunity to demonstrate his or her skills and ability, and the agency or company could evaluate the employee's likelihood of success.

This retraining opportunity would first be established as a demonstration project at the Department of Energy's Germantown, MD, facility. The DOE has been particularly hard hit by downsizing over the last 3 years. Recent cuts in the Department of Defense authorization threaten to impose substantial cuts of highly trained personnel and create a chaotic situation resulting from a massive RIF. These cuts would also divert time from critical cleanup programs, and I am actively fighting against these cuts. Regardless of whether these cuts occur, DOE is a good place to establish this demonstration project.

Within the current law, the administrators of this program would outline the plan, define the population, establish the selection criteria of candidates, and determine the agencies and companies that would be involved in the program.

If the detail occurs in the private sector, the employee would be considered an employee of the Federal Government and would retain all rights and privileges of a Federal employee until separated officially. The date of separation could be extended in the event that the employee would be separated before the detail ended. During the detail, the employee's compensation would be based on the employee's rate of pay before the detail. Private companies involved would set up an escrow account to store funds that would have been used for compensation had the employee been hired initially. If the employee is retained by the private company and remains for 2 years, the company would be required to transfer the money spent during the detail to the Treasury.

If the individual's work is satisfactory as defined under the agreement made by all parties, the individual would be given an offer, or, in the event that an offer could not be extended, the money would be reimbursed to the Government. If the individual is not satisfactory and not hired, the agency or company would not be forced to reimburse the Government. If the individual is extended an offer, he or she would become an employee of that agency or company on the day after the detail ends, at which time the former agency's financial obligation would end. Multiple details would be allowed, but the combined days for all details could not exceed 90 days.

This change could help Federal agencies be more proactive in the retraining of their employees for private sector jobs. This legislation provides an important window of opportunity for Federal employees who are facing the uncertainty and anxiety of losing their jobs.

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THE NEED TO REFORM FEDERAL TRAVEL PRACTICES AND SAVE $300 MILLION A YEAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. HORN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, there is a fundamental need to reform the Federal travel practices and thus save at least $300 million a year. Today on behalf of the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX] and myself, I am introducing H.R. 3637, to improve travel management in the Federal Government.

The Federal Government is far behind the best practices of private sector firms. At long last, we need to adopt practices common in the private sector in order to save the taxpayers money. According to the General Accounting Office, Federal agencies spent $7.6 billion in fiscal year 1994 on travel, including transportation, lodging, rental cars, other travel related expenses related to two types of travel: Temporary duty and permanent relocation.

Administrative costs to implement the current travel regulations and practices of the Federal Government are also significant. In the private sector, the costs to complete a travel voucher are about $15. In the public sector, the Federal sector, the cost to process a single travel voucher can be as high as $123. Since there are 10 million vouchers processed each year, the Federal Government must reengineer its travel management practices in order to achieve significant savings.

The Federal Government needs to reform its travel processes if we are to succeed in saving $300 million every year. The General Services Administration needs to update the Federal travel regulations, and H.R. 3637 will be ensuring that change and reform can be done in a way that increases savings and decreases the amount spent by Federal agencies on travel. H.R. 3637 has been endorsed by the joint financial management improvement project, which includes membership from the General Accounting Office, part of the legislative branch, and the Office of Management and Budget, the General Services Administration and the Office of Personnel Management, as well as the Department of the Treasury. These are the experts in travel management in Federal agencies.

In addition, the strong support of Senator COHEN of Maine has been instrumental in providing Federal agencies with the spur that was needed to develop these proposals which are designed to reduce costs and to provide agency flexibility. I commend Senator COHEN's efforts, and we will be working with him to enact this important measure.

As we begin the process of balancing the Federal budget, Congress must look to Federal agency managers and its employees to find innovative and creative ways to save travel dollars. H.R. 3637 represents an important part of that effort. According to the joint financial management improvement project, $300 million per year may be saved from the appropriated funds of the taxpayers. By reducing the administrative burden, we can achieve substantial savings by passing H.R. 3637, the Travel Reform and Savings Act of 1996.

Mr. Speaker, I ask consent that a summary of H.R. 3637 be printed at the end of my remarks.

SUMMARY OF THE TRAVEL REFORM AND SAVINGS ACT OF 1996

Section 1. Short title—Travel Reform and Savings Act of 1996.

Section 2. Table of contents.

Title I. Relocation Benefits.

Section 101. Modification of allowance for seeking permanent residence quarters.

This section would authorize the payment of pre-determined travel expenses for househunting trips for relocating Federal employees. In the private sector, predetermined cost reimbursement is already used for househunting trips because of simplicity to administer, administrative cost savings, and the flexibility it gives Federal employees to manage their move.

According to a Joint Financial Management Improvement Project [JFMIP] report entitled Improving Travel Management Governmentwide, this change would save $10.8 million per year.

Section 102. Modification of temporary quarters subsistence expenses allowance.

This section would authorize the payment of pre-determined travel costs associated with temporary quarters. While seeking permanent quarters, a relocating employee must often occupy temporary quarters. Federal agencies currently authorize up to 120 days of expenses. This change would limit this time to 60 days, and provide an amount pre-determined by the agency.

According to the JFMIP report, this change would save $59.2 million per year.

Section 103. Modification of residence transaction expense allowance.

This authorizes agencies to use cost-reimbursable pricing for relocation service contracts. Currently, the Federal Travel Regulation limits relocation home sale payments made by agencies to direct reimbursement of closing costs. This section would authorize the payment of actual costs, overhead, and a performance-based fee designed to speed up the home sale.

This limits the liability of the Federal Government by shifting to the contractor the risk that the home will take a long time to sell, and that the contractor's expenses will exceed the fixed payment. Agencies that exercise this authority will need to manage the risk that the home will take a long time to sell.

According to the JFMIP report, this change would save $33.1 million per year.

Section 104. Authority to pay for property management services.

When an employee transfers for a limited time period, it may be cost-effective for the employee to rent rather than sell his home in the old duty station. This is particularly true in instances when the employee will return to the old duty station. Since the costs borne by agencies of selling a home are larger than the cost of reimbursing property management fees, there are savings which could be achieved by allowing Federal employees this option.

According to the JFMIP report, this change would save $1.5 million per year.

Section 105. Authority to provide employment assistance services to the spouse of a transferring employee.

When a dual career family moves, the accompanying spouse must find employment without the assistance of the Federal Government. This results in the loss of a second income, and often Federal transferees are unable to qualify for home mortgages without the second income. This provision gives agencies discretionary authority to provide some level of job placement to relocating spouses, when deemed in the best interests of the Federal Government.

According to the JFMIP report, this change would cost $5.9 million per year.

Section 106. Authority to transport a privately owned motor vehicle within the continental United States.

Current statute prohibits the shipment of a vehicle to a new duty station within the continental United States. Agencies reimburse the transferee for mileage, plus a per diem, which generally exceed the costs of shipping the vehicle and using a more expeditious mode of transportation to relocate the employee. Requiring that vehicles be driven to the new duty station also requires extended administrative leave, thus increasing costs and reducing efficiency.

According to the JFMIP report, this change would save $7.9 million per year.

Section 107. Authority to pay limited relocation allowances to an employee who is performing an extended assignment.

This section authorizes agencies to pay for permanent change of station expenses in lieu of the daily per diem allowance for extended assignments. Since employee costs are lower over a longer-period of time, many employees receive an allowance that exceeds what is needed to cover expenses. This provides the option to reduce costs by providing permanent change of station expenses, which can include en route travel and transportation, shipment of vehicles, househunting trips (if necessary) and lease breaking expenses. Employees would not be eligible for expenses related to disposing or maintaining residences at the official duty station.

According to the JFMIP report, this change would save $14.5 million per year.

Section 108. Authority to pay a home marketing incentive.

Most Federal agencies currently offer some of their transferees the assistance of a relocation contractor to market and sell their home. The fees charged by the contractor are typically based on a percentage of the home's value, and are quite large. A pilot in the Social Security Administration demonstrated that allowing employees to sell their own homes and be paid a fixed fee can save Federal agencies large figures.

According to the JFMIP report, this change would save $142.2 million per year.