

EMERGENCY STUDENT LOAN CONSOLIDATION ACT OF 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL LUTHER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 21, 1997

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 2535 because I am very concerned that our higher education graduates are in need of greater assistance as they consolidate their student loan debts after graduation and begin the process of repayment.

Currently there is a backlog of between 80,000 to 86,000 student loan consolidation applications at the U.S. Department of Education. Graduates need this tool to effectively manage school debt, while at the same time embarking on their careers and often starting families. The consolidation program was enacted originally in 1993 as an initiative of the Clinton administration. The concept was good then, and it's good now, and with H.R. 2535, borrowers will be able to consolidate their loans with guarantee agencies and private lenders.

I want to thank subcommittee Chairman MCKEON and ranking member KILDEE for bringing this legislation to the floor in a timely fashion. I'm also pleased with the bipartisan approach to this issue. Helping people attain a higher education, and providing support for the repayment of the debt accumulated in the pursuit of that education, is a shared goal. Again, thanks to all involved in this effort, and I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

DEMOCRACY IN COLOMBIA

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, on October 26, 1997, Colombia attempted to conduct nationwide municipal elections despite the deadly impact of guerrilla scare tactics on voter turnout and candidate participation. The municipal elections in Colombia were marred by a brutal campaign of violence, kidnapping, and extortion carried out by the guerrilla movements of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC] and the National Liberation Army [ELN]. While the electoral process may have succeeded in the urban areas, the lack of participation in the rural sectors reflects the serious threat to the democratic process posed by the guerrilla war.

Through the deadly efforts of the FARC and ELN, 40 political candidates were murdered; over 1,900 candidates were forced to abandon their campaigns; nearly 120 municipalities had candidates reluctantly running; and 11 municipalities had no candidates at all. The situation continued to deteriorate during the week before the elections when FARC and ELN terrorist activities escalated into a national crisis with the kidnapping of international election observers from the OAS and a declaration of an armed strike in order to impede public transportation during the crucial time of the elections.

Largely responsible for the escalation of FARC and the ELN activities over the last

couple of years is the increase in funding from narcotics trafficking. This has enabled both guerrilla elements to effectively quadruple their power base over the past 7 years so that it is now estimated that they control up to 40 percent of the territory of Colombia.

It is clear that the leaders of the FARC and ELN have resisted all overtures by the Government of Colombia to end the violence and establish peace. With nearly 70,000 people dead as a direct result of the guerrilla war in the last decade, it is past time to find a solution to this crisis. As reflected in the recent municipal elections, the campaign of the FARC and ELN now present a direct threat to the very democracy of Colombia and stability to the region.

In response to the critical situation in Colombia, I am introducing legislation that would:

First, recognize the importance of the threat of the guerrilla movement to Colombia's democracy and that the acts of violence to disrupt the electoral process in the municipal elections could spill over to the congressional and presidential elections to be held in 1998;

Second, urge the guerrilla leaders of the FARC and ELN to end the violence and sever their relationship with narcotics traffickers; negotiate a peace accord with the Government of Colombia and to take their agenda into the political arena for debate;

Third, call upon the international community, particularly the Organization of American States, to continue to play a more pro-active role in resolving the conflict; and

Fourth, urge the administration to reevaluate United States policies toward Colombia taking into account the threat of the guerrilla movement to Colombia's democracy, and to encourage a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Mr. Speaker, Colombia's democracy is one of the oldest and most important democracies in the hemisphere. It is critical for the stability of the hemisphere that this guerrilla movement, like all the others in the region, come to an end. Peace, political stability, and economic prosperity must be given the highest priority for all nations.

HONORING THE CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

HON. RONALD V. DELLUMS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Mr. DELLUMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Center for Independent Living's 25th anniversary. It is appropriate at this time to highlight its many achievements and to underscore the positive impact that it has made in the local community.

The Center for Independent Living, the first of its kind, was established in 1972 for the purpose of allowing people with disabilities to live independently, to attain their productive potential, and to participate fully in all aspects of society. Throughout its history, the Center for Independent Living has played a pioneering role in advocating architectural changes to make the community more physically accessible, instructing in techniques of independent living, and offering a core of essential services. This comprehensive package of services to help people with disabilities is offered in the belief that it is the most effective way to serve

clients who have complex and interconnected needs.

Currently there are 30 Centers for Independent Living throughout California, and over 300 throughout the country, which are modeled after the Center for Independent Living in Berkeley. The services that it offers include advocacy, attendant referral, blind services, deaf services, employment services, peer support services, youth services, services for people with mental disabilities, independent living skills information and referral, a client enhancement and empowerment project, and housing. Berkeley's Center for Independent Living has increased the quality of life for thousands of people with disabilities, independent living has increased the quality of life for thousands of people with disabilities locally, nationally, and internationally, and was involved in the passage of the 504 Act of 1973, State title XXIV, and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990.

The Center for Independent Living has brought national and international attention to the state of California and the Nation as a leader in assuring access to people with disabilities, I commend the Center for Independent Living for all its hard work, dedication, and commitment to our community as well as to the Nation.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO EN- COURAGE THE SALE OF LARGE PLEASURE BOATS

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill that would greatly enhance the international yachting industry in the United States.

Most people are unaware how the sale or even the mere presence of large foreign-owned pleasure boats docked at a domestic port contributes to the local economy. A single large luxury boat can literally pump tens of thousands of dollars into the local economy a month. For example, the cost of supporting a crew, docking fees, boat repairs, supplies, and other related expenditures while the boat is moored at a domestic marina all help the economy and create jobs. Attracting these types of vessels to our shores is therefore beneficial to the economy. In fact, in my congressional district, a significant segment of the local economy is based on the recreational boating trade and its attendant services.

Unfortunately, current law and customs regulations as applied to large yachts have the unintended consequence of discouraging the sale of these vessels domestically. This is primarily for two reasons. First, when the yacht is imported into the United States for sale, the duty must be paid immediately, whether the yacht is eventually sold or not. This requirement is onerous for the yacht seller, because if the yacht is not sold, he or she cannot get a timely or full refund of the duty. This is due to the lengthy procedure—9 months to a year—that the Customs Service administrative process takes. If the value of the yacht exceeds \$1 million, the loss of funds to the seller can be quite substantial.

Second, there is an old maxim among boaters that "every boat is for sale." Consider this

scenario: a foreign boatowner enters U.S. waters, without intending to sell his or her boat. An interested buyer propositions the foreign owner, and informal negotiations ensue. Once the owner of the foreign boat offers the vessel for sale—and this sometimes can be a gray area—if a duty has not been paid on the boat, it can be immediately seized by the Customs Service. While such actions by the Customs Service are rare, this policy has a chilling effect on potential foreign boat sellers interested in entering the country because they are fearful their boats will be seized and impounded even if they casually talk to someone interested in purchasing their boat. To avoid this risk, some of these sellers conclude the sale of the boat offshore, where no duty is paid and no economic benefits are realized for the local economy.

My bill would remedy this problem by deferring payment of the duty on large pleasure boats until after the sale has been consummated. In order to ensure that the duty is paid when the boat is sold, the foreign seller would be mandated to post a bond, the value of which would be twice the amount of the duty. Because the value of the bond would be twice the duty on the boat the Federal Government would be virtually guaranteed of receiving its duty. Moreover, I have narrowly tailored this legislation so it applies only to large pleasure boats that are intended to be sold at domestic boat shows. I am hopeful this provision has the effect of not only promoting America's boat shows—which are among the largest and best in the world—but also ensuring the sale of these boats occur in an orderly setting.

Mr. Speaker, south Florida is the boating capital of the world. My bill helps make our ports and boat shows more attractive to international yacht sellers. Because this type of economic activity is highly beneficial to the economy, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

TRIBUTE TO DR. S. TIMOTHY ROSE

HON. JAY W. JOHNSON

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay tribute to a gentleman from Appleton, WI, Dr. S. Timothy Rose.

When the 139th annual session of the American Dental Association ended yesterday in San Francisco, CA, Dr. Rose became the organization's new president.

Dr. Rose has served 27 years in the American Dental Association, and has given his leadership to a host of other member organizations, such as the Wisconsin Dental Association, the Outagamie County Dental Association, the Midwest Society of Periodontics, and the Wisconsin Society of Periodontics. He has also served his Nation as a Major in the U.S. Army Dental Corps.

But Dr. Rose's commitments do not simply begin and end with dentistry. He has given his time to the Board of Directors of the Fox Alley Arts Alliance, the Friends of Hearststone, the Tri Park Development Corp. and the American Cancer Society. In addition, Dr. Rose is an elder in his church, Memorial Presbyterian Church of Appleton.

I know my colleagues will join me today in wishing Dr. Rose, his wife, Ginny, and his children, Cathy, Tom, and Jim our warmest wishes as he takes on this new and challenging responsibility.

THE DISABLED SPORTSMEN'S ACCESS ACT

HON. RANDY 'DUKE' CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Disabled Sportsmen's Access Act. This legislation will expand opportunities for sportsmen with disabilities to hunt and fish on Department of Defense facilities. In addition, this legislation allows the Department to work with private organizations to construct facilities and operate programs for sportsmen with disabilities.

This legislation is based on a program run at nearby Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA. This program, run by Lt. Col. Lewis Deal, is one of the Nation's most successful disabled hunting programs. With the help of volunteers and donated materials, Col. Deal has built eight permanent disabled accessible blinds for deer hunting. All eight of these are in use during both gun and bow seasons. These structures are mini decks built on high ground looking down a slope where game walks below. For these decks to be successful, it is important that they are constructed large enough for a wheel chair to turn around on and camouflaged from game. Once cleared pathways from the main access roads make them accessible, these stands make hunting much easier for many sportsmen with disabilities.

In addition, Quantico is in the process of constructing a fishing pier accessible for people with disabilities. This pier, designed by the Paralyzed Veterans of America, will be a model for everyone in America to use. They will construct their pier with lowered railings, providing access for individuals to reach over, and stops on the side of the pier to prevent individuals from falling off the sides.

The Disabled Sportsmen's Access Act builds upon this program by encouraging the Department of Defense in managing its 30 million acres of wildlands to provide improved access for disabled individuals, when appropriate and within the military mission. This bill protects the primary purpose of our Nation's military, the defense of our Nation.

Our military installations offer numerous outdoor recreational programs and opportunities for both civilian and military personnel. However, there has never been a concentrated effort at Department of Defense facilities to provide access and opportunity for persons with disabilities.

While encouraging the Department of Defense to give access to individuals with disabilities, this legislation allows the Department of Defense to accept donations of money, material, and volunteers for the construction of facilities accessible to sportsmen with disabilities. Under this bill, the Department of Defense can use volunteers and organizations that serve people with disabilities to construct facilities and operate programs—at no cost to the Federal Government.

The bipartisan Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus has endorsed this legislation and

many of my colleagues have joined me as co-sponsors. It is also endorsed by the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Disabled American Veterans, Wheeling Sportsmen of America, Safari Club International, Wildlife Management Institute, the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

TRIBUTE TO ADEA JUNIOUS AND JESSICA FISHER

HON. NEWT GINGRICH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to commend two young ladies from Smyrna, GA, who recently displayed an enormous amount of personal character.

Adea Junious, 13, and Jessica Fisher, 14, found more than \$17,000 in a bag at a local Kmart. With both girls coming from financially struggling families, there was a natural temptation to keep the money for college tuition, a new car, or even a shopping spree.

Adea and Jessica, however, resisted that temptation and did the right thing. They turned the money in to the store's manager, who then called the police.

"We thought someone had lost their life savings," Adea said. "We didn't think anyone would take that much money out of the bank and go shopping at Kmart."

"Maybe they were going to use the money to buy a house or for college," Jessica added.

The police were able to track down the owners of the money, a Hispanic couple who had intended to use that money to meet payroll of their local business.

Each girl was rewarded with a CD boombox, a \$50 gift certificate, and a certificate of appreciation for her good deed by the management of the Kmart on South Cobb Drive where the money was found.

Additionally, the Friends of Smyrna Library has dedicated to each girl a book focusing on African-American characters. Each girl's book is inscribed with her name.

Personal strength, as exhibited by these young ladies, is based on integrity, and it is one of the key pillars upon which American civilization was founded. I am honored to represent such fine upstanding citizens as Adea and Jessica. I hope that they will serve as role models for their peers.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHAN SAEED NOURMAND

HON. JULIAN C. DIXON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Mr. Stephan Saeed Nourmand, president of the Beverly Hills/Greater Los Angeles Association of Realtors [BH/GLAAR]. For the past year, Saeed, as he is more affectionately known by his friends and colleagues, has provided exemplary leadership to BH/GLAAR, an