

to keep pace with the times." This inventor, Madam Speaker, was Thomas Jefferson and he knew a little bit about the Constitution, which charges the Congress with the duty of promoting the progress of science and useful arts through intellectual property.

None of us discharges his or her duty by pandering to the worst instincts of other people. Nor do we honor ourselves by pretending that complex and arcane subject matter is easily and snappily explained. The regrettable effect of the two lectures just described is that they may motivate 20 or 30 people in some Member's district to write or call urging a "no" vote on the patent bill. I urge support of the patent bill.

SEXUAL PREDATORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. GRANGER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. LAMPSON] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMPSON. Madam Speaker, yesterday the people of Friendswood, TX, whose lives have been inexorably altered by the kidnapping and murder of 12-year-old Laura Kate Smither, saw a light at the end of their tunnel. Police Chief Jared Stout announced yesterday that they had a prime suspect who was in custody. The Friendswood police were able to name this suspect after his arrest for kidnapping a 19-year-old woman from a nearby community called Webster.

In the case for which this suspect was arrested, he approached a young woman changing a flat tire and offered assistance, but as he approached, he pulled a knife on her and ordered her into his truck. This woman escaped by throwing herself out of his truck, which was moving down an interstate highway at 70 miles an hour sustaining significant injuries.

That was not the first time this individual had attacked a woman. The prime suspect in the murder of Laura Smither had been sentenced on December 18, 1986, to a total of 28 years for convictions on charges of aggravated kidnapping, forcible oral sodomy, and rape. He was released a year ago. He served less than half of that sentence, and now this man has been named as the prime suspect in the slaying of Laura Smither.

In less than a year, this individual, who had committed previous acts of kidnapping and violent sexual assault, has already been charged with aggravated kidnapping again. It is outrageous. Scientific data demonstrates that individuals who commit sex crimes against children have the highest recidivism rate of any criminal. It is irresponsible, if not downright negligent to release this individual back into society after serving only 10 years of a 28-year sentence for aggravated kidnapping, forcible oral sodomy and rape.

Violence against women and children cannot be tolerated. It cannot be excused. It cannot be swept under the rug. Rape and sexual violence are not minor offenses. They are violent attacks that violate the body and violate the human spirit. These crimes must be punished swiftly and severely. An Oklahoma court tried to do that when it sentenced this man to 28 years in prison. But somehow in that State's criminal justice system someone decided that 10 years was enough for that rapist. And less than a year later, one 19-year-old woman had to throw herself out of a truck to save herself, traveling 70 miles an hour down a highway sustaining significant injuries, to save herself from a rapist. And when Chief Stout's investigation is completed, we are likely to learn that this individual has committed a total of three acts of aggravated kidnapping, one act of forcible oral sodomy and two rapes and a murder.

We cannot lose these people in this system. Yes, this man was registered as a sex offender, but if he had been an incarcerated sex offender as he was sentenced, we might have a 12-year-old child alive today.

As for Bob and Gay Smither, they may soon know for certain who took their little girl away never to return again. That is little solace, but that is what the Friendswood Police Department has worked so hard to accomplish since we discovered Laura's body on April 20. We thank and salute them and the Webster Police Department, as well. And today we still pray, as many did last night gathered in Stevenson Park in Texas. We are all still mourning, and worst of all, we must continue to pray for the safe return of Jessica Cain, who has kidnapped from the same vicinity on August 17.

It was the way the community came together to search for Laura that spurred me to form the Congressional Caucus on Missing and Exploited Children. I am proud of the fact that 80 of our colleagues in the House have joined the effort to protect our children and reunite families. But this morning, Madam Speaker, I am frustrated and angry. Whatever we do here in Congress will not matter a bit if we do not punish these sexual predators and make them serve their full sentences in prison. Madam Speaker, we cannot allow more of these tragedies.

FDA'S MISGUIDED POLICY COULD HARM PATIENTS WITH RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, on March 6, 1997, the FDA issued an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking, which set forth its plan to ban CFC-containing metered-dose inhalers once certain criteria are met. The plan was

developed in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency and is intended to eliminate the minuscule amount of CFC's currently allowed to be used for medication delivered by metered-dose inhalers.

CFC is the abbreviated term used to refer to chlorofluorocarbon gas. There are tens of millions of Americans who suffer from asthma; 5 million of those are children. These patients depend upon CFC-propelled metered-dose inhalers to treat their asthma and to help them breathe. With over 5,000 deaths each year in America due to asthma, I am convinced that the FDA's rule would eliminate treatment options for asthmatic patients.

Today, I want to talk about H.R. 2221, legislation that I, along with my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH], introduced on July 22 of this year. Since that time I have received tremendous support from all over the country. With 28 cosponsors, the bill continues to receive new cosponsors daily. The bill would require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to take no further action on the FDA's proposed ban on CFC-containing metered-dose inhalers.

My colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH], and I are working with Members from the House and Senate from the relevant committees in an effort to add language in the conference report to the Food and Drug Reform legislation. It will direct the FDA to withdraw its March 6, 1997, advanced notice of proposed rulemaking and to take no further action to promulgate a proposed final rule on the basis of such advanced notice.

Madam Speaker, recently it has been pointed out in several leading publications, including the Wall Street Journal editorial dated September 17, 1997, that asthma is on the rise in our Nation. It is the most common chronic illness affecting children. In fact, among children's chronic diseases, asthma is the No. 1 reason for school absenteeism. Asthma mortality is also on the rise. Explanations for the increasing prevalence, morbidity and mortality are varied. Regardless, these populations include children, especially poor children living in urban areas.

Are not these the very children that the EPA claims it is helping with its new air quality standards? This misguided policy is definitely the case of one hand not knowing what the other hand is doing.

With one hand, the EPA presents new air quality standards that are supposed to protect the health of asthmatic children, while on the other, the FDA proposes to ban life-saving metered-dose inhalers from the market. The result of these actions would be to deny these children the treatment to help them to lead almost normal lives.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues on the conference to adopt the language that I have presented and outlined in their final report. I urge my

colleagues to support our bill, H.R. 2221, by becoming a cosponsor.

YOUTH SUMMIT '97

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House about an exciting and successful event that I sponsored in Ayden, NC, Saturday, October 18. This event, called Youth Summit '97, is an annual event for students that I have sponsored for the last 5 years. Each year, I am particularly pleased that the turnout is equal or greater than the one the previous year.

This year's summit brought together an impressive number of youth; over 600 participated. It was certainly an inspiration to see so many students expressing their interests in pursuing an education. Most of the youth were minority students throughout eastern North Carolina. Many came with school or church groups, while others came with their parents.

The youth summit was held this year in Pitt County at a local school called Ayden-Grifton High School. Over the past several years, I have sponsored the event in different counties exposing students throughout North Carolina to the seminar.

The youth summit is designed to expose children to educational opportunities afforded to them, to reaffirm the importance of their skills and competency development, to alert the children to explore all job and career options they have, and to remind and to encourage students that they should pursue their goals to their utmost ability.

The summit also prepares students about the entire process of applying to colleges, from testing procedures to the availability of financial aid. Because I feel that the financial aid is so important to students, particularly those who come from low-income homes, we explained to the students just exactly what has transpired in Congress this session regarding funding for education.

For example, we discussed and explained the legislation enacted granting increases in title I funding and what effects these increases would have particularly on particular families. The increases included, \$1,500 HOPE scholarships, the increase in Pell grants by 26 percent, the largest in the last 20 years, and 20-percent tuition tax credit for families with students in their third and fourth year of college and universities.

These increases are so critical for North Carolina's educational success, and particularly important for the educationally disadvantaged. According to the U.S. Department of Education, North Carolina families will tremendously benefit from the increase in the

scholarships and grants appropriated by title I.

Not only was the event an informational session, but the summit was also a forum where several speakers made their presentation. It also was a social event. Several speakers included guidance counselors, pastors, doctors, professors, judges, county commissioners, and representatives from the military academy. They spoke on a wide range of topics, including testing, financial aid, job career opportunities, parent-child communication, self-esteem, service academies, and the church's role in the development of our youth.

Additionally, our session three students explained just how difficult it was and their struggle from their path to make sure they would become adults.

The youth summit reinforced how essential education is for students and their communities. In order to be entirely successful, however, students must appreciate the importance of developing values and morals in their life, in addition to education they receive in attending class.

I am particularly pleased with the youth summit's success this year and I am looking forward to many future youth summits in North Carolina. These annual events seem to have such a positive effect, not only on the children, but on their parents and other communities. Therefore, I am also recommending to my colleagues that they do similar in their districts.

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H.R. 2564, MARRIAGE TAX ELIMINATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. WELLER] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELLER. Madam Speaker, today I stand here to speak in favor of H.R. 2564, legislation entitled the Marriage Tax Elimination Act, which many of us believe should be the centerpiece of next year's budget. And I am proud to report that the Marriage Tax Elimination Act today has 222 cosponsors. Members of both parties have joined with us in this very important effort.

Let me explain why elimination of the marriage tax is so important; why bipartisan support is needed and so necessary for the Marriage Tax Elimination Act, with some three very simple questions:

Do Americans feel that it is fair that our Tax Code imposes a higher tax penalty on marriage? Do Americans feel that it is fair that 21 million married working couples pay almost \$1,400 more a year in taxes just because they are married; \$1,400 more than an identical couple living together outside of marriage? Do Americans feel it is morally right that our Tax Code provides a financial incentive to divorce?

I think the answer is pretty clear. The marriage tax is not only unfair, it

is wrong, it is immoral. It is immoral that our Tax Code punishes our society's most basic institution, which is marriage. And, according to the Congressional Budget Office, this marriage tax is imposed on 21 million married working couples for an average of \$1,400 more in taxes just because they are married.

Let me give my colleagues an example of a couple from my district in Illinois, a couple with the combined income of \$61,000. This particular couple, and I will say the husband is a machinist at the Joliet Caterpillar plant, the wife is a schoolteacher at the Joliet public schools. They each have essentially identical incomes, right around \$30,000.

If this couple were two singles, say living together outside of marriage, they would each be in the 15-percent tax bracket, after considering the standard deductions and exemptions. But because as a married couple they file jointly, their combined income, which is almost \$61,000, they are pushed into the 28-percent tax bracket.

For this married couple, this machinist at the Joliet Caterpillar plant, this public schoolteacher at the Joliet public schools, they pay almost \$1,400 more in higher taxes just because they got married. And do the American taxpayers believe that it is right that we impose a higher tax on this Joliet couple just because they are married?

Think about it, what that \$1,400 would mean for an average married working couple. Fourteen hundred dollars is several months worth of a car payment, tuition at the Joliet Junior College, or tuition at a local parochial or private or religious school for their child. Of course, even a portion of a downpayment on a home.

Let me quote Mike Reading from Monee, IL, who many have talked with about the Marriage Tax Elimination Act, and Mike says, you know, "You try and be honest and do things straight, and you get penalized for it. That's just not right."

Well, that is really what it is all about. This is an issue of right and wrong. The marriage tax is wrong. We proposed the Marriage Tax Elimination Act to do something about it, and we really want to provide an issue of fairness by giving working married couples the power to choose their filing status. Very simple.

Under the Marriage Tax Elimination Act, this Joliet machinist and Joliet public schoolteacher would be able to choose to file each as single, even while they are married, to be able to enjoy the same tax rate as that couple who lives together outside of marriage. That would save this couple \$1,400, money they could spend to meet their family's needs.

And I am pleased that our efforts to eliminate the marriage tax penalty, which now has 222 cosponsors for the Marriage Tax Elimination Act, is gaining momentum. I am proud our efforts have been endorsed by the Joliet Herald News. The hometown newspaper for