

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE CHILD CARE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Child Care Quality Improvement Act of 1999. As more and more families with infants and young children are forced to send both parents to work, the need for child care—especially infant care and care at non-traditional hours—continues to expand. As the need for care grows however, startling findings in a study on the cost and quality of child care by the University of Colorado at Denver's Department of Economics report that more than 80% of child care services in the U.S. is thought to be of poor or average quality.

I want to make sure we're not missing the mark. Although it is true that child care is in short supply and is too expensive for many families to afford, we must not allow the demand for child care services to override the need for quality. It is critical that children receive care that promotes their healthy growth and development. We cannot allow them to be placed in substandard conditions.

Today I am introducing the Child Care Quality Improvement Act of 1999, to help states increase and meet their child care quality goals. My bill would provide funding for Quality Improvement Grants to be transferred to local child care collaboratives.

Grants would be made by the Federal government to states which have established goals for child care quality improvements in six areas: increased training for staff, enhanced licensing standards, reduced numbers of unlicensed facilities, increased monitoring and enforcement, reduce caregiver turnover, and higher levels of accreditation. States would then make grants to local child care collaboratives to make quality improvements.

My bill take a benchmarking approach that helps states define quality targets and measures the states' progress toward meeting their long-term quality goals. State plans would be subject to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for approval and monitoring. States would be required to report to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on their progress in meeting their quality goals in order to remain eligible for future funding.

I am introducing this legislation in response to a report by the General Accounting Office (GAO) which found that most states lack strong standards for quality child care, such as requiring a sufficient educational training level of child care workers, keeping child to staff ratios low, and requiring safety and health provision on hand washing and playground equipment safety. The report further concluded that child care center staff turnover—which hurts the quality of care children receive—is very high and is largely due to the extremely low level of pay teachers in child care centers receive.

I have sought the expertise of child care professional and early childhood development specialist across the country, including Dr. Edward Zigler, Sterling Professor of Psychology, former Director of which is now the Administration for Children, Youth and Families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and founder of the federal Head Start Program. Dr. Zigler tells us that a national policy to encourage an increase in state quality standards is of great value, and that the goal of this legislation—to improve child care services in the states—is both necessary and urgent.

Congress has wrongly refused to require significant quality standards for the child care dollars we allocate each year. The federal government should give states the resources to raise state quality standards and improve child care quality at the local level, but only through a system of measurable indicators of desired outcomes. We must allocate these funds with the guarantee that incentive grants will continue to raise standards and improve the quality of care.

As the father of a young son, I know the difficulty families face when choosing a caregiver for their children. My bill gives families peace of mind by encouraging the state and local facilities across the country to provide the high quality of care every child deserves.

HONORING THE VOLUNTEERS OF ST. MARY'S/GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to recognize the volunteer corps who make up the "backbone" for St. Mary's/Good Samaritan Hospital's Centralia and Mt. Vernon campuses.

Volunteers such as founding member Pat Bunchman, Mercedes Campbell, Barbara Francois, and Pauline Raines, represent some of the longest-serving members of the volunteer group. These hospital auxiliary groups provide volunteer service and funding thus far of \$1 million for patient and hospital equipment since they began their efforts.

Pauline Raines said the volunteering needs "patience," "commitment," and being a "people-person." The ability for these tasks to be put to use and the initiative to implement these programs are a tribute to what the United States stands for. It is a wonderful thing to see American values exhibited in such a benevolent and rewarding program such as the hospital auxiliary groups of St. Mary's/Good Samaritan Hospital.

I applaud their volunteer service, and site it as a testament of volunteerism aiding our communities and enriching our lives.

RECOGNIZING LAMBERTVILLE'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Lambertville, New Jersey's sesquicentennial. Lambertville is a historic town, which has been and continues to be a source of pride for the state of New Jersey. I am proud to represent it in Congress.

Lambertville first grew to prominence as a key stop along the Old York Road, the main route from Philadelphia to New York, in the early 1700's. At the beginning of the 19th century, the building of the Delaware and Raritan Canal helped the town become a leading industrial center for manufacturing. Railroads began to take on much of the canal traffic in the late 1800s, and Lambertville retained its importance as a trade center by serving as the headquarters of the Pennsylvania-Belvidere Railroad. By the turn of the century, more than 3000 factory workers produced such items as wooden wagon wheels, rubber boots, railway cars, bottled beer, and ceramic white ware within the town's borders.

Although Lambertville's factories and mills are closed today, the town continues to thrive. The historic downtown district offers art galleries, antique shops, and a variety of wonderful restaurants. Lambertville retains a colonial charm, with Victorian, Colonial, and Federal styled buildings housing its 4,000 residents. The annual Shad festival in April, a two-day event that marks the arrival of spring and the run of the shad fish upstream to the Delaware River, salutes ongoing efforts to revitalize and maintain the quality of our water.

Lambertville's celebrations of its anniversary will be taking place throughout the summer. In the spring, a documentary on the town will be released.

Lambertville, New Jersey represents the best of small town life. As we look for ways to control development and to create livable communities, Lambertville offers a vibrant, positive example. I urge all my colleagues to join me in recognizing the town of Lambertville on its sesquicentennial.

HONORING THE GRADUATES OF THE 90TH PRECINCT

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating special graduates of the 12th Congressional District of New York. I am certain that this day marks the culmination of much effort and hard work which

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

has led and will lead them to continued success. In these times of uncertainty, limited resources, and random violence in our communities and schools, it is encouraging to know that they have overcome these obstacles and succeeded.

These students have learned that education is priceless. They understand that education is the tool to new opportunities and greater endeavors. Their success is not only a tribute to their strength but also to the support they have received from their parents and loved ones.

In closing, I encourage all my colleagues to support the education of the youth of America. With a solid education, today's youth will be tomorrow's leaders. And as we approach the new millennium, it is our responsibility to pave the road for this great Nation's future. Members of the U.S. House of Representatives, I ask you to join me in congratulating the following Academic Achievement Award Recipients:

Christian Nitti and Joshua Romero—PS 16.
 Massiel Santana and Josette Dueno—PS 18.
 Pearl Ramos and Andrew Vasquez—PS 19.
 David Rodriguez and Cindy Escoboza—PS 84.
 Lasnette O'Garro and Jose Lozada—PS 147.
 Steven Rodriguez and Janyra Quinones—PS 196.
 Giselle Burgos and Christina Santiago—PS 250.
 Kimberly Gonzalez and David Quinga—PS 257.
 Michelle Rivera and Ior Kretowicz—Most Holy Trinity R.C.
 Jennifer Pascual and Nicole Medici—St. Nicholas R.C.
 Marcus Copeland and Ann Liriano—PS 380.
 Kaity Cheng and Yu Chen—I.S. 318.
 Sabrina Ramphal and Yamil Tavaréz—I.S. 49.
 Fances Dover and Wendy Morel—J.H.S. 50.
 Abner Rodriguez and Monica Aldana—I.S. 71.
 Nella Bastien and Raquel Aponte—H.S. Enterprise Business & Tech.
 Essanai Velasquez and Luis Ramos—El Puente Academy/Peace & Justice.
 Keith Madden and Zorielle Rodriguez—Transfiguration R.C. School.
 Desirae Nazario and Joann Danio—Saint Peter & Paul R.C.
 Jennifer Chavez and Gabriella Padilla—All Saints R.C.

WAGING THE DRUG WAR

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, last week a Narcotics Eradication Task Force from the Republic of Colombia visited Washington. The Task Force included three retired Colombian Generals, a former Minister of Defense, the ex-Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, the Army's former Inspector General, journalists, academics and a Magistrate from the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague. They came to Washington at the request of the bipartisan National Security Caucus with an important and powerful message for all of us.

I hope all of my colleagues will pay careful attention to the alarming statistics they provided:

Eighty percent of the world supply of cocaine is produced or transits through Colombia, and over 75 percent of the heroin seized on the U.S. East Coast is from that nation.

Over 20,000 Americans die every year from abusing illegal narcotics. Drug abuse is also the main reason America's prison population has doubled between 1988 and 1998 and our nation has to spend over \$35 billion on its correctional system.

There has been a 27 percent increase in drug use among 12-17 year olds, and 78 percent of American students report that drugs are bought, sold or used in their high schools.

According to the most recent reports issued by the Clinton Administration, there has been an incredible 378 percent annual increase in the use of pure Colombian heroin. Heroin use has become an epidemic in almost every town, big or small, in our country. It is cheaper, purer and easier to obtain than ever before.

A recent report released by the Colombian Army demonstrates that the FARC rebels have earned more than \$5.3 billion over the last eight years through drug trafficking, kidnapping and extortion.

Colombia has one of the highest rates of murder and kidnapping in the world. Attacks by rebel forces displaced over 300,000 people last year and 95 percent of all crimes go unpunished. The number of outstanding arrest warrants is over 150,000 and the judiciary has a backlog of over 3.5 million cases.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we can win the war on drugs but it will take a real commitment. We cannot just wish it away, and education alone is not going to stop drugs. Furthermore, interdiction alone will not stop the drug lords.

Almost every American family has been affected negatively by drugs, including my own, not only from usage but from the sale of drugs. I want to tell you how disappointing, how hurtful it is and how damaging it is to a family. The Narcotics Eradication Task Force from Colombia expressed sincere gratitude for the economic assistance of the United States, but they also demonstrated that we need a real and comprehensive war on drugs.

The Task Force members reminded us that many brave Colombian soldiers, policemen, judges and statesmen have lost their lives in the War on Drugs. They reminded our colleagues of heroes such as Enrique Camerino, a Border Patrol agent from just east of my district. He was buried alive after being tortured by Mexican drug lords.

The Narcotics Eradication Task Force met with Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) and our colleagues Cass Ballenger (R-NC); Ciro Rodriguez (D-TX), Joe Crowley (D-NY), Kevin Brady (R-TX), Cliff Stearns (R-FL) and Mark Sanford (R-SC). According to the Task Force, the Colombian cartels processed coca paste flown from Peru and Bolivia for over a decade.

It was not until the 1990s that the cartels promoted the planting of coca in the remote and sparsely populated eastern plains and jungles of Colombia, where the guerrillas had strong influence. Initially the guerrillas were content to protect laboratories and "tax" the different phases of the production process.

They have since moved into direct involvement in the whole production process. They provide a good share of the cocaine produced in Colombia and collect protection money for the rest. The same holds true for the more recent production of heroine.

However, as their income from drugs increased the guerrillas' kidnapping activity did not diminish. Around 1,600 people were reported kidnapped in 1997 and over 2000 were abducted in 1998. The true figure is unknown but probably much higher, since families are routinely ordered not to inform the authorities and many heed this warning. Guerrillas are believed to be responsible for 60% of the kidnapping in Colombia and collect more than 200 million dollars annually from these activities.

The Colombian guerrillas are thought to be the world's richest and most powerful criminal organization. But guerrillas combatants do not operate in a vacuum. Although the various legal Marxist parties have had little success at the polls, their unarmed supporters have infiltrated many government organizations. They also have permanent representatives abroad that run, with the collaboration of the extreme left in the United States and Europe, a powerful propaganda and disinformation operation.

The visit of the Narcotics Eradication Task Force was made possible by the Colombian non-profit organization, Forum Interamericano. The Task Force also expressed its concern over the excessive concessions made by President Pastrana to the FARC rebels in a well intentioned but badly planned peace initiative. As an inducement to the FARC to sit at a negotiating table Pastrana ordered the withdrawal of the Armed Forces from a coca producing region the size of Switzerland, 16,000 square miles. This has given the terrorist guerrillas a safe sanctuary where the rebel group is recruiting combatants, keeping kidnap victims and has continued to produce drugs.

HONORING MT. MORIAH CHRISTIAN CHURCH

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to applaud the efforts of the Mt. Moriah Christian Church in Centralia, Illinois for their strength and dedication in rebuilding after vandals set a fire that destroyed the church in August of 1997.

Mount Moriah believed to be the first church in Marion County was built in 1829. The May 16 rededication ceremony with county historian George Ross as the guest speaker told of the great history behind this community asset.

Credit should go to the dedicated members, Dale Nollman, and Carpenter's for Christ for their assistance in the rebuilding process. They not only restored the church, but also brought the building up to standards including making it wheelchair accessible.

I am truly pleased to see that the Mt. Moriah Christian Church's efforts will keep this part of community history living with new chapters to come well in to the future.