

match, our team defeated China with a 5 to 4 penalty kick victory.

The excellence of our team sends a powerful and positive message to the world about the importance of women's athletics and its value in building confidence, character and self-esteem for our young women.

Saturday's victory represents a first in many ways.

It was the largest women's world championship in history. Over 90,000 fans attended, a record for a women-only sporting event.

Saturday's game was the most-watched soccer game ever on network televisions.

This was the first Women's World Cup hosted by the United States. Over 30 matches were played before more than 650,000 fans in seven cities across the country.

An unprecedented 16 nations participated, signaling a growth for women's soccer throughout the world.

But Saturday's victory is important for many other reasons.

Our team helped to raise soccer and women's sports to new levels, both in America and internationally. World Cup soccer has long been the venue for male players and is the most popular sport in the world. But, the Women's World Cup and the U.S. national team in particular showed us that women's soccer and women's sports can be just as captivating, just as athletic, just as powerful, and just as competitive as men's sports.

What makes our team so special is that the U.S. women's national soccer program stands in stark contrast to many of its competitors who rely on a government-run or government-financed training system or a professional club to produce national teams.

In contrast, our American women started in community-based amateur recreational leagues, and owe much to their parents, who have steadfastly driven their daughters to weekend soccer games and summer soccer camps.

They have also relied on the high-caliber, but amateur, college sports system which provides top-notch athletic competition that, in turn, produces the top-notch athletes who can compete at this level.

Key to this college competition is the valuable role Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments has played in first establishing, then strengthening college sports programs for women, creating opportunities both to participate and to compete at advanced levels in soccer and many other sports.

But perhaps the finest trait exemplified by the Women's World Cup, and by the performance of the American team in particular, is the quest for excellence. Whether you are a rabid soccer fan or merely a casual observer, excellence is something we all recognize.

The U.S. Team is renowned both here and around the world for its commitment to values that we can all appreciate: teamwork, sportsmanship and fair play. Their esprit d' corps has been emphasized in feature article after feature article, and has even been a distinctive theme in TV commercials over the past few weeks.

Victory is wonderful, and victory is to be commended. But as long as we pursue excellence in our lives, as the U.S. national team has demonstrated time and time again, we can all be champions.

FINANCING EDUCATION; FREEDOM AND PRIVACY RESTORATION ACT; AND GAY MARRIAGE

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 14, 1999

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I insert for the RECORD statements by high school students from my home State of Vermont, who were speaking at my recent town meeting on issues facing young people today. I am asking that you please insert these statements in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD as I believe that the views of these young persons will benefit my colleagues.

FINANCING EDUCATION

(On behalf of James Lucas, Caitlin Stone-Bressor, Jesse Pixley and Kim Junior)

Kim Junior: We are talking about financing our education.

Education is a paramount concern because it affects everyone. Hillary Clinton said that it takes a village to teach a child, and it does. Currently, the United States educational system is going through a rebirth. Many states are attempting to improve their education systems. Vermont has recently shed itself of its old education system and has donned a new, more equal method. This new educational plan, led by Act 60, has helped equalize the percent a property owner is taxed towards education.

Now that the state has money coming to the schools that are in need of funding, the state, the school and the community have to decide how they want to improve their school. The consensus believes that better facilities will make better schools. They think a new gym, arts center or a classroom will make children more capable in that particular area. A new building, however, does not change students.

Jesse Pixley: Teachers are needed to change students and help them to become more educated. But to improve how educators teach is difficult.

Many teachers feel that they are not competent. In a January 29th New York Times article, William Honan said that only one in five full-time public school teachers said they felt qualified to teach in a modern classroom. This is a scary revelation. There is a definite need to enhance the qualifications of teachers and to help them gain sufficient confidence to be able to teach.

The New York Times printed an article on April 23rd telling of over 4,000 Washington teachers and educators who protested because they are not being supported in their pursuit of higher education. Deben Gruber, a special education teacher in Highland School District, said "I can't afford to have a computer, the Internet or a newspaper anymore". The teachers in Washington were not given the opportunity, financially, to attain a greater level of learning.

Caitlin Stone-Bressor: A recent addition for \$75.9 million is being added to the \$159 million that is already promised to school districts under the Education Reform Act. Of this \$76 million addition, only an eighth of it will be given to teachers. The proposal also calls to give \$4.2 million to school nutrition programs. While school nutrition is certainly important, America is setting its priorities in the wrong position when it gives so much to food and so little to educators.

Tenureship is also an important issue because it allows unqualified teachers to keep teaching. Established because of the frequent changes in the administration, it allowed

teachers to have faith that they would be able to keep their jobs despite changes in authority. Yet the system is proven to have flaws.

James Lukas: Many teachers who are granted tenureship are not fully qualified. The school system then finds that it would cost less to keep these teachers than to get rid of them. The most prominent and meritorious suggestion to remedy this problem is having teachers paid on the basis of skill and quality, and not on seniority. The education system should be run as a private enterprise, and if a teacher is not making the standard, they should not be favored as well as the teacher who excels in his or her area.

Reform is needed to improve our education system. The current system needs to enhance teachers, special education, advanced learning, sports, arts, and all the other aspects of education to make sure Vermont's education system is as good as it can be.

FREEDOM AND PRIVACY RESTORATION ACT

(On behalf of Stacy Pelletier, Jessica Cole, Amy Clark, Sarah Kimball and Christine Miller)

Stacy Pelletier: Do you want the government of the U.S. to be able to find out any information about you whenever they want to? The proposed medical ID and the Know-Your-Customer Act make your medical information open for their viewing and allow banks and government to monitor your financial transactions. Along with these two items, social security numbers have become a huge violation of your privacy. Luckily, the Freedom and Privacy Restoration Act of 1999 looks to make your private life private again.

Jessica Cole: We agree with the Freedom and Privacy Restoration Act of 1999, which forbids the federal government from making any identifiers which can be used in investigating, monitoring, overseeing or regulating private things, like sales or transactions between U.S. citizens. One of these identifiers could be national ID cards.

If Congress doesn't take action, federal officials could soon keep citizens from traveling, getting a job, opening a bank account, or even getting medical treatment unless all their papers are in order according to the federal bureaucracy.

Amy Clark: One example of invasion of our privacy are social security numbers. These identification numbers usually have to be shown for anything from getting a job to getting a fishing license. The Freedom and Privacy Restoration Act prohibits the use of social security numbers as an identifier. In order for parents to get a birth certificate for their children and claim them as dependents, they are forced to get a security number for them. We find that this is abusing our right to privacy.

Sarah Kimball: In 1996, the Department of Health and Human Services was told to come up with a unique health identifier. Their proposed plan includes a giant database for the total medical history of every American, and a medical ID card one would have to show in order to fill a prescription, leave the country, or even check into a hotel. The police could also request to see this card at any time, and many fear that hackers would break into the medical files, destroying doctor-patient confidentiality.

Many of the problems presented are in violation of the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution, but, thankfully, the Freedom and Privacy Restoration Act would prohibit such an act and identification tool from being put into action.

Christine Miller: In conclusion, we value our privacy, which is violated by social security, medical cards, and medical IDs, and the Know-Your-Customer Act.

Congressman Sanders, can we urge you to support the legislation of the Freedom and Privacy Act in the future?

GAY MARRIAGE

(On behalf of Vera Catherine Wade, Alex Hastings, Stephanie Ladd, John Nichols and Mark Boyle)

John Nichols: As Vera already said, we are all members of the Gay-Straight Alliance at BFA. Namely, that is a group of both gay and straight people, and our main purpose is to ease some of the tensions that exist in high school life between hetero and homosexual people that is sometimes the result of perhaps ignorance and other such things that can easily be mended.

However, the reason we are here today is, when we became aware of the possibility of legislation in Vermont being suggested that would ban gay marriage, we saw that as a great concern, as infringing upon the rights of people of the homosexual persuasion.

Vera Catherine Wade: The suggested antigay marriage bills state that a valid marriage consists of a man and a woman. We believe people should have the right to marry whomever they choose. In the past, the question wasn't gender, it was race. To deny anyone the right to marry is a step backwards in equal rights to all peoples.

In addition, who is to say what a good family is? A man and a woman in an abusive relationship can bring a child into the world without planning, and where is the child supposed to go with that? A homosexual couple have no choice but to plan.

We aren't saying that everyone should get married, and we aren't saying that it's the right thing for these people to marry; we aren't encouraging anything but the right to marry for everyone.

Mark Boyle: Another issue that's a really big problem for homosexuals in many cases is the right to insure your partner. It's okay for a man and a woman in a monogamous relationship outside of wedlock to claim people on taxes or their insurance, and yet it is not okay for homosexuals to claim a partner as a person of their family, and it's not allowed for them to get married so as to be able to include them on any type of taxes or insurance.

The issue of having somebody choose what they want to do is very at hand here. I think that a lot of people tend to stop and think of this as a moral issue, when it is more of an issue of just plain tolerance. You don't have to agree with it or disagree with it or be part of it; all that you have to do is to give people the opportunity to be Americans and to be given the rights and privileges, and the expansion of those privileges to any and all pursuits they choose, as long as it is not infringing on the rights of other humans.

FEAR AND HUNGER IN THE WAKE OF WELFARE REFORM

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 14, 1999

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, since the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act in 1996, legal immigrants have been denied access to vital health, income and nutrition assistance programs. Although the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 restored some benefits to elderly, disabled, and minor immigrants who entered legally before

August 22, 1996, researchers have documented a dramatic increase in extreme hunger and food insecurity among those affected by the law.

The following research memorandum was written by Amy K. Fauver, a research associate for the Washington-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA). The memo represents an elaborated version of an article which will appear in issue 19:09 of COHA's publication, the Washington Report on the Hemisphere. The article addresses the consequences of the immigrant-specific provisions of welfare reform, and demonstrates the need to restore essential benefits to immigrants who have come to the U.S. legally and have paid taxes, but in some circumstances have needed government assistance.

FEAR AND HUNGER IN THE WAKE OF WELFARE REFORM

(By Amy K. Fauver, Research Associate, Council on Hemispheric Affairs)

On August 22, 1996, President Clinton signed the "Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act" (PRWORA), mandating in his own words, "the end of welfare as we know it." The justification for these measures was moral and financial: welfare recipients in general "abuse" the system; welfare "hurts" people by encouraging "dependency"; and above all, taxpayers should "not have to foot the bill for immigrants" who viewed the U.S. as, according to Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX), chairman of the Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims, "nothing more than a taxpayer-funded retirement home." Among the most dramatic changes were those affecting the eligibility of legal, documented immigrants for federal benefit programs. Of the \$60 billion projected savings from welfare reform, approximately \$24 billion—44%—was to come from cuts in social services to immigrants. 85% of these savings were from reductions in Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, Food Stamps and Air for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)

PRWORA PROVISIONS TARGET IMMIGRANTS

The immigrant provisions of PRWORA created new categories of distinction among immigrants based not on their legal status, but on their date of arrival in the U.S. Previously, federal means-tested benefits were available to any legally admitted immigrant on the same terms as natural and naturalized citizens after a period of deeming. PRWORA redefined immigrants as "qualified" or "unqualified," which effectively replaced the "legal" or "illegal" dichotomy for determining entitlement, and essentially denied most legal immigrants access to benefits. Aside from emergency medical assistance and a few other programs necessary for the protection of life and safety, any benefits the newly "unqualified" were receiving at the time of the law's enactment were terminated. Although the majority of legal immigrants were "qualified," most were nonetheless barred from SSI and Food Stamps until they were naturalized. The only exemptions were those able to prove 10 years of Social Security-qualified work history, refugees, asylees and those granted withholding of deportation (but only for their first five years in the U.S.), as well as veterans and active duty military, their spouses and dependent children.

PRWORA also distinguished between immigrants based on their date of arrival in the U.S. The "before" group, of those immigrants who were legally present before August 22, 1996 (this date coincides with the signing of PRWORA), were granted greater access to benefits than the "after" group,

who arrived on or after that date. The "after" group was barred from benefits for their first five years in the country, except the life and safety provisions.

Pressure to amend PRWORA came from immigrant advocacy groups and President Clinton himself, who vowed to soften the immigrant provisions of PRWORA even as he signed it. The Balanced Budget Act of 1998 reinstated \$11.4 billion of the \$23.8 billion cut from immigrant benefits, restoring SSI benefits to most "before" immigrants. The legislation also extended the length of time that refugees and asylees can collect benefits from five to seven years in response to an INS backlog of over a year. This formula was intended to provide a realistic time frame in which to naturalize before benefits would be discontinued.

In June 1998, the Agricultural Act restored \$818 million in food stamps to specific immigrants, including the elderly and legally present children under 18 from the "before" group. Although these restorations returned food stamps to approximately 250,000 immigrants, two-thirds of those previously eligible remain without such assistance. This law did not address immigrants who entered after the arbitrarily chosen cut off date.

CONSEQUENCES: FEAR AND HUNGER

Despite these attempts to soften the blow that PRWORA dealt to legally-present immigrants, it has profoundly impacted all non-citizen welfare recipients and destroyed the safety net for those not currently needing help, but who might require it in the future. A July 1998 Urban Institute study of Los Angeles County portrays a sharp decline in immigrant applications for welfare benefits even though the vast majority remained eligible under state-funded programs. This study suggests that many immigrants are not attempting to prove their eligibility partly due to confusion about the law, but especially out of fear of negative consequences. They are afraid that revealing information about their immigration status (as in the case of undocumented parents trying to collect benefits for legal immigrant or citizen children) could result in deportation or compromise future attempts to naturalize if they are labeled a "public charge."

These well-founded anxieties can prevent those who are aware of their eligibility from seeking benefits for themselves or for their children. PRWORA's provisions requiring public agencies to report to the INS any persons "known to be unlawfully present" in the U.S., have exacerbated this fear. Although public health care providers are exempt from such reporting requirement, because they are prohibited from having an official policy that they will not share immigrant status information with the INS, they cannot guarantee protection for undocumented patients. According to the Center for Public Policy Priorities in Austin, TX, "Public health providers report that this is already having a chilling effect on the use of prenatal care, preventative care and primary care."

One of the most egregious problems directly resulting from PRWORA has been an extraordinary increase in hunger among legal immigrants. As for the welfare reductions in general, a disproportionate share of the federal savings from Food Stamp cuts came from restricting immigrant eligibility. Prior to PRWORA, 5.2% of all Food Stamp recipients were immigrants, yet over 30% of Food Stamp cuts came from slashing immigrants benefits. Not surprisingly, many immigrants who lost benefits now are suffering. A May 1998 study by Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) tracked household hunger among legal Latino and Asian immigrants in California, Texas and Illinois. Finding 79% of