

We feel that the drinking age should be lowered from 21 years of age to 18. The reasons for our proposal are:

1. If you are 18, you are considered an adult, just the same as if you were 21.

2. If, at the age of 18, you are allowed to join or be drafted into the army to fight for your country, why can't you buy a six-pack of beer?

3. Most European countries have either no drinking age or it is 18 years old.

4. Giving 18-year-olds this privilege will help them feel like an adult, rather than just an 18-year-old.

5. The drinking age was 18 at one point in this country. It was during the '70s. We know the outcome was not the greatest, but you have to understand that that was the '70s, there was Vietnam, lots of drug use, many rebellious people and organizations.

6. Once a rule is made, the number one response is to test it. That is why many people under the age of 21 consume alcohol, just because they aren't supposed to.

7. Most of this group here is 18, and once we are 18, are seniors in high school. That means next year some of us will be attending college. The college scene is very much more older and diverse. The ages range from 18 and up. So, if you are all in the same boat, what makes the 18-, 19- and 20-year-olds different? They can vote, drive automobiles, serve the country, get into clubs, buy tobacco products, lottery tickets, give blood, purchase a firearm. The one thing they cannot do is purchase or consume alcohol products. What difference does three years make?

If the age were lowered, it is understood that some problems may occur, such as more high school students would start drinking, causing more drinking and driving. But we believe awareness to be very effective. Also, stricter laws to minors under the age of 18, and stricter penalties to the persons supplying minors.

As our representative, Congressman Bernie Sanders, we urge you to voice our opinion to lower the drinking age to 18.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, on July 15 there were several rollcall votes on amendments to the FY2000 Treasury-Postal Appropriations bill, H.R. 2490. Had I been there I would have voted "no" on rollcall No. 301; "aye" on rollcall No. 302; "no" on rollcall No. 303; "aye" on rollcall No. 304. On final passage of H.R. 2490, I would have voted "no" on rollcall No. 305.

On July 16, the House considered the African Growth and Opportunity Act, H.R. 434. Had I been present I would have voted "no" on rollcall Nos. 306 and 307.

On July 19 and 20, the House considered several bills under suspension of the rules. Had I been there I would have voted "aye" on rollcall Nos. 308, 309, 310, and 311.

On July 20, the House considered several amendments to the American Embassy Security Act, H.R. 2415. Had I been present I would have voted "no" on rollcall No. 312; "aye" on rollcall No. 313; and "aye" on rollcall No. 314.

On July 20, the House also took up the rule on the Teacher Empowerment Act. Had I been there I would have voted "aye" on rollcall No. 315.

On these dates, I was participating in the Fourth Annual International Symposium on Reduction of Patent Costs at the Hague, Netherlands, where I was the keynote speaker. This event was sponsored by the International Federation of Industrial Property Attorneys (FICPI) and the American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA). I had committed to participating in this event prior to the scheduling of votes.

AMERICA SHOULD SUPPORT KASHMIRI, SIKH, NAGA FREEDOM STRUGGLES

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, the world watches carefully the situation in Kashmir, where the Indian military attacked the Kashmiri freedom fighters to shut down the seventeen freedom movements within its borders. The effort did not go well for India, despite its claims of victory. An Indian military spokesman admitted that Indian troops were "dying like dogs."

The Sikhs in Punjab, Khalistan have been very concerned that this war will spread to their homeland, where they are also seeking self-determination. One of India's strategies for keeping the freedom movements from succeeding is to set the minority nations against each other. In pursuit of this divide-and-rule strategy, they have sent Sikh soldiers to fight the Kashmiris, as they have done in Nagaland. The Christians in Nagaland have been fighting for their freedom for the last 52 years.

The Council of Khalistan wrote an open letter to the Sikh soldiers and officers. They called on the soldiers and officers to stop "dying like dogs" for the Indian government. The letter asked Sikh soldiers if they would rather die as Sikh martyrs or mercenaries for Indian oppression. It urged them to stop shooting at their fellow freedom fighters in Kashmir and join the movement to free Khalistan.

The reasons why Khalistan and the other nations of South Asia should enjoy their freedom have been outlined by many of us in the past, and they have not changed. Amnesty International reports that thousands of political prisoners are being held without charge or trial. Some of them have been in illegal custody for 15 years.

If India is democratic and if there is no support for the freedom movements, as India claims, then why not let the peoples of the subcontinent vote on their political status? America should support self-determination for all the nations and peoples. We should declare our support for the freedom movements and the right of self-determination and stop aid to the repressive Indian regime.

CELEBRATING THE ARTISTRY OF WILLIAM KRAWCZEWICZ

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding artist, William Krawczewicz, whose design was recently selected to appear on the back of the Maryland quarter, to be issued in March of 2000.

The U.S. Mint will issue fifty different designs of the official quarter for the fifty different states, each quarter depicting features of its state. Mr. Krawczewicz's winning design features the state Capitol building in Annapolis, Maryland, the only statehouse that also once served as the Nation's Capitol. The design was chosen from among the approximately 280 designs depicting different aspects of Maryland.

This is not the first time Mr. Krawczewicz's artwork has been recognized. Over the years, he has won a number of awards and one of his designs was selected for a 1994 Olympic coin commemorative set. When he is not producing coin designs, Mr. Krawczewicz works as a graphic designer for the White House.

I would like to congratulate Mr. Krawczewicz for his artistry and for his contribution to the commemoration of the state of Maryland.

MARION COWELL, JR.

HON. BILL McCOLLUM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to publicly congratulate Marion Cowell, Jr. on his retirement from First Union.

Mr. Cowell served as General Counsel for First Union for an impressive 27 years, during which he earned the respect and confidence of his associates at all levels of the corporation, both as a talented lawyer and as a friend. Besides working diligently for First Union, Mr. Cowell dedicated significant time providing pro bono services to individuals and community organizations that could not otherwise afford them. Such willingness to contribute to the community was recognized by his peers, and in 1998 he received the National Public Service Award from the Business Law section of the American Bar Association. His wise and judicious council will be greatly missed at First Union and I personally commend him for his outstanding achievements.

CHARACTER COUNTS

HON. MARK E. SOUDER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday Congressman ERNIE FLETCHER introduced an amendment, which allows teacher training funds to be used for character education training, to the Teacher Empowerment Act. It was adopted with my strong support.

In the mid-1980s I served as the Republican Staff Director of the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families. I visited numerous creative character education programs across this nation including in St. Louis, Miami and Baltimore.

Each school system had involved the local community in the development of their program. Each was having a positive impact on the students in their schools. And, importantly, each program was done differently. It is important that we continue to encourage such creative flexibility.

Currently, there are a number of character education efforts in my district in northeastern Indiana. One of the best is a program called "Character Counts" which I have discussed with Garrett-Keyser-Butler Community School system superintendent Alan Middleton, as well as others in the Garrett system.

We need to encourage efforts to implement such programs. By allowing—leaving it up to the school districts themselves but allowing—teacher training to include character education training is an important advance for character education. Congressman FLETCHER's amendment made it clear that funds can be used for such training.

What follows is some basic information from the Garrett community school system's "Character Counts" program, which gives some idea of the approach of one character education initiative. It is important to note the emphasis on community participation as well as the specific themes that are stressed.

What? The Character Counts! Coalition is a national partnership of organizations and individuals involved in the education, training and care of youth. They have joined in a collaborative effort to improve the character of America's young people based on six basic standards of character.

Six pillars of character: Trustworthiness, responsibility, respect, fairness, caring, citizenship.

The Garrett-Keyser-Butler School Corporation this last year became a member of the national CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition. The program's development was based on a 1992 summit meeting of educators, youth leaders, religious leaders and ethicists who worked together to identify those basic characteristics that they could all agree on as being essential to the development of good character. These became known as the Six Pillars of Character.

The CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition hopes to combat violence, irresponsibility and dishonesty while strengthening the character of the next generation. The program is not associated with any particular religion or ideological agenda other than that of promoting good character through ethical decision making.

The membership list includes many well respected national organizations such as American Red Cross, the United Way of America, USA Police Activities League, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, 4-H, Little League Baseball, YMCA of the USA, the National Association of State Boards of Education and National Association of Secondary School Principals to mention a few.

We at the GKB School Corporation have made a commitment to work through the CHARACTER COUNTS! program in an effort to improve the character of our young people.

We believe that CHARACTER COUNTS! in personal relationships, in school, at the workplace, and in life. Who you are makes a difference!

Mission Statement: The Garrett-Keyser-Butler School Corp., is committed to the de-

velopment of a program which unites the whole community in promoting trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. We believe these ethical traits are essential for the success of young people in all areas of their life—in school, work, and personal relationships.

The Coalition is comprised of about 100 national and regional organizations that together reach more than 40 million young people.

Coalition includes: YMCA, BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS, 4-H, BIG BROTHERS/SISTERS, ATSO, LITTLE LEAGUE, RED CROSS, BOYS TOWN, NAT'L ASS'N OF POLICE, ATHLETIC LEAGUES, U.S. SOCCER ASS'N., AFT, NEA, NAT'L ASS'N OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, NAT'L ASS'N OF STATE BOARDS OF EDUCATION, NAT'L ASS'N OF STUDENT COUNCILS, NAT'L CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL ASS'N, AARP, LA RAZA, INTERNATIONAL ASS'N OF POLICE CHIEFS, NAT'L URBAN LEAGUE AND UNITED WAY.

TRIBUTE TO REV. LEROY BELLAMY

HON. KAREN L. THURMAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Reverend Leroy Bellamy, a dear friend and senior pastor at Grace Temple Church of God in Floral City, FL.

For 40 years, the Reverend Bellamy has touched the lives of many Citrus County residents through gospel and prayer. He has worked hard over the years to build trust in the community and to inspire his congregations. Achieving that was not always easy, but he followed his heart and answered his calling.

Reverend Bellamy was the first minister of color in Citrus County to participate in inter-denominational and inter-racial community religious and social activities. At a time when many residents believed separate was better, Reverend Bellamy challenged that notion and encouraged the community to worship and pray together.

The annual sunrise Easter service in Citrus County is proof of Reverend Bellamy's commitment to racial tolerance.

Each year, parishioners of different racial and ethnic backgrounds sit side by side in a packed stadium to listen to his inspiring sermons. The 86-year-old pastor prides himself on never having missed a sunrise service. The service is one of many ways this unassuming and humble man shows those around him that building bridges is God's answer to burning them. That working to bring people together—regardless of race, color, sex, religion or social class—is the right thing to do.

The people of Citrus County have listened carefully over the years to Reverend Bellamy's wise words. As a special way to thank him, the community is hosting a "Reverend Leroy Bellamy Day" in his honor on July 31st.

This is one of many times the pastor has been recognized for his service to the community. Reverend Bellamy and his late wife Priscilla were selected Citrus County's Family of the Year in 1992. He was also given a "Key to the City" in Inverness and lives on a road in Inverness bearing his name.

As you can tell, we're very proud to have Reverend Bellamy in our community. He's the epitome of goodness and righteousness. He grew up in Florida during a time when economic depression and racial isolation made life hard for many people. But, as a young man, Reverend Bellamy followed God's path and shunned bitterness and anger.

He often juggled several manual-labor jobs to provide for his 10 children: Leroy Jr., Randolph, Lonnie, James, Clarence, Curtis, Bruce, Gilbert, Nina, and Lucille. In later years, he went to work for himself in the hog-farming business and prospered. He saved his earnings and sent several of his children to college—an opportunity that was not available to him.

Like so many other upstanding Americans, Reverend Bellamy started within his own family to make life better for future generations. His grandson Patrick Thomas is a dedicated caseworker in one of my Florida district offices. Patrick says has grandfather always stressed upon his children and grandchildren, the importance of self-discipline, education and respect for oneself and others. Most of all, the Reverend Bellamy taught his children and parishioners to have faith and trust in God. This, the Reverend says, is the most important lesson. The lesson that shapes a lifetime. The lesson that opens Heaven's gates.

Through his ministry, the Reverend Bellamy lifts the spirits of people in prisons, hospitals and nursing homes. He grieves with families at funerals, brings couples together in holy matrimony and celebrates life's simple pleasures at parades and other county festivities.

We are forever grateful to the Reverend Bellamy for leading a life dedicated to God's work and for choosing to make Citrus County his home. His smile brings hope and joy to the troubled. His prayers strengthen wearied hearts. His words of comfort console those in need.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in paying tribute to the Reverend Leroy Bellamy, a man who credits his good life to his commitment to God. May Citrus County be blessed with the Rev. Bellamy's divine presence and spiritual leadership for many more years to come.

CARRIE P. MEEK'S TRIBUTE TO REV. DR. G. DAVID HORTON, PASTOR, GREATER NEW BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is truly a distinct honor and privilege to pay tribute to one of Miami-Dade County's great ecclesiastical leaders, the Rev. Dr. G. David Horton, on his 20th Year Anniversary as Pastor of Greater New Bethel Baptist Church. I want to echo the same sentiments of joy and gratitude that his congregation is lifting up to Almighty God to celebrate his milestone during this month of July, culminating on Sunday, August 1, 1999.

Rev. Dr. Horton truly represents the best and the noblest of God's Chosen Ones. As pastor, preacher and minister of the Gospel, he is remarkably leading his congregation in the ways of God and has tirelessly worked to