

those sectors of our economy with the greatest need. To rectify this problem, I am introducing a legislative package to ensure that training programs provide the skills that American employers need by bolstering industry-driven training programs, creating incentives for successful placement, and providing for the special concerns that multi-state regions, such as the Washington Metropolitan Area, experience as they seek qualified workers.

The bills I have introduced today are:

H.R. , TO ESTABLISH FOR REGIONAL SKILLS TRAINING ALLIANCES

Modeled after the successful Manufacturing Extension Program, this bill recognizes that in rapidly expanding industry, employers are best positioned to identify the skills and knowledge needed for emerging jobs. It would provide matching funds to encourage companies to participate in consortia that would address their industry's specific skill needs. Every dollar in federal support will be matched by a dollar in state or local government support and a dollar in direct industry support.

H.R. , TO ESTABLISH REGIONAL PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCILS FOR LABOR MARKET AREAS THAT ARE LOCATED IN MORE THAN ONE STATE

This bill allows the Secretary of Labor to establish Regional Private Industry Councils (PICs). PICs play a constructive role in addressing the workforce needs within a state. These organizations, however, are state organizations and not formed to address problems that may cross state lines. To remedy that situation, this bill would allow the Secretary of Labor to certify, and fund, regional PICs that address regional problems. The new PICs would be funded directly by the Secretary of Labor to ensure that they do not take from existing state programs.

H.R. , TO PERMIT PAYMENT OF INCENTIVE BONUSES TO CERTAIN JOB TRAINING PROVIDERS THAT PLACE LARGE PERCENTAGES OF INDIVIDUALS IN OCCUPATIONS FOR WHICH A HIGH DEMAND EXISTS

This bill would ensure that the federal government's investment in training is well spent by allowing Private Industry Councils to reward bonuses to training providers with a high percentage of placement. This will help establish a more outcome-based system to ensure that training providers emphasize placing their students. This bill would amend JTPA to allow funds to be used for bonuses for training providers of specific direct training services. This creates an incentive for training providers to provide up-to-date training opportunities that coincide with market needs, and to help place trainees after they have completed their training.

H.R. , TO ALLOW EMPLOYERS A CREDIT AGAINST INCOME TAX FOR HIGH TECHNOLOGY JOB TRAINING EXPENSES

This bill would offer employers who train employees for information technology jobs a tax credit for 50 percent of the training costs up to \$2,500 per year, per employee. The credit provides an important incentive, yet requires that industry bears at least half of the training costs.

IMPROVING OUR NATION'S RETIREMENT SAVINGS

HON. BILL McCOLLUM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing a bill today which will help all Americans save for their retirement years. It is no secret that our current savings rate is among the lowest in the industrialized world. A low savings rate not only adversely impacts a person's retirement, it does not create much capital available for savings and investment. Without this capital, our economy cannot expand at its optimal rate. It is my hope that this legislation, if enacted, would help correct this problem.

My legislation would do several things. First, it would increase the amount of money one may contribute to an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), from \$2,000 to \$4,500, and still receive full deductibility. This amount is also indexed to inflation to protect its value from that silent thief of inflation. This would also remove a disincentive to establishing an IRA, that being the fear that the money will not be available without paying a substantial penalty when you need it. A person with an IRA would be able to make withdrawals, without penalty, for long-term care, financially devastating health care expenses, and during times of unemployment. Furthermore, no taxes would be paid on these withdrawals if they are repaid to the IRA within 5 years.

Current law offers no incentive for many people to establish IRA's. My bill would allow people who do not have access to a defined contribution plan—e.g., a 401(k) plan—to establish a tax-preferred IRA, regardless of their income. The legislation would also encourage the middle class to establish IRA's by raising the income phase-out levels from \$25,000–\$40,000 for joint filers—to \$75,000–\$120,000 for joint filers. This will provide not only incentives, but needed tax relief for the middle class. Again, these levels are indexed to inflation.

Turning to 401(k) reforms, currently folks are hit with tax liability when taking their 401(k) benefits as a lump sum when leaving a job even if it is rolled into an IRA. This is not fair. Therefore, under this proposal, people would not be exposed to tax liability if the lump sum distribution is rolled into an IRA within 60 days.

Just as contribution limits have been increased for IRA's in this legislation, they are increased for 401(k) plans as well. The tax-deductible contribution limits would be \$20,000—in 1992 dollars—indexed to inflation. This would also encourage more firms to establish defined contribution plans by injecting some common sense into the law. It would allow firms to meet antidiscrimination requirements as long as they provide equal treatment for all employees and ensure that employees are aware of the company's 401(k) plan. This is truly nondiscriminatory as everyone would be treated the same.

Finally, this proposal would correct some of the serious problems involved with IRA's and 401(k)'s when the beneficiary passes away. As someone who believes the estate tax inherently unfair, indeed I advocate its abolishment, I feel that IRA and 401(k) assets should

be excluded from gross estate calculations. This bill would do that. Furthermore, an IRA that is bequeathed to someone should be treated as the IRA of the person who inherited it. Current law forces the disbursement of the IRA when the deceased would have turned 70½ years old. This would change that pointless provision, allowing the inheritor to hold the money in savings until he or she turns 70½.

Similarly, anyone receiving 401(k) lump sum payments as a result of a death would not have the amount counted as gross income as long as it is rolled into an IRA. That amount would not be counted against the nondeductible IRA limit of \$4,500.

Mr. Speaker, I am excited about this legislation. I expect to introduce this legislation again at the beginning of the next Congress and look forward to hearing debate on it. It is absolutely essential that we continue to encourage personal savings and this is certainly a step in the right direction.

COMMENDING BEACON COLLEGE IN LEESBURG, FLORIDA

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, one of the world's greatest documents is our Declaration of Independence. It proclaims our unalienable rights, among them "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." This is one of the central components of the American experience, the right to use your God-given abilities to pursue your goals. As Americans, we are entitled to go as far as our talents will carry us. That is why it is imperative to ensure that every individual has the chance to succeed.

A few weeks ago, I had the privilege of visiting Beacon College in Leesburg, Florida, a school in my district dedicated to providing opportunities. Beacon College offers the opportunity of a higher education to students with learning disabilities.

Learning disabilities can affect a person's ability to read, write, speak, or compute math, and can impair socialization skills. This disability can be a life-long condition affecting how that person functions in school, at home, or in the work place. And this is not a rare occurrence; 15 to 20 percent of the U.S. population have some form of learning disability.

People with learning disabilities can and do excel in their individual pursuits, they just need the chance. Beacon College is committed to working with a diverse student population, assisting each with an individual approach, taking into consideration differences in experiential backgrounds, pace and readiness to learn, learning styles, and individual strengths and weaknesses.

Beacon College offers Associate of Arts and Bachelor of Arts degree programs in Human Services and Liberal Studies. The Human Services program stimulates the student's interest in intellectual, philosophical, social, and public issues. This program concentrates on human development and public services. The Liberal Studies program provides a well-rounded liberal arts education. Both programs are designed to help students achieve their career goals.

Through small class sizes, with an average of eight students per class, the faculty can interact better with their students, leading to better academic success. However, the College is more than a learning institution, it also promotes responsibility and self-reliance. Beacon students are called upon to identify their own learning styles as well as their strengths and weaknesses to prepare them for their roles in society.

Beacon College goes beyond teaching, it prepares its students for a meaningful career and an independent lifestyle. I am glad that I am able to share with my colleagues the commitment of Beacon College to providing opportunities for those with learning disabilities. Through its efforts, the College is making a richer life for its students and their families.

REMARKS ON IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to strongly oppose the impeachment of the President of the United States. My President. The People's President.

Today we embarrass the memory of our country's Founders as we torture the intent of the genius of their system of *balancing* the awesome powers of Government. Once our votes are cast on this despicable issue, no longer will we be able to look upon ourselves and our House as honorable; or even as men and women who are here to serve as a *check* on the power of the Executive. Instead, we will have become a House that sits in moral judgement over another man, meting out *punishment* for personal deeds which we deem unacceptable. The Majority party, however, has decided that this course is pre-determined, because we must uphold "the rule of law." Otherwise, our country will descend into chaos.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, no one is above the law—and there is no question that the law must be followed. But we also serve a greater document: and that is the Constitution of the United States. And it is the words within that great document that we must follow in this case as we decide whether the disgraceful behavior by the President merits his impeachment.

Mr. Speaker, under your leadership and that of your party, we stand here—small men with petty careers, and partisan of purpose, to diminish our great Republic. Devoid of a sense of proportion and overburdened with an excess of hubris, you claim conscience as your exclusive domain, and deny us the right to offer the People's Will—a motion of censure. I can only surmise the answer to that is because the Republican leadership is being driven by a core of short-sighted, bitter, and small-minded people who would do away with the *high-minded* principles espoused and framed for time immemorial by the Founders of this Nation. And they would do this for the sole reason that they do not agree with the President's actions. However, the President's behavior does not put him in the category of those who would commit treason, except perhaps in the minds of those conspiracy theorists who are consuming the Majority party.

Let me be clear that what we do here today is an oligarchical act that attempts to recreate a presidency that would serve at the Majority's *whim*, rather than at the *will* of the people. Mr. Speaker, please believe me that the gravity of this action will not go unnoticed by the public that we purport to serve.

To be sure, the President has shamed himself greatly.

To be clear, it is we who are about to become the shame of the Nation.

EXCELLENCE IN MILITARY SERVICE ACT

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the "Excellence in Military Service Act."

This legislation would increase the active duty service obligation (ADSO) of Military Service Academy graduates from five to eight years. Many Americans do not realize that this free and highly competitive college education costs the average taxpayer over \$270,000 per cadet/midshipman. While I believe that investing in our military is critical to the future stability of our nation, I do not think it is fair to burden the taxpayer with this expense without requiring academy graduates to exhibit a similar commitment in their ADSO. I maintain that it is not unreasonable that for a free education, with a monetary allowance, that a graduating cadet/midshipman be required to commit to a longer period of obligated service upon commissioning.

As college tuition continues to skyrocket, I believe our U.S. military academies will become even more attractive to prospective college students. In light of this fact, we need to ensure that a free education does not become a primary motivation for future applicants. I maintain that increasing the ADSO is an effective way to accomplish this without jeopardizing the viability of these historic institutions.

I hope my colleagues will join with me to protect the U.S. taxpayers' investment in one of our nation's most precious resources.

12-YEAR TERM LIMITS

HON. BILL McCOLLUM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a proposed amendment to the Constitution that will limit the number of terms a Member of Congress may serve to a uniform, lifetime term limit of 12 years in the House and 12 years in the Senate. This is a proposal I have enthusiastically pushed for over the years and one I continue to support. I am firmly convinced that this is the single biggest obstacle to making some of the tough decisions that have to be made as we move into the 21st century. Term limits is not a partisan issue. It is a sound proposal with broad popular support.

The arguments for term limits are numerous and persuasive. Volumes could be written on

the issue but I would like to stress one point. Term limits are not simply to create turnover for the sake of turnover. It is important to get fresh blood in Congress, but it is more important to change the institution as a whole in a manner that only term limits can achieve. Term limits would end the pervasive careerism in Congress.

The status quo in Congress encourages longevity in service. One's impact in Congress is almost directly related to the length of time the Member has served. This is due to the fact that the House and Senate are directed primarily by the elected leadership and the full and subcommittee chairmen. Few rise to these levels without significant time served. Therefore, many Members will do their best to stay in Congress as long as possible, making it a career. Consequently the tendency of most will be to try to please every interest group in order to get reelected. While term limits would not completely end this attitude, it would mitigate it considerably because term limits would mean that when somebody is elected to Congress they would know that they were only coming here to serve a short period of time, not to make a career of it. I favor term limits not because of a hostility toward Congress but as an affectionate measure to restore Congress to its rightful role as a deliberative branch of government which governs with the next generation, not just the next election, in mind.

Term limits will give us the citizen legislature the Founding Fathers envisioned and effect fundamental reform in the attitude of those serving in Congress as well as in the attitude about service in Congress. Term limits will inject fresh ideas in Congress, ensure a rotation of influence and give people more choices with more open seat elections.

Congress has both an opportunity and an obligation to make fundamental changes which improve the way in which Congress works for the American people. Fighting for term limits is central to that effort and I urge my colleagues to support this proposal.

INTRODUCTION OF THE AUTISM STATISTICS, SURVEILLANCE, RESEARCH, AND EPIDEMIOLOGY ACT OF 1999 (ASSURE)

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I am re-introducing legislation that will provide \$7.5 million to establish several centers of expertise in autism in an effort to quantify the incidence and prevalence of autism, as well as develop new ways to treat and prevent pervasive developmental disorders such as autism. My legislation—The Autism Statistics, Surveillance, Research, and Epidemiology Act of 1999 (ASSURE)—will empower the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) in the fight against autism.

This bill was crafted in close cooperation with the National Alliance for Autism Research (NAAR), the developmental disabilities experts at CDC, as well as with service providers from New Jersey. It is a health care and medical research bill which is long overdue, and I urge all of my colleagues to lend it their support.