

thanked earlier, I would like to thank my legislative director, Karen Weiss, for all of the work that she has done on this bill. This may be the last time that we stand as a subcommittee on the floor with legislation during this Congress; and if so, I want to again thank the gentleman from California (Mr. MARTINEZ), the ranking member of this committee. He has been a joy to work with. He really has the people of this country at heart. He has served a lot of time in this Congress and done an excellent job, and I just want to let him know that I appreciate greatly the ability that he has brought to this Congress and the opportunity that we have had to work together.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, we are here today to consider the Higher Education Technical Amendments of 2000. Many of my colleagues will remember that in the last Congress we enacted the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 on a bipartisan basis. That bill was one of the most important pieces of legislation we considered for students and their parents. I want to thank Chairman MCKEON again for his leadership on that bill. Throughout that process he kept members focused on our goal of improving our student financial aid system. Millions of students have since benefited from our efforts, and the minimal number of technical amendments that we are considering today is testimony to the fact that the bill was well crafted.

The Department of Education has issued a majority of the final regulations implementing the 1998 amendments. In most cases our intent was followed, but in a few important instances, it was not.

For example, I feel very strongly that the department is not following our intent with respect to direct loan origination fees. The 1998 amendments were designed to provide students with the best possible deal under very tight budget constraints, and I believe we succeeded in doing that. However, the law uses the word "shall" and it is very clear in directing the Secretary to collect a four percent origination fee on direct student loans. This is confirmed in legal opinions from the Congressional Research Service and the Comptroller General. It was not our intent to change that, and in my view the department's decision to arbitrarily interpret "shall" to mean "may" sets a very dangerous precedent. The fact that this legislation does not address this issue should not be taken as an endorsement of the department's actions.

The legislation before us today does make a needed change to the "return of federal funds" provisions in the Higher Education Act to help students who withdraw before the end of a term. By correcting the department's mistaken interpretation, we will ensure that no student is required to return more than 50 percent of the grant funds he or she received. I know there are those who would like us to go further. However, doing so would increase mandatory spending, and in many instances, would result in students leaving school with increased student loan debt, which I cannot support.

H.R. 4505 includes three new provisions all related to campus security. The first provision is based on H.R. 3619, introduced by Representative ANDREWS of New Jersey, and requires institutions of higher education to have

a policy related to the handling of reports on missing students, including the notification of parents, guardians and local police.

The second provision is based on H.R. 4407 introduced by Representative SALMON of Arizona. It requires institutions to have a policy regarding the availability of information provided by the state under the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act with respect to registered sexually violent predators.

The third provision was an amendment offered by Representative ROUKEMA of New Jersey that requires institutions to include in their annual security report a description of campus fire safety practices and standards.

All of these provisions will result in greater awareness of potential security risks on campus, and I, for one, believe that more information is better.

Finally, I want to thank Mr. CLAY and Mr. MARTINEZ for their efforts in crafting this bipartisan legislation. This bill will not satisfy everyone completely. But it does make necessary technical and policy changes that will improve the implementation of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998, and it does so in a way that will benefit students.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman GOODLING and Chairman MCKEON and their staffs for all of their hard work on the Campus Protection Act, which will close a loophole in federal law that restricts the ability of colleges and universities to notify students of the presence of convicted sex offenders on campus. I am thrilled that the campus security legislation has been incorporated into H.R. 4504, the Higher Education Technical Amendments Act of 2000.

What peaked my interest in this matter was a column Tamara Deitrich wrote for the East Valley Tribune on a sex offender roaming the campus of Arizona State University (ASU), which is located in my District. The sex offender secured a work furlough to study and do research at ASU, where about 23,000 young women attend classes. Campus law enforcement officials at ASU expressed concern that Federal law hampered their ability to adequately warn students about this threat. To me, it's unconscionable that women on campuses do not receive notification when a rapist or sex offender is enrolled.

S. Daniel Carter of Security on Campus, an expert in campus security matters, carefully evaluated the Campus Protection Act. The following is an excerpt from his letter:

For too long colleges and universities have used the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 USC Section 1232g) to withhold public safety information from their students and employees that any other citizen would be able to get freely. This is a situation that denies them equal protection under the law and unnecessarily puts their lives and safety at risk. The addition of a requirement to the campus security section of the Higher Education Act of 1965 that schools publicly disclose information about registered sex offenders who are either enrolled or employed by the institution should ensure that FERPA is not misinterpreted to preclude the release of this critically important information. The language included in H.R. 4504 is designed to clarify this point . . .

I thank S. Daniel Carter for his contribution to this effort and am delighted that the founders of his organization and the family most responsible for the original campus security

law—the Clery's—endorse the Campus Protection Act.

The Campus Protection Act adds a new section to the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act to clarify that sex offender information of all enrolled students and employees not only can be released, but when received, must be released. This will ensure that the same information about sex offenders available to other state citizens is available to college students. Additionally, the Act sensibly provides that universities develop a policy statement regarding the availability of this information as part of their annual crime statistics report.

Without a clear statement that schools are obligated to release this information, questions will remain about the legality of releasing sex offender information. Schools that withhold information because of this uncertainty unnecessarily put their students at risk.

Under the Campus Protection Act, colleges are only obligated to report information the state provides. This is not an undue burden or mandate, but authority that most campus security offices, such as the ASU unit, will welcome. The colleges maintain full discretion on how to disclose sex offender information.

The Campus Protection Act will aid campus law enforcement agencies and, more importantly, increase campus safety. In her letter endorsing the bill, Detective Sally Miller of the Santa Rose Junior College District Police Department writes: "I wish to indicate my full support of [your bill] which provides direction and legal tools for college and university law enforcement agencies to educate and inform our communities about sexual predators currently hidden within our communities. These amendments . . . are vitally important to allow college and university police departments to adequately provide for the safety of our students and staff from sexual predators."

Passage of H.R. 4504 will close the sex offender campus loophole once and for all and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4504, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING IMPORTANCE OF STRONG MARRIAGES FOR A STRONG SOCIETY

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 280) recognizing the importance of strong marriages and the contributions that community marriage policies have made to the strength of marriages throughout the United States, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 280

Whereas one of every two marriages ends in divorce;

Whereas children living with a single mother are six times more likely to live in poverty than are children whose parents are married;

Whereas married adults, on average, live longer, have fewer emotional problems, and are less likely to engage in alcohol or drug abuse;

Whereas visionary communities have adopted community marriage policies to empower couples for healthy, lifelong marriage and to foster an environment that has the greatest likelihood of ensuring the well-being of our citizens, especially our children;

Whereas a community marriage policy is a set of guidelines for premarital preparation and community support for marriage to which individuals, the community, clergy, and congregations voluntarily commit; and

Whereas a successful community marriage policy is one that urges clergy, congregations, and the broader community to—

(1) encourage premarital preparation education;

(2) train mature married couples to serve as mentors to the newly married;

(3) evaluate current practices that may unwittingly undermine marriage formation and stability;

(4) implement policies that promote marriage; and

(5) volunteer time, expertise, and resources to support initiatives that promote marriage and stable families: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the importance of strong marriages for a strong society;

(2) commends communities that have established community marriage policies for their efforts to support marriage and prevent the problems of divorce; and

(3) encourages other communities in the United States to develop voluntary community marriage policies to enable community members, such as clergy, business leaders, public officials, and health professionals, to work together to strengthen marriages and provide stable environments for children.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MARTINEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 280.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the issue of marriage and its benefits for individuals, for communities and for our Nation. There have been considerable discussion about the state of marriage in this Nation over the past half century because there has been such dramatic changes in our Nation and in the institution of marriage.

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If we look at the details of what has happened to marriage in this half century and what has happened as a result, we find some very interesting things.

As an example, there has been a great deal of debate in America about the growing gap between rich and poor; and almost all of it focuses on the changing job force, the cost of living, and the tax and regulatory structure that hamstring businesses and employees.

But analysis of social science literature demonstrates that the root cause of poverty and income is definitely linked to the presence or absence of marriage. Among other problems, broken families earn less and experience lower levels of educational achievement.

Let's consider some of the statistics that have been offered: in 1950, 12 out of every 100 children, in other words, 12 percent, entered a broken family. By 1992, 58 percent, or 58 out of every 100 children born, entered a broken family. Children living with a single mother are six times more likely to live in poverty than are children whose parents are married.

Of families with children in the lowest quintile of earnings, 73 percent are headed by single parents. Ninety-five percent in the top quintile are headed by married couples.

In 1994, over 12.5 million children lived in single-parent families that earned less than \$15,000 per year. Only 3 million children lived in single-parent families with annual incomes greater than \$30,000.

Three-quarters of all women applying for welfare benefits do so because of a destructive marriage or live-in relationship. Those who leave the welfare system when they get married are the least likely to return to the welfare system.

Co-habitation doubles the rate of divorce. Co-habitation with someone other than one's future spouse quadruples the rate of divorce.

Divorce reduces the income of families with children by an average of 42 percent, and almost 50 percent of those families experience poverty. Married couples in their mid-50s amass four times the wealth of divorced individuals, \$132,000 versus \$33,600.

I think this illustrates some aspects of the current situation. But let us also consider, research that has been done on marriage and happiness and particularly marriage and health.

University of Chicago demographer Linda Waite found that life expectancy is more adversely affected by being unmarried than by being poor, overweight, or having heart disease.

Similarly, scholars at the National Institutes for Health Care Research recently compiled a lengthy report showing that divorced men are particularly likely to experience health problems. When compared to married men, divorced males are twice as likely to die prematurely from hypertension, four times as likely to die prematurely from throat cancer, twice as likely to die prematurely from cardiovascular disease, and seven times as likely to die prematurely from pneumonia. In other words, being married is healthy.

Why does marriage offer such extraordinary health benefits? The previously mentioned demographer, Linda Waite, states that marriage provides individuals a network of help and support which can be particularly beneficial in dealing with stress and in recovering from illness and accidents.

Of course the long-recognized link between stable marriage and greater wealth is not simply due to the fact that married men have stronger incentives to work hard. It is also due to the fact that married-couple households benefit from role specialization and from pooling resources.

Another interesting aspect, Washington State University researcher Jan Stets reports that women in cohabiting unions are more than twice as likely to be the victims of domestic violence than married women.

Data from the National Institute of Mental Health shows that cohabiting women have rates of depression that are more than three times higher than married women and more than twice as high as other single women. On and on the statistics go.

I think a very important item to mention is that research reviews by UCLA Professor Robert Coombs and others find that the longer lives of married people cannot be explained by the fact that healthy people are more likely to get and stay married. The state of marriage itself is more important in fostering good health.

Now, that is very important to recognize because an immediate response of many people to all the statistics that I have given here is that we simply have not done a controlled experiment. The problem, they would say, is simply that the healthier people and the happier people are the ones more likely to get married and stay married.

But as I said here, the research by Robert Coombs of UCLA indicates that is simply not true. The state of marriage itself is more important in fostering good health.

The conclusion is that marriage is healthy. It is good for couples. It is good for children, good for communities, good for the Nation. It improves health, well-being, and makes children's lives, on average, more stable.

The question is what can we do to encourage marriage if marriage is so wonderful? Is there some magic wand we at the Federal level can wave and solve that particular problem? I think it is important to recognize that we cannot do a great deal at the Federal level. But we can certainly encourage community-level activity, particularly activity that is having a good effect.

I want to make it clear I am not up here to condemn divorce; I am simply pointing out that marriage can be a positive factor in many lives and that we should try to encourage those who are married to stay married and those who are not married to become married.

An example of a way to handle this appropriately is to mobilize religious

and community support. Something that has emerged in this country, which is very good and has had a positive influence, is something called a community marriage policy.

Let me cite some material from a recent report, "Toward More Perfect Unions: Putting Marriage on the Public Agenda," a report from the Family Impact Seminar, reported by Theodora Ooms. She notes that perhaps the most promising and innovative marriage-strengthening strategy bubbling up from the community level is the community marriage policy. This is a strategy rooted in the religious sector and was originally conceived of and promoted by Michael McManus, a syndicated columnist and author of "Marriage Savers."

In the community marriage policy initiative, clergy and congregations in a community get together and agree upon a set of guidelines.

A particularly good example of such a community marriage policy is that of the Greater Grand Rapids, Michigan, area which I represent. I do not say that just because I represent it.

In the words of the report Family Impact Seminar report, the best community marriage policy is taking place in Greater Grand Rapids, Michigan, where, in 1996, the community launched an ambitious community-wide mobilization designed to support children-strengthening marriage.

The initiative has some core funding, an executive leader, Dr. Roger Sider, and institutional support from Pine Rest, a Christian Community Mental Health Center.

I should point out in an aside that Pine Rest is more than just a center; it is the second largest private community member health facility in the United States.

What distinguishes the Grand Rapids community marriage policy is that it involves a high caliber and breadth of community leadership, including many civic leaders and health professionals as well as the clergy. They have taken pains to be inclusive of many different views of marriage.

For example, they have been careful to listen to and accommodate the concerns of feminists working with battered women and minority leaders working with single-parent families.

Let me emphasize that this community marriage policy is voluntary; but the Grand Rapids one is unique in that it has involved the broader community, not just the religious community.

In Grand Rapids, pastors, rabbis, priests, judges, doctors, lawyers, counselors, elected officials, business leaders, educators and concerned citizens are being asked to find ways that they can strengthen and support marriages throughout their life cycle.

The chairman of the 50-person steering committee is Bill Hardiman, a good friend of mine, and the mayor of Kentwood, the second largest suburb of Grand Rapids. He has put many hours into this and has done exceptional work.

After more than a year of careful planning, in the spring of 1998 the initiative began implementation, starting by offering training to ministers and courses to others.

The Greater Grand Rapids Community Marriage Policy has set itself a goal of reducing the divorce rate by 25 percent by the year 2010, a very ambitious goal; and they are well on the way to achieving that. It will also establish some interim benchmarks of progress towards this goal.

So the purpose of this resolution is to commend community marriage policies throughout this land; and, in particular, although it is not specifically stated in the resolution, I want to commend the Greater Grand Rapids community in developing their community marriage policy. It has worked well. It holds great promise. We hope that it will achieve a great increase in the stability of marriages in our community and eventually throughout our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 280, which recognizes the importance of strong marriages and community marriage policies. I think it is a wonderful thing if communities try to encourage strong marriages.

Our communities have changed so drastically over the past 3 years, today it is a fast-paced world and places constant stress on families and couples alike.

But today, most married couples, young married couples, one finds both of the couples working, dedicated to a career or a job, and that is a hectic life style. The hectic life style that many young couples are leading make it difficult for them to focus on family and each other, thereby putting a strain on their relationship and putting their marriage at risk.

This resolution, I commend the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) for bringing it forth, bringing attention to a need for strong healthy marriage and community support to make that a reality.

This support, in the form of community marriage policies and other efforts to ensure a network of help for couples, can greatly contribute toward more harmonious and happy marriages, especially churches and community-based organizations.

Those who are contributing that support are various members of our community, including those organizations, as I mentioned, religious and those people's community-based organizations that put forth counseling service.

In closing, I want to thank again the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) for bringing this resolution to the House today and urge Members to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I have outlined some of the reasons that our nation should consider as we try to strengthen marriages in our country. The benefits of health, the benefits of stability, the benefits for our Nation and particularly for our children and their education.

I have stated that the purpose of the resolution is simply to commend communities throughout the entire Nation that have established community marriage policies. But I would like to point out that the Congress itself should focus on ways to undue the bias against marriage in certain Federal programs.

This House has already passed the elimination of the marriage penalty in our income tax, and we hope that that will soon pass the other body and be signed into law by the President. The earned income tax credit should also not have a marriage penalty, which it presently has.

There are other issues in poverty programs and many other programs in the Federal Government where one can detect some antimarriage bias. I think we as a Congress should address those issues.

In addition State governments, with their responsibility for the marriage laws, should do what they can to encourage proper premarital counseling and especially proper counseling of individuals considering divorce.

In the State of Michigan, we have done that through a State law which sets up a mechanism for counseling at the local level, using funds from marriage license fees. Churches and local communities, through initiatives such as community marriage policies, also should encourage this.

In summary, we have demonstrated there are substantial effects of divorce on children. There are substantial effects of divorce on the health of individuals. And we have also outlined a number of the benefits of marriage.

It is very important that we as a Nation and as a Congress emphasize the importance of stable marriages for the well-being of our Nation, our citizens, and especially our children.

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This resolution is one small way we can do that, and I urge the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 280, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.