

have been touched by how that experience formed Norm, a period prominently displayed in his official portrait that hangs in 2167 Rayburn. Instead of harboring a lifetime of bitterness against the country that imprisoned him and his family, Norm Mineta devoted much of his life to public service. He has helped make this a better nation and has helped us become better Americans.

During his 21 year in this House, Norm Mineta was a leader in transportation policy and a fair chairman of what was then called the Committee on Public Works. He is well suited to leading the Department of Transportation in the years to come. Congress—and this body—has fought hard to provide our nation the funding necessary to address the many problems facing transportation today. Norm Mineta brings with him the intelligence, experience, and disposition to be an excellent member of the new Administration and I look forward to working with him in the years to come.

A BALANCED FEDERAL BUDGET

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I fulfill the pledge I made to the citizens of southern Missouri to introduce and work tirelessly to pass an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, that requires a balanced Federal budget. Over the course of the past several decades, fiscal irresponsibility has produced a Federal debt that is fast approaching \$5 trillion. That's trillion, with a 't,' Mr. Speaker. A debt of \$5 trillion is a mind-boggling figure, but it can be placed in a much clearer perspective. A child born today immediately inherits nearly \$20,000 of debt, owed directly to Uncle Sam. The same is true for every American. The era of continuing annual budget deficits must end, and it is clear that the only way to restore conservative fiscal values to the Nation's budget is to pass the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

The stakes in this debate could not be more important. The fiscal future of the United States hinges on the ability of Congress and the President to make the difficult choices required to balance the Federal budget. It's more than debating trillion dollar figures. It's about making our economy stronger and providing every working American family with a better chance to make ends meet. A balanced budget will strengthen every sector of our economy with lower interest rates that will help families stretch each paycheck further. Home mortgages, automobiles, and a better education will become more affordable to every working family, making the American Dream closer to reality for all.

Mr. Speaker, I am committed to working with my colleagues in the new Congress to see that the balanced budget constitutional amendment is passed and sent to the States for ratification. A constitutional amendment is certainly no substitute for direct action on the part of the Congress. However, we have seen time and time again instances where those who object to conservative fiscal responsibility find convenient excuses to deny the American people a balanced budget. An unbreakable enforcement mechanism is clearly needed to

ensure that those who would continue to spend our children's future further into debt are not able to do so.

I also want to make plain that the Social Security trust fund has no place in this debate. The independent trust fund is a sacred trust between generations and must never be used to balance the budget or hide the true size of the deficit.

Commonsense conservatives in Congress and the American people are committed to balancing the budget. I look forward to working throughout this session with all of my colleagues and the White House to pass the balanced budget constitutional amendment on a bipartisan basis. The obligations we owe to hard working American families, their children, and our Nation's future generations deserve nothing less than decisive action to preserve our future by balancing the budget. A constitutional amendment will ensure this outcome.

RE-INTRODUCTION OF THE LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to reintroduce the Women's Right to Know Act in the 107th Congress. This bill ensures that so-called "gag rules" upon women's access to information about reproductive health care are not imposed by the states or the federal government in the future.

First imposed during the Reagan and Bush Administrations by executive order, the gag rule denied federal funds for any health care clinic whose employees counseled, referred, or discussed terminating a pregnancy in any way. If they did so, the clinic's funding could be rescinded. Congressional efforts to overturn these executive orders were vetoed.

Thankfully, President Clinton revoked the gag rule as his first order of business in 1993. While this marked major progress towards better health care for women on a federal level, it did not prevent individual states from imposing statewide gag rules. Currently two states, Missouri and Colorado, have gag rules—with Pennsylvania's state senate having considered and narrowly defeated a similar law in May 2000. With statewide "gag rules" on the rise, the threat of a federal "gag rule" being reimplemented looms on the horizon.

Contrary to the predictions of many gag rule supporters, abortion rates have not been linked to a reversal of this federal policy. In fact, abortion facts actually declined to a twenty year low in 1997 with record drops in teen pregnancy.

Leaving the gag rule to the power of executive order is playing Russian roulette with women's reproductive health. We must intensify our efforts to safeguard a women's access to full reproductive options and prevent the gag rule from ever being imposed again. For the government to withhold information about reproductive health care in a violation of our democratic principles and an unconscionable act against the people it intends to serve.

The Women's Right to Know Act ensures that gag rules will not be imposed by the states or the federal government in the future. This legislation states that no state or federal

government entity may limit the right of any health care provider to supply, or any person to receive, factual information about reproductive health services, including family planning, prenatal care, adoption, or abortion.

The government has no right to interfere with private health care decisions. I therefore urge my colleagues to support this legislation and allow Americans to have access to complete, factual information so that can make informed decisions about their health care.

INTRODUCING H.R. 218, THE COMMUNITY PROTECTION ACT

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I am reintroducing my legislation to permit qualified current and former law enforcement officers to carry a concealed firearm in any jurisdiction. This measure is called the Community Protection Act, and I have requested that it be assigned the same bill number as in previous Congresses—H.R. 218.

The Community Protection Act provides three benefits to our police and to our country.

First, it effectively provides thousands more trained cops on the beat—at zero taxpayer cost.

Second, it enables current and former law enforcement officers to protect themselves and their families from criminals. When a criminal completes his or her sentence, that criminal can find where their arresting officer lives, where their corrections officer travels, and other information about our brave law enforcement personnel and their families.

And, third, it helps keep our communities safer from criminals.

This measure is very similar to the H.R. 218 reported by the Judiciary Committee in the 106th Congress.

Members and the public interested in additional background information on the Community Protection Act, I encourage them to read the Judiciary Committee report accompanying H.R. 218 from the 105th Congress (H. Rept. 105-819), my testimony before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime Tuesday, July 22, 1997, or my statement from introduction in the 106th Congress on January 6, 1999.

I urge all my colleagues to support this important common sense anti-crime legislation.

TRIBUTE TO MARK MIODUSKI

HON. DAVID R. OBEY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, there are many people in this institution who work tirelessly and often thanklessly in order to improve the lives of the people we serve. Those who benefit from their work will never recognize their faces or know their names and day after day and year after year they produce a better country. Today, I rise to pay special tribute to one of them. I offer my most sincere gratitude to Mark Mioduski who has recently left the minority staff of the House Appropriations Committee after fourteen years of distinguished service to the federal government.

For the past five years, Mark Mioduski has been my right-hand man on the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Bill. He has applied a unique blend of technical know how from both budgetary and parliamentary standpoints, creativity and high energy to staffing this important bill. As many people know, the Labor, HHS bill is one of the most difficult appropriations bills to manage and is usually one of the last appropriations bills to pass. Mark has been instrumental in helping to navigate and negotiate numerous high profile and tricky issues affecting the Department of Labor, including funding for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and the recently published ergonomics regulation. In fact, Mark has lived and breathed the ergonomics issue over the last five years and knows the issue better than virtually anyone else on Capitol Hill. In addition, Mark has made significant contributions to a wide range of health and education issues, including working to expand funding for health care access, for biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health, for AIDS and emerging infectious diseases, for Low-Income Energy Assistance, for Head Start, for the Social Services Block Grant, and for Pell Grants for disadvantaged students. The Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, and Education also owe him a debt of gratitude for his detailed attention to their programs and appropriations requests.

Mark has spent most of his career in public service. He began his federal service after being selected to participate in the Presidential Management Intern Program, which is designed to attract the best and brightest to the federal government. He then spent four years with the Interior Department as a senior budget analyst before joining the staff of the House Appropriations Committee. For the last decade he has worked on the Appropriations Committee and, he has been of great assistance to many members and their staffs. I am sure a good many of you saw him as he wore a path to and from the Capitol often carrying his signature workbag which was passed down to him by his father.

Mr. Speaker, I have greatly appreciated the job that Mark has done with humility and good humor over the years. Mark has been not only an outstanding public servant, but also he is an outstanding human being. He cares a great deal about the well being of this country and the people in it who rely on those of us in government to help make this a better place for everyone, especially the most vulnerable among us. Not many of those Americans know his name or know the countless hours he has devoted to his job, but he can leave this institution knowing that many, many Americans and their families have been benefitted from his efforts.

He, like all of us, has been a public servant and he has measured up to the meaning of that term in the fullest possible measure. America's health care system with all its shortcomings provides more help for more deserving Americans because he has worked here. The National Institutes of Health are stronger and the research it oversees is better because he has worked here. Public health programs, not just in this country, but abroad provide more protection to millions of children and adults because he has worked here. Worker protection programs are better able to improve

the safety and health of workers, and working families throughout this country have been able to take advantage of additional training and education to improve their livelihood because he has worked here.

Mark's dedication to the Appropriations Committee and to his work has resulted in many long hours. There were weeks on end when I am sure that Mark did not see much of his family. Mark's departure is a great loss for me as well as the Committee, but I hope that he will be able to spend more time with his wife Lori Whitehand and his two young sons, Ryan and Eric. I wish him the very best in his new endeavors and much success in this new chapter of his career.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL PRAYER

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a constitutional amendment to ensure that students can choose to pray in school. Regrettably, the notion of the separation of church and state has been widely misrepresented in recent years, and the government has strayed far from the vision of America as established by the Founding Fathers.

Our Founding Fathers had the foresight and wisdom to understand that a government cannot secure the freedom of religion if at the same time it favors one religion over another through official actions. Their philosophy was one of even-handed treatment of the different faiths practiced in America, a philosophy that was at the very core of what their new nation was to be about. Somehow, this philosophy is often interpreted today to mean that religion has no place at all in public life, no matter what its form. President Reagan summarized the situation well when he remarked, "The First Amendment of the Constitution was not written to protect the people of this country from religious values; it was written to protect religious values from government tyranny." And this is what voluntary school prayer is about, making sure that prayer, regardless of its denomination, is protected.

There can be little doubt that no student should be forced to pray in a certain fashion or be forced to pray at all. At the same time, a student should not be prohibited from praying, just because he/she is attending a public school. This straightforward principle is lost on the liberal courts and high-minded bureaucrats who have systematically eroded the right to voluntary school prayer, and it is now necessary to correct the situation through a constitutional amendment. I urge my colleagues to support my amendment and make a strong statement in support of the freedom of religion.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERMANENT OFFICE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join with my distinguished colleague, Representative CONNIE MORELLA, in introducing the Violence Against Women Office Act. This bill would make permanent the Violence Against Women Office within the Department of Justice.

Mr. Speaker, domestic violence is shockingly pervasive in our society today. The National Violence Against Women Survey, released by the National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in July 2000, found that:

Domestic abuse rates remain disturbingly high. Nearly 25 percent of women and 7.6 percent of men surveyed reported they had been raped or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, cohabitating partner, or date at some point in their lifetime.

Stalking by intimates is more common than previously thought. Almost 5 percent of surveyed women and 0.6 percent of surveyed men reported being stalked by an intimate at some point in their lifetime; 0.5 percent of surveyed women and 0.2 percent of surveyed men reported being stalked by such a partner in the previous 12 months.

Domestic violence has major implications for public health and our health care system. Of the estimated 4.9 million intimate partner rapes and physical assaults perpetrated against women annually, approximately 2 million will result in an injury to the victim, and 570,457 will result in some type of medical treatment to the victim. Of the estimated 2.9 million intimate partner physical assaults perpetrated against men annually, 581,391 will result in an injury to the victim, and 124,999 will result in some type of medical treatment to the victim.

According to these statistics, approximately 1.5 million women and 834,732 men are raped and/or physically assaulted by an intimate partner each year in the United States. Domestic violence is nothing less than an epidemic, and must be attacked with all the resources we would bring to bear against a deadly disease.

We have made important progress over the past decade. One of my proudest accomplishments in Congress was my work as a lead author of the Violence Against Women Act. This bill, passed by Congress in 1994 and signed into law by President Clinton, has effected a sea change in the way our nation views and addresses domestic violence. VAWA made possible today's programs to educate judges and law enforcement officers, support shelters for battered women and children, and collect vital information on statistics on violence. Nevertheless, studies show that we still have a long way to go.

The legislation I am introducing today with Representative MORELLA would establish a permanent Office of Violence Against Women within the Department of Justice. At present, this office only exists by administrative fiat. It could be abolished or subsumed into another