TEENAGE PREGNANCY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentlewoman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor of the House this afternoon because I care about our communities and our young people. I want to give an ovation to the honorable gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) to support this teenage pregnancy month and certainly to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON), who had another engagement and had to leave, because it is imperative, I believe, to raise the awareness around the crisis of teenage pregnancy.

Nearly 1 million teenagers in this country become pregnant every year. One in four of these teenagers will have a second baby within years of the first child. In Indiana, from which I hail, if you will, we have 37,340 teenage girls who become pregnant every year. Just imagine, 37,340 teenage girls become pregnant every year. Eighty-eight out of every 1,000 girls age 15 to 19 become pregnant in Indiana every year.

When a teenager has a baby, it reduces her chances of completing high school. It reduces her chances of earning a decent wage. Her access to health care will decrease, which will contribute to poor nutritional health for her and her baby. In so many cases, because she cannot afford a baby-sitter, this young woman either loses her job for missing days to stay with a child or is forced to leave her baby in situations that are totally undesirable.

In addition, my recent bill, the Responsible Fatherhood Act seeks to address many of the fathers who are either unwilling or unable to be a source of support, both financially and emotionally, for their children. The effects of teenage pregnancy may also have negative effects on young fathers.

I would hasten to add, however, Mr. Speaker, that the majority of teenage girls who become pregnant have not had relationships with young boys. The babies are fathered by men who are not teenagers.

□ 1300

Some studies suggest, on the other hand, that teenage fathers obtain somewhat lower education levels, suffer from loss of earnings on the order of 10 to 15 percent annually, and are more likely to end up in prison. This too causes long-term consequences for society as a whole.

There are no easy answers to solving teenage pregnancy, and our approach must be comprehensive and multifaceted. I would like to acknowledge the successful efforts that have been made as a result of communities working through a variety of programs that coordinate parents, schools, communities, and religious organizations.

I would like to recognize the important work of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. The organization does a tremendous job because it recognizes the broad consequences for society and the individuals directly involved when children continue to have children. We must empower and support the brave individuals all over the country who are working with programs at the grass-roots level to reduce teenage pregnancy. It is programs such as these that give our young people a fighting chance and an alternative to engaging in destructive behavior.

We believe that if young people have a strategy for the future and have hope about their career and have economic security, they are more likely to value the need to develop themselves, rather than getting involved in behavior that is self-destructive, including premature sex.

I would like to recognize an important bill introduced by my colleague, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE). This bill, the Mentoring for Success Act, will provide grants to expand mentoring through new programs and existing programs throughout the country, hopefully reaching around 200,000 young people.

As the gentleman from Nebraska mentioned, studies have shown that young people who are mentored will be 50 percent less likely to skip school, 50 percent less likely to begin using drugs, 36 percent less likely to lie to a parent, 30 percent less likely to commit a violent act of any kind, and certainly they are less likely to drop out of high school.

Mr. Speaker, let me add in closing that I stand here as a Member of the United States Congress and am the product of a teenage pregnancy. However, the amount of community support, religious support, and school support that I received as a young person has boded well in terms of my future. I hope that we can work together in Congress to pass important pieces of legislation and to offer the necessary resources to counteract this pandemic.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GIBBONS) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Reverend Gene Arey, New Harvest Ministry, Waynesboro, Virginia, offered the following prayer:

Father God, we acknowledge You as the Ruler of all nations and we pray for peace and justice in our world.

We pray First Timothy 2:1–4, ''I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings; and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.''

Father, I pray for our President and the First Lady. Bless them this day and give them the wisdom to do all that is set before them.

I pray for these Representatives, to have the wisdom of God to accomplish all that is set before them to do. Bless them for their commitment to serve the people of our Nation and carry out their duties.

Father, in Jesus' Name I call this United States of America blessed in Jesus' Name.

God bless America. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. EVANS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SUNDRY MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sundry messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.