

apply those lessons, especially those life-skills lessons, to their own experience and they use it to learn grammar, they use it to learn math, they use it to learn science. And the beauty of this is, even if these children, Lord forbid, are unable to go on to secondary school, unable to go on to high school, unlikely to go on to college, they will have learned valuable lessons on preventive health care.

We know these lessons will go a long way in preventing some of the great health challenges that we have seen.

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It will pay off in the long-run in these countries. It will pay off for America. It is a wonderful thing.

The good news is our dollars are working. I thank the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY) for the wonderful experience he included for me. It was truly a great experience.

#### AMERICAN HEART MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish everyone a happy Valentine's Day.

As we know, this is the day that everyone speaks from the heart. This is a day more flowers, especially roses, are given to loved ones, more chocolate and other boxes of candy are purchased. But I would like to call attention to this heart day and our heart health.

While we celebrate Valentine's Day, let us not forget our heart and the signs it gives off, or in some cases, signs that do not give off that are important.

Mr. Speaker, in 1963, a congressional mandate designated February as American Heart Month. Because Valentine's Day is the day of the heart, it is fitting to raise awareness that heart disease kills nearly one million Americans every year, which is about 41 percent of deaths here in the United States.

Heart disease is the number one killer of Americans. Every 33 seconds an American dies from heart disease, and every 21 seconds someone suffers a heart attack. Due to these statistics, Americans need to become more educated on heart disease risks, prevention, and treatment.

Heart disease is also the number one killer for women. About one in five women have some form of heart disease. Even though surveys show that women view breast cancer as a much greater risk to their health than heart disease, the reality is that a woman's lifetime risk of dying from heart disease is one in two, whereas it is one-in-nine lifetime risk for contracting breast cancer, which is also important to be educated and seek examination.

High cholesterol and hypertension are two of the main causes of heart dis-

ease, which is alarming considering the following statistics. Approximately 50 percent of women have cholesterol levels of 200/dL or higher. Seventy-nine percent of black women and 60 percent of Caucasians over the age of 45 were classified as having hypertension.

Further, women often experience other AIDS-related diseases, such as arthritis and osteoporosis that can mask heart disease symptoms and delay the seeking of necessary medical care.

There are also critical preventive measures that include tobacco-use cessation, regular exercise, reduced daily alcohol intake, and controlled blood pressure that women should know of and take to try to avoid this fatal disease.

While heart disease is also the number one killer in my State of California, the good news is that heart disease in California is less than the national average. We must ensure that fighting this disease is on the forefront of our agenda.

In addition to having annual check-ups, screening and participating in regular exercise, it is important to be aware of the heart attack symptoms, which include uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing or pain in the center of the chest lasting more than a few minutes; pain spreading to the shoulders, neck and arms; chest discomfort with light-headedness, fainting, sweating, nausea or shortness of breath; atypical chest pain, stomach or abdominal pain, nausea, or dizziness.

Women typically do not have the crushing chest pain, which is considered a classic symptom. As a result, women's symptoms can be overlooked until it is too late.

Heart disease is a critical health issue. Both men and women need to understand how they can prevent and detect heart disease. Both men and women need to become aware of heart attack symptoms and what to do if they experience any of these symptoms. We need a national effort to raise awareness of this disease.

Perhaps most of all, as the new co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues, I urge all of my colleagues to please make sure they understand the facts and that they, their mothers, sisters, brothers, uncles, daughters all get screened on an annual basis.

So, happy Valentine's Day, Mr. Speaker; and let us not forget the heart.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. BIGGERT addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### ELECTION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here on the floor of the House this afternoon submitting this special order on election reform.

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to address an issue that has been prominent in the minds of many Americans over the past few months but has been on my mind since 1993.

Twenty election reform proposals have been introduced in the House of Representatives since the opening of the 107th Congress. I applaud the thoughtful and expedient response of my colleagues as I myself am soon to unveil my own proposal for strengthening America's voting system and have, in fact, organized my first town hall meeting during the President's Day recess on this specific issue.

When I was elected Secretary of State for the great State of Rhode Island, it had the oldest voting equipment in the entire Nation. Beginning in 1993, as a State representative and then as Secretary of State, I worked with my colleagues in the legislature, the State Board of Elections, local canvassing authorities, and the public to investigate voting problems throughout the State and develop effective solutions.

By May of 1994, our Commission reported the need to replace our antiquated Shoup lever voting machines with optical scanning equipment. Because it is cost effective, it would help increase voter participation.

By the end of 1996, the procurement process had begun; and by September 1997 primary local elections, the optical scan equipment was firmly in place. In both 1998 and 2000 elections, these machines were in full operation throughout the State of Rhode Island.

Implementation of the new optical scan equipment was cost effective because it was cost neutral. Rhode Island's revenue neutral laws ensured that the expenses for staffing, storage, and transportation of voting equipment and printing and mailing ballots all equal the cost of establishing this new system. We also met our goal of increasing voter participation by increasing the number of registered voters by nearly 60,000 from 1993 to the year 2000.

Finally, ensuring timely accuracy in tabulating votes was also a top priority. Because the optical scan machines read voting ballots by sensing the mark within a defined period indicating the vote, this method ensures the clear intent of the voter is transmitted and tabulated.

This system also provides an audit trail for each ballot and enabled the use of ballots printed in multiple languages. However, since the machines were not accessible to blind or sight-impaired voters, I also introduced the Braille and Tactile ballot initiative to ensure that those who have lost their sight or are sight-impaired maintain their right to vote independently.

As Congress works with the President to explore ways to modernize the machinery of voting, I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in applying proven success stories such as what we have done in Rhode Island.

Models exist for accurate, efficient, and cost-effective election reform, which we should utilize in our efforts to ensure true democracy in America. Our voters deserve no less.

#### PRESIDENT BUSH'S TAX CUT PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, as someone who campaigned on the platform of providing tax relief for working American families, I am particularly proud today to announce my support for President Bush's plan to lower income tax rates across the board and to eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

I would like to address two issues today: number one, why I am supporting this plan; and, number two, what our opponents are saying about this plan and address those issues fairly and squarely.

First, why do I support this plan? Well, I support it because it is going to make a meaningful difference in the lives of so many working families here in the United States.

For example, for a married couple raising two children on a salary of \$50,000 combined, they will receive a 50 percent tax cut. That is a savings of \$1,600 a year. Now, a savings of \$1,600 a year for that family translates into an extra \$133 of groceries in their refrigerator every month for those two children that otherwise would not be there.

Now, as someone who himself grew up in relatively humble circumstances, raised by a single mom on a salary of a secretary with three children, I do not have to guess about how much working families and single mothers need tax relief. And that is why I am so enthusiastic in my support of President Bush's tax cut plan.

Now, not everybody agrees with me here. Our opponents have two things they are saying about this bill. And I believe these things are myths. But let us go ahead and address them squarely.

The first thing they say is this tax cut is simply too big, it does not leave enough money to shore up Social Security, Medicare and pay down the debt.

Well, here is the truth: 70 percent of this tax surplus goes to shore up Social Security, provide for prescription drugs, pay down the debt, with only 30 percent being used to return to taxpayers in the form of tax relief, the very folks who are responsible for this tax surplus.

Now, they say we could leave that 30 percent here in Washington, D.C. And I suppose we could. But what would happen? Congress would simply spend that money. Whether it is Republican Con-

gress, Democrat Congress, or alien Congress, that money will be spent. It deserves to be returned to the people who paid these excessive taxes.

The second myth they say is that this is a tax cut just for the rich. Well, let us look at that little myth there. For a secretary making \$38,000, a single mom raising three children, she will get a 100 percent tax cut, she will pay no taxes under this plan. For her boss, the lawyer making \$100,000 a year with two kids, he will get a 16 percent tax cut. Secretary, 100 percent. Attorney, 16 percent. The low-income Americans are the big winners under this plan.

Now, why is that? Because we take the lowest rate of 15 percent and lower it down to 10 percent and we double the \$500 per child tax credit.

Now, with that said, some folks say, well, that is all fine and good for the single moms and folks at the low end of the spectrum, let us just have taxes for the special people, let us not have the taxes for what they call the rich.

Well, once again, all of us pay taxes and all of us are entitled to tax relief. The truth of the matter is that the top 10 percent of wage earners in this country pay 66 percent of the taxes. These are the same people who every year create hundreds of thousands of jobs. Are these folks not entitled to the tax relief? Should we not encourage them to provide additional jobs in this economy?

In summary, this tax relief is desperately needed. It is going to make a meaningful difference in the lives of single moms and working families. A tax cut is not too big and it is not just for the rich.

In closing, let me say this. The leading cause of divorce in the United States today is arguments about money. On this Valentine's Day, we have a happy message of hope for married couples who are struggling to make ends meet: Help is on the way.

#### TRIBUTE TO MS. IMOGENE MATTHEWS OF GARY, INDIANA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, it is with the greatest pleasure that I pay tribute to one of the most caring, dedicated, and selfless citizens in Indiana's First Congressional District, Imogene Matthews of Gary, Indiana.

After serving the constituents of Northwest Indiana in my Gary District Office for the last 10 years, Imogene announced her retirement this past December.

Imogene Vanetta Matthews was born on April 15, 1954, in Gary, Indiana. Imogene, affectionately known as Moby, was the youngest girl of 11 children born to Emmett and Pauline Matthews. A lifetime native of Gary, Indiana, Imogene graduated from West Side High School in 1972.

One need look no further than her career choices after high school to deter-

mine what kind of person Imogene is. From her beginnings at the Gary Manpower Administration helping to place young children in day-care centers and homes, to her years of service as executive secretary for Gary Mayor Richard G. Hatcher, to the last person she assisted in her capacity as a Federal caseworker in my office, she has dedicated her life wholly to public service.

I was fortunate enough to have Moby on my staff as a Federal caseworker since 1989. Her commitment to her work and the people of Northwest Indiana eventually earned her a position as my Deputy District Director.

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During her tenure in my office, she has worked selflessly to ensure the well-being of all those around her. Her exceptional knowledge and expertise in dealing with the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Social Security Administration are unparalleled. While serving on my staff, she reunited dozens of families, helping loved ones attain the privilege of U.S. citizenship and aiding those already in the U.S. by acquiring the passports and visas they needed to visit their relatives abroad.

You only needed one meeting with Imogene to see the revelation that her choice of vocation is not only a result of the responsibility she feels to a community she loves but is also a reflection of her deep and abiding compassion for those around her. Federal casework can be a thankless task. But Moby never wavered. Regardless of the barriers that faced her, Imogene threw herself into her work with the patience and perseverance of Job. Her overwhelming commitment to following through on her promises made her an absolute miracle worker. My office is often the last resort for many of my constituents with problems. Imogene never let anyone feel desperate or afraid. On the contrary, she was a great source of hope to many people who had nowhere else to turn. She treated everyone who walked into my office with the dignity and respect they deserved, regardless of their situation in life or the details of their problems. After working with her for a decade, I can say easily that her kindness knows no bounds.

As one might expect, Imogene selflessly gives her free time and energy to her community as well, her friends, and, most importantly, her family. Imogene is a member of the NAACP as well as the Young Women's Christian Association. She is also an active volunteer for the American Association of Retired Persons and is a member of the Friends of the Gary Public Library. In addition to these important activities, Imogene promotes another cause that is near and dear to her heart. She is an avid Chicago Bulls fan and a Michael Jordan fan. Pictures of Michael Jordan adorned her office along with a life-size cutout of M.J.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me