

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SUBMISSION OF APPEAL FOR CONGRESSIONAL VOTING REPRESENTATION FROM D.C. CADET AT UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 7, 2002

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as the American people and government officials consider entry of our country into a war, I rise today to bring to the attention of the House a letter to the President of the United States from one of my constituents, James N. Rimensnyder, a cadet at the United States Military Academy. I nominated Cadet Rimensnyder, a graduate of Woodrow Wilson High School in the District of Columbia in 2000, and he is now in his 2nd year there.

Recently, Cadet Rimensnyder's letter to the President was brought to my attention by his father, Nelson Rimensnyder. Entirely on his own, Cadet Rimensnyder, who identified himself in his letter as a Republican, had written President Bush, as his Commander-in-Chief, to express his desire for full representation in the Congress. The simple eloquence of Mr. Rimensnyder's plea for the benefits of full citizenship as he serves his country speaks for itself. Cadet Rimensnyder speaks as well for all District residents. I ask the House to recognize Cadet Rimensnyder, who is serving in the U.S. Army in time of war and asks only that his service be honored with full citizenship rights.

West Point, NY, April 2, 2002.

Hon. GEORGE W. BUSH,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: As a native-born resident of the District of Columbia, you know, of course, that I have no voting representative in Congress. This situation has persisted for 200 years. District residents first brought this to the attention of Congress in 1801. Today, we are the only citizens of the United States, excluding felons, who pay federal taxes and serve in the Armed Forces, but are denied representation in Congress.

Two years ago, when I reached my 18th birthday, I registered as a Republican and voted in the 2000 presidential election as provided in the 23rd Amendment to the Constitution. Now I am a Cadet at the United States Military Academy, and appeal to you to uphold the longstanding tradition of our party to advocate voting representation in Congress for the residents of the District of Columbia.

Sir, I wish that one day soon I might have the opportunity to meet you, salute you as my Commander-in-Chief, and thank you personally for addressing this grievance.

Sincerely,

JAMES N. RIMENSNYDER,
Cadet PFC USMC.

THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY
RENEWAL ACT OF 2002

HON. J.C. WATTS, JR.

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 7, 2002

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, America's strength rests in its communities. It is for this reason that today I introduce the American Community Renewal Act of 2002. This legislation will continue the advances begun with the provisions contained in the original American Community Renewal Act of 2000, and provide opportunity for even more cities, towns, and neighborhoods across the country to better their circumstances.

This legislation authorizes the designation of 20 additional Renewal Communities, 15 urban and 5 rural, using newly available 2000 census data. By creating an environment where private investment can flourish, Renewal Communities are uniquely able to harness market forces for job creation and growth. Providing access to employment is a catalyst for people to escape the vicious downward spiral of poverty, and to improve the lots of their families and communities.

An additional incentive provided for in this legislation is a new tax code feature designed to encourage private sector investment in Renewal Communities, Empowerment Zones, Enterprise Communities and HUBZones. This addition to the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, relating to common nontaxable exchanges, would allow investors, subject to certain restrictions, take proceeds from the sale of real property and re-invest these proceeds in businesses in the community without recognizing capital gains. This should encourage investment in businesses within these communities that create jobs for the residents of said communities.

Finally, in order to marshal the resolve of State governments to engage in the revitalization process within Renewal Communities, this legislation requires that States adopt a qualified allocation plan for their available commercial revitalization deduction within 120 days. If States fail to adopt such a plan, the commercial revitalization deduction allocations will pass directly to the approved commercial revitalization agency at the local governmental level. This provision will encourage States to provide the statewide coordination function for community revitalization originally intended in the American Community Renewal Act of 2000.

One of the primary responsibilities of Congress is to create an environment that rewards efforts to strengthen our nation's communities, and fosters the development of responsible and engaged citizens. The American Community Renewal Act of 2002 continues the efforts of previous Congresses in this regard. This strategy is particularly relevant in today's volatile world.

WYANDOTTE NATION LAND
CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 7, 2002

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. Speaker, throughout my years as a Member of this body, I've tried hard to be a defender and promoter of the rights of Native Americans, our First Americans. In that spirit and as Vice Chairman of the Resources Committee, I am proud to add my name as an original co-sponsor of the Wyandotte Nation Land Claims Settlement Act.

The Wyandotte Nation, like so many other Native American Tribes, has endured a sad history of broken promises at the hands of the federal government and they have filed suit to reestablish their rightful and just claim to the lands that those broken promises took away from them. The land claim suit, which the courts have said has sufficient merit to proceed, involves billions of dollars worth of land and thousands of current landholders whose ownership status is now in question.

The Wyandotte Nation, like other groups of Native Americans who have successfully settled their aboriginal land claims, including Natives in my State under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, do not seek to dispossess anyone of their homes and businesses. Rather, they seek a fair and just settlement of those claims so that the broken promises can be mended sufficiently for Native and non-Native Americans to move on productively and cooperatively with their lives and interests.

The Wyandotte Nation Land Claims Settlement Act provides the opportunity for compromise and resolution of longstanding issues in a manner that is beneficial for the Wyandotte Nation and for the entire community currently occupying and surrounding the lands in question and I am therefore proud to add my name to the bill and urge my colleagues to support its passage.

HONORING THE HOMELAND CENTER OF HARRISBURG ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 135TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 7, 2002

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor today to recognize the Homeland Center of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania on the occasion of its 135th Anniversary. For well over a century, Homeland Center has met the medical and social needs of the community through the compassionate vision of its founders.

Christian men and women from various denominations established the "Home for the

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Friendless" in 1866 for the purpose of caring for the widows and children of the Civil War. The first residents consisted of just three women and one little girl.

In June of 1871, the cornerstone was laid for a new building at the location where the building now stands today. Almost one year later, the building was finished and residents moved in, including 148 little girls.

By 1907, only five children were left, but a waiting list existed for adult women who were in need of Homeland's services.

As time passed, renovations were badly needed, but because of the Depression, funds did not become available until 1941 when two sunrooms and two sets of fire towers were installed on the building.

The 1950's were a time of important changes for Homeland. In 1953, the name was changed from the "Home of the Friendless" to "Homeland." Four years later in 1957, plans began to build two new wings. The old building was renovated, too, and became the chapel for Homeland.

By the end of the 1980's, Homeland was almost an entirely new building. New and nearby property was required to meet the growing needs of residents. The third floor was remodeled while the fourth floor was completely removed. New beds, a courtyard, and a new dining room were added.

Perhaps the biggest expansion took place between 1996 and 1999 when six million dollars was spent to add an Alzheimer's care unit, a new chapel, more office space, and a new skilled care building.

Mr. Speaker, although Homeland Center has undergone a phenomenal number of changes, it has never veered from the vision of its original founders to provide medical services and a welcoming community to those in need. Today, Homeland provides state-of-the-art living and personal care for one hundred and fifty residents of varying degrees of medical needs. A faithful team of nurses and aides staff Homeland, providing care and well being.

I am very pleased to recognize Homeland Center today. Reaching its 135th Anniversary is certainly a milestone; reaching it with a record of continuously successful growth is a truly remarkable accomplishment. Congratulations Homeland Center.

CHILD MALTREATMENT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 7, 2002

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, we have all read the on-going stories about the chaos engulfing the Florida foster care system. The story below describes the horrifying findings of a study commissioned, then subsequently suppressed, by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF).

The Florida report, released September 19th, uncovered a 13-year-old boy living in a foster home—his 19th placement in under a year. In another case, auditors found a 10-year-old boy had been moved 12 times in two years and although a therapist thought he could not read, DCF had done nothing to ensure supportive educational services. Florida auditors blame the failed child welfare system

on poor communication, ill-trained workers and insufficient resources.

The situation described in the Florida audit is not unique to Florida. In August, an audit of Maryland's child welfare system revealed that the state had lost track of some foster care children for months, failed to ensure proper health care and, in at least one case, entrusted a foster child to a sexual offender.

In July, Los Angeles County's foster care system was sued by child advocates, charging that foster children were routinely denied medically necessary mental health, behavioral support, and case management services, as required by federal law. District of Columbia officials acknowledged that several boys were sexually abused at various group home facilities, including a group home for mentally retarded foster children.

The circumstances described in the following report, comparable to reports in Maryland, California, and the District of Columbia, clearly indicates that the child welfare system today is a national disgrace. States fail to meet federal child welfare law requirements of safety, permanency, and child and family well-being. In fact, child protection agencies make victims of the very children and families they are supposed to benefit.

The history of Federal child welfare review efforts goes back to the law I authored in 1980 (P.L. 96-272). That law requires States to comply with a number of core requirements intended to protect children placed in foster care as a condition of receiving Federal foster care funds. Over the past 20 years, Congress has thrice charged the Department of Health and Human Services with developing new systems to review States compliance with federal child welfare protections. Yet the extent to which the Federal Government actually holds States accountable continues to be an issue of ongoing concern.

The States have repeatedly failed to comply with federal foster care core procedural requirements. If those requirements cannot be enforced in a manner that adequately protects children, then Congress cannot delay longer in developing new standards to protect the well being of foster children.

The article follows:

[From South Florida Sun Sentinel, Sept. 20, 2002]

GRIM TALES ARISE FROM FOSTER CARE (By Megan O'Matz and Sally Kestin)

Three Broward County boys were taken from their mother in 1996 and put into foster care. Five years later, the state decided it had no grounds to keep the children and reunited the family.

By then, one boy had been whipped in foster care, and another had gone so long without seeing his siblings "he forgot they were his brothers and thought they were just friends," according to a state review of the children's case files.

"The boys have been harmed by the system that set out to help them," the reviewers wrote.

The case study was part of an exhaustive review by an Alabama consultant of more than 80 children under the care of the Department of Children & Families statewide.

The summaries, released by the department this week, include disturbing descriptions of children wrongly kept from parents, lingering in the system for years and lagging behind in school, unprepared to live on their own.

Evaluators blame the problems on poor communication, ill-trained workers and insufficient resources.

Carolyn Salisbury, associate director of the University of Miami's Children and Youth Law Clinic, said the grim experiences described in the reports are not surprising. "I have worse cases than that," she said. "We all should be shocked, but those of us who work in child welfare are not."

The analysis, conducted by the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group from February to April, looked at cases in seven DCF districts, including Broward and Palm Beach counties.

The lead consultant, Paul Vincent, delivered data to DCF in May, but agency officials who were under attack for losing track of children withheld it from the public and two panels charged with investigating DCF until this week. The agency released nearly nine pounds of documents in response to public records requests from DCF critics and the media.

"Now that the document is public, we can see why DCF spent so much time and effort to hide it," Salisbury said.

BELOW STANDARDS

DCF officials were not available to comment on the case summaries; however, newly appointed DCF Secretary Jerry Regier expressed concern in a public appearance Thursday that recommendations in a 2001 study of Broward County by Vincent's team were never acted upon.

"That bothers me very much," he said.

The subsequent review discovered problems statewide. Evaluators said three out of four cases failed to meet acceptable standards.

Some common themes emerged.

DCF caseworkers and supervisors often did not work collaboratively with therapists, teachers, foster families and parents. The system made few efforts to help parents overcome problems related to poverty and cut off contact with children, making reunification harder. And the agency regularly had difficulty finding suitable foster homes.

The reviewers found a 13-year-old Palm Beach County boy living in a foster home—his 19th placement in under a year.

The boy, who had a history of attacking teachers and students, shared a room with a 5-year-old whom he threatened to strangle.

When the teen reported headaches and "auditory hallucinations," DCF waited a year to complete the doctor-recommended brain scans.

In another case, an Orlando teenager, abandoned at 15 by her adoptive parents, bounced among foster homes. "These constant moves have placed her at least two years behind educationally," the report states.

A frequent runaway known to climb into cars with strangers, the girl claimed to have been raped more than once.

Reviewers found she "is not safe, stable or moving toward permanence and independence. Her emotional status may be at a historical low point ... The child's progress is unacceptable and worsening." In Marion County, the consultants concluded that DCF should not have taken a 3-year-old girl from her mother. The agency received a report that the girl and her siblings were flea-bitten and dirty and that the house had no food.

Shortly after arriving in foster care, the girl began pulling her hair out and banging her head. She smeared feces on walls and had trouble sleeping, awakening from dreams of "monsters." Foster care "should be a last resort, not a first step," Vincent's team wrote.

SLEEPING IN OFFICE

Lacking funds, DCF, meanwhile, could not find a bed for a disturbed 13-year-old in the Tallahassee area.

Suspended from school and kicked out of a foster home for killing a litter of newborn puppies, the boy spent his days "in and