

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

around" a DCF office. At night he slept on the floor, next to his caseworker.

The child flunked sixth grade twice and had been hospitalized numerous times for threatening to hurt himself and others.

"This is a case of the system failing the child for a multitude of reasons," the report states.

The team faulted DCF in the case of another 13-year-old, whose adoptive parents abandoned her. The state could have prevented the failed adoption, the consultants found, but investigators did not act quickly after receiving reports of problems in the home, including harsh discipline and sexual activity between children.

Later, the girl kicked a teacher and hit a Department of Juvenile Justice worker, sending her to a St. Petersburg delinquency program two hours from her hometown of Ocala.

No relatives visit her, "nor do any of the people in the system," the reviewers wrote. "She seems to be a child who is 'out of sight, out of mind.'"

LAWYER SEES PROBLEMS

Richard Komando, a Fort Lauderdale lawyer who represents about 90 children in DCF care, said he routinely encounters problems the consultants identified, including poor communication, too few foster homes and decisions driven by money.

"It's rare when I see a kid where everything's going right," he said.

Indeed, the experts found little going right for a 10-year-old Brevard County boy. In his first two years in care, DCF moved him 12 times.

His father, a convicted sex offender, committed suicide. The department, despite warnings, planned to return the boy to his mentally ill mother. "The mother is presently living with a friend or in her car. No one is certain," the report states.

The boy should have been in fifth grade but was functioning on a first-grade level. A therapist thought he could not read, yet DCF "had no contact with the school regarding his progress," the report states.

"The child's remaining in one home since May 2000 after a history of instability is the only mark of progress," the consultants wrote. "There is inadequate knowledge of this case, its history and its future by DCF."

WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 7, 2002

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Wisconsin State Journal, which was founded in Madison, Wisconsin 150 years ago in 1852.

The daily Wisconsin State Journal, which we celebrate today, evolved from an afternoon weekly called The Madison Express. The Madison Express covered stories directly related to a young and isolated frontier town, Madison, at a time when area wolves decimating local pig populations dominated the early paper's headlines. It was a dedication to providing exemplary local coverage that ensured the survival of the weekly edition and eventually led to a broader daily newspaper that connected a developing, city with the world. Through the years, both The Madison Express and then the Wisconsin State Journal were able to survive the competition of over 80 competing local newspapers.

Today, the Wisconsin State Journal is a thriving metropolitan newspaper that maintains a balanced focus on both the wider world and the local developments of the Madison area and Wisconsin. The newspaper currently has a circulation of over 110,000 households in a territory spanning 17 counties. In recognition of its quality, the Wisconsin State Journal has received an impressive seven Lee Awards for excellence in journalism and five Inland Press Awards for community service and public affairs reporting.

The newspaper has shown its commitment to the area through its community involvement. The Wisconsin State Journal originally conceived and now leads the Schools of Hope project, a broad, community-driven program that has helped improve the reading scores of area students.

Congratulations on 150 great years.

RECOGNIZING CONTRIBUTIONS OF HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTIONS

SPEECH OF

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2002

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, investing in a sound education is one of the most important things that we can do to give a child the tools to get ahead in life. I am proud to have been an original cosponsor of H. Res. 561 Recognizing the Contributions of Hispanic-Serving Institutions. These institutions of higher learning are an integral part of America's commitment to quality education for all Americans.

South Florida students, in particular, have benefitted from the academic excellence "Hispanic-serving institutions" (HSI) strive to provide to their students. We are talking about schools, in which student enrollment must be at least 25 percent Hispanic, with at least 50 percent of these Hispanic students from low-income families. While comprising only 5 percent of all institutions of postsecondary education, Hispanic-serving institutions enroll 49 percent of Hispanic-American students. These institutions have devoted themselves to ensure that these underrepresented students receive the same opportunities and quality of learning as their peers who come from higher socio-economic backgrounds, and for that these schools deserve every praise.

Most recently, on September 3, 2002, the U.S. Department of Education awarded two grants totaling more than \$3 million to Florida International University (FIU) for programs to expand the University's capacity to serve Hispanic and low-income students and provide pre-collegiate opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. I am proud that FIU is a part of the South Florida community. It has proven through its long and distinguished history as an HSI, that administering programs effectively addressing the educational needs of underrepresented and underserved students, leads to these students becoming positive contributors to our society.

There is an ever-growing number of postsecondary institutions that are striving to serve our nation's Latino population. Throughout the nation more and more institutions of higher education are reaching out to and enrolling an

increasing proportion of Spanish-speaking students. According to the U.S. Department of Education, the enrollment of Hispanic American students in college is growing twice as quickly as college enrollments in general. Many of these students are learning English as a second language, and come from families where Spanish is primarily spoken. These institutions provide a comfortable and nurturing setting in which to acclimate primarily Spanish-speaking students with their English-speaking peers. Therein, all students from various backgrounds can further develop their academic skills.

I commend HSIs for the opportunities they provide to Hispanic students and also to low-income students. I also commend their graduate and professional programs which are designed to improve and expand graduate and professional opportunities for Hispanic students and other students.

Today's students are our country's future and, therefore, our investment in a sound educational system is crucial.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 7, 2002

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, due to an unavoidable scheduling conflict, I was not present for rollcall vote No. 438, on Thursday October 3. Had I been present, I would have voted "no".

TRIBUTE TO BEN GILMAN

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 7, 2002

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and honor to my good friend and colleague, Chairman BEN GILMAN.

Mr. GILMAN has served 30 distinguished years to the people of the 20th Congressional District of New York. I have only had the opportunity to work with Chairman GILMAN for four years, but they have been insightful and meaningful ones.

Chairman GILMAN has always been known for his influential backing of key social reforms. His instrumental role in securing fair human rights practices in the former Soviet Union has been felt and has contributed to the proliferation of American values of democracy and equality worldwide.

As Chairman of the Committee on International Relations, Mr. GILMAN handled challenging and difficult situations with sensitivity and in a most diplomatic manner. Chairman GILMAN has also been an example of what it means to be truly committed to supporting the State of Israel and the Jewish people. His instrumental involvement in peace and reconciliation in Israel as well as in Ireland has secured him a special place in the history of American foreign affairs.

Chairman GILMAN never hesitated to share with me the outstanding wisdom and knowledge he possesses. His years in the House have been filled with dignity and grace, friendship, loyalty, honesty and integrity. Mr. GILMAN's decision to retire from the House will