

H.R. 1350—IMPROVING EDUCATION RESULTS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 2003

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 9, 2003

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 1350. When Congress made the leap to dramatically change the way the nation treats the education of disabled students in 1975 when it created IDEA, it made a commitment to providing a free, quality education to children who previously had been neglected by the system. This commitment to fund 40 percent of the excess cost of education for children with disabilities was unprecedented. Six million children who had once been forced to seek private education or forego education altogether were given the opportunity that so many children take for granted. At least, that was the idea.

Unfortunately, this body has continued to neglect these children by refusing to fully fund the program. Today we had the opportunity to show these children, their parents, and their educators how serious we are about their education—but passing H.R. 1350 will be a failure to do that. Not only does the bill fail to fund IDEA above the 18 percent we currently give to the 40 percent Congress promised, but it actually sets back the education of children with disabilities. In fact, this bill weakens the civil rights protections that were initially established with IDEA, undermines parental involvement and even creates the potential for disabled students to be punished for actions related to their disabilities. When the Majority promises to leave no child behind, does it make an exception for children with disabilities?

Many groups, including the PTA, the National Mental Health Association, and the Children's Defense Fund oppose this bill because it falls short of improving education for children with disabilities. It has become clear that this bill favors school administrators—not children, parents, and the teachers who work so hard to give disabled children an equitable education.

I strongly support a good public education for all children and I believe that every child is entitled to the same. Those who passed IDEA in 1975 shared that view, and they set a goal to give students with disabilities the treatment and education they deserve. Unfortunately, this bill fails to live up to what the original authors of IDEA intended, and I must vote against it. However, I am committed to special education and I will continue to work to pass a bill that accomplishes the intended goals set out under the original Act.

REMEMBRANCE ON MOTHER'S DAY

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 9, 2003

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the Mother's Day weekend, I rise today to remember the mothers of missing children, or mothers whose children's lives have tragically ended in violence. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

Most of you remember the story of the two Oregon City girls who disappeared on their way to school last year: Ashley Pond in January and Miranda Gaddis in March.

Months later after a lengthy search by law enforcement and the community, the entire Nation was horrified as the FBI and Oregon City Police dug up the backyard of a home neighboring their apartment complex to discover the girls' bodies.

Ashley and Miranda were just 13 years old when their precious young lives ended in violence. I think of them often.

Throughout the last year, my staff and I have gotten to know Michelle Duffey, the mother of Miranda. She has survived horrors unimaginable except to those who have lived through this kind of terrible tragedy themselves. Less than 1 year after learning of her daughter's fate, Michelle is trying to rebuild a life for herself and her family.

Just consider for a moment, that throughout her grieving process, Michelle has been recognized in the grocery store and on the street. She continues to be called upon for numerous media interviews. This sort of notoriety must be very, very hard for her and her family to endure. And yet Michelle has taken that attention, gained some strength from the community's support, and has used that courageously to advocate on behalf of missing children and their families. I admire her fortitude. And I greatly appreciate her public service.

I will continue to stand by Michelle Duffey in her efforts to prevent this type of tragedy from happening to someone else's child.

Each year, nearly 800,000 children are reported missing according to the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. This includes children who run away, who are abducted by family members and the most serious and deadly kidnappings, those by strangers. I am proud to be a member of the Missing Children's Caucus that supported the passage of the national AMBER Alert plan, that takes important steps to prevent such tragedies as happened in Oregon City. No legislation will ever prevent 100 percent of the atrocious crimes perpetrated against our Nation's children, but it is up to us to try. Michelle Duffey has been one of its strongest and best advocates.

This Sunday, I will remember Miranda and Ashley's mothers in my thoughts as we honor our Nation's mothers. I ask you to keep in mind all the mothers across America who are missing their children at this time, and to offer your thoughts and prayers for them and their children.

NAVY JUNIOR ROTC

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 9, 2003

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise with pride today to recognize an outstanding Navy Junior ROTC from Corpus Christi, Texas, in my congressional district.

The Flour Bluff High School's Navy Junior ROTC is easily the very best in the country, having won the national title among all Navy Junior ROTC programs in the country for the past seven years. So they are used to being known as the "best of the best."

This week, they made their domination of Junior ROTC competitions complete by winning competitions against units from every branch of the service. For the first time, both the armed and unarmed drill teams from Flour Bluff won the all-service competition against teams from all other military branches.

The 33 students from the Coastal Bend of Texas who won the competition of 4,000 students on 155 teams were simply spectacular at the All Service Grand National Championship competition in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Both young women and men have competed for the championship—and both have won. The young women of Junior ROTC won the national title in 2000. The following year, the young men took the championship. But this year, they accomplished a new goal by both taking home the championship.

They are judged on drills, precision marching, personal appearance and their knowledge regarding current events. While these are exceptional young people who are outstanding young leaders, they have a visionary example of leadership in their unit Commander, Armando Solis.

Commander Solis has nurtured these teenagers through seven consecutive titles for the Flour Bluff High School Navy Junior ROTC. It is largely through his dedicated guidance that Flour Bluff's Navy Junior ROTC has been extremely successful in their national competitions.

I am particularly proud of these young people under Commander Solis' guidance. ROTC is a feeder program for tomorrow's officer corps, and there are a number of people who are serving us in uniform today who came through this particular program, and from Junior ROTC programs across the nation.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in commending the Flour Bluff High School's Navy Junior ROTC for their excellence.

A BILL TO PERMANENTLY EXTEND THE WORK OPPORTUNITY AND WELFARE-TO-WORK TAX CREDITS AND IMPROVE THE PROGRAMS

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 9, 2003

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, today I am joined by my colleague from New York, Mr. RANGEL, in introducing our bill, "Encouraging Work Act of 2003." The bill would permanently extend the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and the Welfare-to-Work Credit (W-t-W) and make other changes discussed below. Both programs are currently due to expire on December 31, 2003. The credits are tax incentives designed to encourage employers to hire public assistance recipients and other individuals with barriers to employment. They are important tools in our efforts to help needy individuals become productive employees.

Improvements in the programs the past few years have made WOTC and W-t-W far more effective in providing employment, with training, for our nation's disadvantaged. Such training can be costly and the credits provide an incentive to employers to hire the disadvantaged and provide the needed training while

offsetting costs associated with the latter effort.

Of course, many believe the programs would be even more successful if they could be extended indefinitely. We hear from both employers and state job services, which administer the programs, that the continued uncertainty surrounding short-term extensions impedes expanded participation and improvements in program administration. If the programs were made permanent, employers, both large and small, would be induced to expand their recruitment efforts and encourage the states to improve the administration of the programs. Such a change would benefit everyone.

WOTC provides employers a 40-percent tax credit on the first \$6,000 of wages paid to those from targeted groups who are working at least 400 hours, or a partial credit of 25 percent for those working 120–399 hours. W–t–W provides employers a 35-percent tax credit on the first \$10,000 of wages for those leaving welfare and working 400 hours in the first year. In the second year, the W–t–W credit is 50 percent of the first \$10,000 of wages paid to qualifying employees.

In addition to making the credits permanent, our bill would simplify WOTC and W–t–W, as President Bush recommended in the Administration's FY 2004 budget, by combining them into one credit and making the rules for computing credits simpler. Among other changes, the bill would expand the food stamp category by increasing the age limit from 24 to 39 years of age for members of food stamp households and residents of enterprise zones or renewal communities ("a designated community resident"). The current ceiling of 24 limits the availability of individuals in these targeted categories. There are many individuals, over the age of 24, who could be gainfully employed if the age limit was expanded. Currently, the programs do an excellent job of helping women on welfare enter into the workforce. Over 80 percent of the hires in the programs are women. However, men from welfare households face a greater barrier to employment because they are no longer eligible for welfare once they turn 18. However, they can qualify up to age 24 if they are a member of a household receiving food stamps or live in an enterprise zone or renewal community. We believe increasing the age limit to 39 will provide employers an incentive to hire more "at-risk" males and provide them with a sense of personal responsibility and self-esteem in assuming their responsibilities as parents and members of society.

More than 80 percent of the 2.2 million individuals hired under the WOTC and W–t–W programs were previously dependent on public assistance programs. However, during periods of slow economic growth and rising unemployment, employers have more hiring options. The jobs skills of those coming off welfare today—many because they have reached their 5-year life time eligibility ceiling—are even less than the first generation that left the welfare rolls. Because of the high cost of recruiting, training, supervising low-skilled individuals, many employers will look elsewhere for employees if these programs are not renewed before the end of the year. WOTC and W–t–W are proven incentives for encouraging employers to seek employees from the targeted groups.

We urge our colleagues to join us in co-sponsoring this important legislation to extend and improve the two programs.

HONORING DELONE BRADFORD-GLOVER

HON. ROB BISHOP

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 9, 2003

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to honor a tremendous individual and important representative of all who have worked so hard to preserve historic sites across the State of Utah. Delone Bradford-Glover has devoted a remarkable amount of time, energy and heart to the noble cause of preserving the Golden Spike National Historic Site. I wish to commend her unselfish devotion and dedication.

Delone began working with Bernice Gibbs Anderson over 50 years ago. Together they were the champions of the preservation of the Golden Spike. Delone was instrumental in assuring that the Last Spike Site at Promontory Summit received national recognition through its inclusion in the National Park System. Delone was President of the Golden Spike Association for more than 25 years. In that time Delone had the tremendous responsibility of planning every anniversary celebration and event, including recruiting re-enactment participants and ceremony guests, until retiring as active President two years ago. Specifically admirable was her work on the Centennial Celebration in 1969 when she lobbied for the anniversary celebration to take place and worked so hard to make it such a success. In 1994, Delone set out to save the Brigham City Depot and it was her work that encouraged the Union Pacific Railroad to deed that land to the Golden Spike Association on the 125th Anniversary year.

I take great pleasure in honoring this amazing citizen for her service to the Golden Spike. Her selfless devotion has impacted and will continue to effect countless generations of those in her community and the State of Utah as a whole. I would like to thank Delone Bradford-Glover for truly being the "Heart of the Golden Spike."

RECOGNIZING ANTHONY K. SITTER
ON HIS APPOINTMENT TO THE
U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 9, 2003

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize my constituent, Anthony K. Sitter of Bowling Green, OH, who recently accepted his appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy.

Anthony will soon graduate from Bowling Green High School. During his high school career, he has maintained a 3.9 grade point average. He is an accomplished athlete, earning multiple varsity letters in swimming. And, he has demonstrated his strong leadership ability, serving as class president and as a delegate to Buckeye Boys State. He is a member of the National Honor Society.

Anthony Sitter can be very proud of his many accomplishments. He is a credit to his family, his school, and his community. By accepting his appointment, Anthony is accepting a unique challenge.

The Academy is the pinnacle of leadership development for the United States Navy. As a member of the U.S. Brigade of Midshipmen, he will face a most demanding academic curriculum and physical regimen. He will live, study and prepare in an environment where strong leadership thrives, individual achievement is expected, and personal integrity is demanded.

Mr. Speaker, General John W. Vessey, Jr. once wrote, "The Nation's ability to remain free and at peace depends in no small measure on whether we will continue to inspire our youth to serve."

I am confident that Anthony Sitter has the character and ability to excel at the U.S. Naval Academy. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing him well as he begins his very important service to our Nation.

TRIBUTE TO ELIZABETH NEUFFER

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 9, 2003

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a Elizabeth Neuffer, a Boston Globe journalist who died in a car accident today while covering the conflict in Iraq.

Elizabeth was a well-respected journalist with the Globe, New England's largest daily newspaper. During the 1980s, she won a reputation for courageous reporting for her work on war crimes in the Balkans. She went on to report from Rwanda after the genocide; from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq during the first Gulf War; and from the Soviet Union during the transition from Gorbachev to Yeltsin.

Her most recent assignment was the United Nations, and after covering the war in Afghanistan, she underwent training for reporters to be imbedded in Iraq and was helping to cover the ongoing conflict with her colleagues at the Globe. She was passionate about covering the reconstruction effort, and at the time of her death she was working on a story about efforts to remove the influence of the Ba'ath Party.

Her unique perspective as a reporter covering the realities of genocide helped her transfer an abstract debate about war crimes prosecution into a book, "The Key to My Neighbor's House: Seeking Justice in Bosnia and Rwanda."

Among her many awards while serving as the Globe's European bureau chief were the Courage in Journalism Award, as well as the Edward R. Murrow Fellow of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Elizabeth once said, "The truth may be hazardous to those who tell it, but truth is not dangerous, disinformation is. As I saw in Bosnia and Rwanda, it is propaganda that fans the flames of hatred."

Elizabeth will be missed not only by her family, friends, and those who loved her, but by those of us who had the privilege to work with her in the world of politics and journalism.