

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM DeMINT

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 13, 2004

Mr. DeMINT. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during roll call votes 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, and 168. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on roll call votes 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 163, 164, 166, 167, and 168. I would have voted "nay" on roll call votes 161, 162, and 165.

RECOGNIZING THE VERMONT SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION'S SCHOOL ENERGY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 13, 2004

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to share with you some information regarding an outstanding program in my State that helps schools save hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in energy costs, while dramatically reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental pollutants.

Since 1993, the Vermont Superintendents Association's School Energy Management Program has assisted Vermont schools with the implementation of cost-effective energy choices and efficiency measures.

Energy cost savings realized by the more than 125 public and private schools which the School Energy Management Program has assisted now exceed an estimated \$950,000 annually. A significant proportion of these annual savings is due to the 23 public schools which utilize biomass wood chips for all or part of their heating requirements.

The concept of the School Energy Management Program was developed by the Vermont Department of Public Service in 1993 and the Vermont Superintendents Association agreed to host the program. The program is supported by the Federal Government via various grant funds; the Vermont Department of Public Service; the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation; the Vermont Department of Education; Efficiency Vermont, the statewide electric efficiency utility; the Montpelier-based Biomass Energy Resource Center; the Vermont Department of Health; the Vermont School Boards Insurance Trust's School Management Resource Center; the state's electric and natural gas utilities; and private architectural and engineering firms.

Participation in the program is voluntary and core consulting and assessment services of the School Energy Management Program have traditionally been provided to schools at no direct cost to Vermont school district taxpayers and with no compensation or "shared savings" demands. The program takes pride in "saving real taxpayers real money" for the long term, while improving the educational environment for Vermont students and saving energy.

The program works to accomplish on-site energy assessments and provide energy conservation consulting services to schools. The program's work is not limited to one energy

source or type. It includes: biomass heating, including ongoing support to the 23 Vermont public schools which now utilize biomass wood chip heating systems; electric energy efficiency; advice concerning electric, natural gas, propane, and fuel oil water and space heating fuel choices; and school kitchen equipment efficiency.

One of the program's most remarkable components is the development of wood chip heating systems, an environmentally sound energy choice saving money for Vermont schools and Vermont taxpayers. These systems provide many benefits to Vermont schools and set an excellent example for schools and public buildings in Vermont and across the country.

Wood chip heating can provide significant cost savings to many schools: Vermont schools currently save over \$366,000 in fuel costs annually by utilizing wood chip heat.

More than 10 percent of public school students in Vermont currently attend wood heated schools and in Vermont there are now 23 public schools which use wood chips for heat and two more schools will start using wood chips for heat in late 2004.

Wood chips are a renewable source of energy, currently saving Vermont schools over 720,000 gallons of fossil fuel annually by utilizing wood chip heat.

Wood chip utilization recycles carbon that already exists in the natural carbon cycle; therefore no new carbon dioxide is added to the atmosphere from this biomass energy source.

Wood chips are supplied from Vermont and the adjacent region; hence money spent on wood chips stays in the local economy and supports jobs in the area's forest products industry.

For buildings 50,000 sq. ft. and larger, fuel cost savings likely more than offset capital financing costs combined with additional maintenance staff time requirements; hence, in many cases, a system can "pay for itself" in 5 to 10 years.

I enthusiastically commend the Vermont Superintendents Association's School Energy Management Program for setting an excellent example for school systems and other public and private facilities throughout Vermont and across the country. Mr. Speaker, it is my intention to introduce legislation to encourage schools across the country to take advantage of their innovative, environmentally sound and cost-effective heating and energy solutions. It is imperative that American schools save money on energy costs for their taxpayers, help improve environmental conditions related to heat and energy production, and help support their local job markets in the process.

TRIBUTE TO HENNA WHITE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 13, 2004

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Henna White in recognition of her work to heal divisions and solve problems within her community and among families in Brooklyn.

Henna attained national recognition for her work in inter-group relations, which began in the wake of the Crown Heights disturbances in

1991. She is a South African who grew up during the turbulent years of apartheid and was instrumental in forming "Mothers to Mothers," a dialogue group composed of Jewish and African-American women who meet regularly to learn about and from each other. She has received a number of awards for her inter-group activities and she continues to work with communities and groups to help foster harmony.

Henna has also been at the forefront of issues dealing with domestic violence. She is a well-known speaker on the topics of domestic violence and women's issues and has organized conferences, forums and educators' workshops. She created Brairot, a batterer's intervention and counseling group for Orthodox Jewish males as well as a sex offenders program designed to meet the specific religious and cultural needs of sexual offenders. She has been the guiding force in helping communities break through the denial and realize the tragic effect of domestic violence on families.

After reading about the tragedies of newborn babies being left in dumpsters, Henna created a program called Baby Safe Haven. Baby Safe Haven gives new mothers the opportunity to anonymously leave a newborn at a safe place such as a hospital or a firehouse, keeping the baby safe and giving the mother immunity from prosecution.

Approximately 7 years ago in the aftermath of Yitzhak Rabin's assassination and in response to the rhetoric that divided the Jewish people, Henna founded the Jewish Women's Dialogue under the auspices of the American Jewish Committee. The Dialogue is a group of approximately 30 women from all walks of life with differing and opposing religious views who have learned to listen and talk to each other. The women have created a foundation of trust based on shared beliefs about their differences while maintaining a level of understanding and respect for each other. This organization is now being replicated throughout the New York Jewish community as well as in Boston and Washington.

In her professional life, Henna works for the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office as Community Liaison for District Attorney Hynes. She serves as the Chairman of the Board of Kingsbrook Hospital. She is the first woman to chair the Board of Directors and has been spearheading many programs that educate women when it comes to health related issues.

Her work with youth and families is recognized throughout New York, especially in the areas of teens at-risk and drug addiction. Henna is also the President of the Jewish Community Council of Canarsie and a board member of the American Jewish Committee. Henna is a Chassidic Lubavitch woman born in South Africa who now resides in Canarsie, Brooklyn with her husband, Asher, and their four children.

Mr. Speaker, Henna White has helped solve some of the most difficult and private issues facing families across Brooklyn. As such, she is more than worthy of receiving our recognition today and I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring this truly remarkable person.