

deepest condolences go out to her parents, Ira and Magic Love; her sisters, Bridget and Crystal; her brother, Stephen; and her grandparents. April's legacy and spirit will live on in those whose lives she touched.

REMARKS ON RYAN WHITE CARE ACT REAUTHORIZATION

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, Congress will stand by and allow the Ryan White CARE Act to expire. While this does not signify the end to the program, it does underscore our responsibility to conduct hearings and vote on its soon overdue reauthorization. We must act swiftly to ensure that this landmark program, which provides lifesaving treatment to more than half a million persons living with HIV/AIDS each year, be strengthened to meet the changing needs of their care.

New York City has always had a special respect for the opportunities the Ryan White CARE Act affords the city in serving the needs of our HIV/AIDS population. New York City comprises three percent of the nation's population, but more than 16 percent of the nation's AIDS cases. As of December 31, 2003, there were 142,085 cumulative AIDS cases in NYC, and 88,479 City residents diagnosed as Persons Living With HIV/AIDS. Although Ryan White CARE Act is widely considered the payer of last resort for people with HIV/AIDS, it fills much of the void in providing treatment and support services for those who either are uninsured or underinsured, without the necessary resources to access desperately needed care.

We must do better by CARE Act funding. This program has been virtually flat funded for years, and its AIDS Drug Assistance Programs (ADAP) only received a ten million dollar increase in this year's House Labor-HHS bill. Many very low-income people continue to be shut-out from ADAP programs due to states' varying income eligibility levels, which can range from 125 percent to 500 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. Without early, aggressive treatment people living with HIV/AIDS can experience rapid and often irreversible disease progression. Additionally, if care is interrupted drug resistance can develop, which compromises their ability to properly control their health. Now, more than ever, the President should release emergency ADAP funding to help host states care for the estimated 8,000 victims of Hurricane Katrina, who have been displaced from their homes and networks of care.

The President's Principles for Ryan White CARE Act Authorization include some troubling provisions which could have devastating results for communities' ability to provide consistent, appropriate care for persons living with HIV/AIDS. The proposed Severity of Need for Core Services Index will change funding formulas to take into account the availability of other resources, like state and local funding streams. This is bad public policy as it punishes states that have taken responsibility for their local HIV care and creates a powerful disincentive for other states to prioritize funding for HIV funding in future years, if they think

the federal government will just cover the gap. No state spends more than New York does to care for its residents with HIV and AIDS—over \$3 billion last year. New York has always viewed this funding as a partnership between the state, cities and federal government and should not lose out on future federal funding for being at the forefront of providing progressive services and treatment.

Secondly the President's proposal for a minimum of 75 percent of Ryan White CARE Act funding to be spent on core medical services should be seriously revisited. While there is no question that appropriate funding should be directed towards medical care, localities that benefit from comprehensive state funding for medical care, might better serve patients with using the funding for transportation to medical visits, emergency housing assistance for homeless patients, and other key services. This hard number fails to reflect the different resources that cities like New York utilize to care for their patients, and the changing needs of the HIV/AIDS patient population.

As a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, I look forward to holding hearings on the reauthorization of the Ryan White CARE Act. We must work together with the Senate to strengthen and preserve the foundation of the Ryan White CARE Act program with the compassion and thoughtful consideration it deserves.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to celebrate a true milestone in our Nation's history, the 85th anniversary of our Constitution's 19th amendment, guaranteeing that "the rights of citizens to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

The efforts of pioneers in the fight for women's suffrage such as Susan B. Anthony, Alice Paul, Lucretia Mott, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, served not only to advance women's rights, but also promoted equality for all Americans.

I would also like to acknowledge the contributions made by Business and Professional Women/USA during the suffrage movement, most notably the organization's oldest Michigan chapter, located in Saginaw. These women were dedicated to protecting and defending human dignity. Those beliefs remain today with the current members of BPW, who continue to strive for the betterment of women in society.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the 109th Congress to please join me in recognizing the 85th anniversary of the 19th amendment to the Constitution. It has helped make our country a better place in which to live.

INTRODUCING THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL EQUITY ACT

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my good friend, Representative HILDA SOLIS, and Senators KERRY and DURBIN to introduce the Public Health and Environmental Equity Act.

It has been 5 weeks since Hurricane Katrina devastated the lives and landscapes of the gulf coast region. The floodwaters that ravaged Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi in the last month have finally begun to recede and America and the world have become all too aware of the losses suffered by the citizens of these areas. They have lost family and loved ones. Most have lost homes, jobs, and businesses. And in their greatest hour of need, they were left abandoned and forgotten. Our own President was forced to admit the shortcomings of the so-called "relief" effort.

While nothing can ever make up for the misery endured in the first days of the storm, there is plenty we must do to alleviate additional harm as rebuilding begins. Understandably, residents are anxious to get back to their homes and to their lives. Anxious contractors with a different agenda have vowed that such a mission can be fulfilled sooner rather than later. They want us to believe that homes, buildings, and schools fully submerged from weeks of raw sewage, pesticides, solvents, decaying corpses, and teaming with mold will magically become clean and safe to move into.

How will they accomplish such a feat? Their plan: Have the EPA completely waive every environmental mandate that has protected us for 35 years. Simply put, this means that anyone involved in Katrina rebuilding will be allowed to dump where they want, pollute where and when they want, and contaminate for as long as they want. It's a quick-but-dirty solution for cleanup and reconstruction with no regard for maintaining clean air, water, or soil. Once in place, environmental loopholes attributed to Katrina recovery in the gulf region will also be the excuse for any company to create toxic breeding grounds anywhere in the country. Your backyard could be next.

Mr. Speaker, waiving these long-standing environmental regulations is an irresponsible and unconscionable way to jump-start the rebuilding process. What we'll end up with are toxic residues that will sicken these communities for years to come. Residents who return to their homes under such EPA waivers will face a lifetime of illness and uncertainty about the water they drink, the air they breathe, and the soil they walk on every day. Failure to fully implement current environmental health and safety regulations jeopardizes every human and ethical standard we claim to hold dear. Loosening these environmental safeguards will further victimize those still struggling to regain their lives.

We know what Katrina's victims look like; we know their income level; and we know why they've been ignored. To roll back highly regarded environmental protections will add insult to an already festering injury of racial and social injustices. The citizens of the gulf coast

want the same things the rest of America strives for—a safe place to live, work, and raise their families. They expect their elected officials to uphold laws that secure these basic necessities. They deserve our assurances and our actions that the value of their lives are no longer a back burner issue.

Katrina's victims already survived the worst natural disaster in modern American history. They've already survived a relief effort that can only be described as shameful. Why on earth would we create a man-made catastrophe and tell them it's in their best interest?

The resolution which we are introducing today makes Congress's commitment clear and obvious that we do not believe that Katrina—or any other natural disaster—should be used to justify rolling back and completely waiving environmental regulations. I ask for our colleagues' support and urge the House to move this resolution swiftly.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF H.R. 2123, SCHOOL READINESS
ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF
HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA
OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2005

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 2123, as this bill is a remarkable improvement on last Congress's version and includes important provisions which will benefit all Head Start participants. I will, however, vote against this legislation if Leadership succeeds in inserting a "poison pill" that, if adopted, would mark the first time Congress would permit organizations that run Head Start programs to discriminate against job applicants solely on the basis of their religion.

While by no means a perfect bill, this legislation stands as a testament to the progress that can be made through bipartisan cooperation. This bill contains none of the controversial provisions from last Congress, such as block granting or universal competitions. Instead, H.R. 2123 contains several provisions which will benefit all Head Start participants, and I am proud of this fact and have worked hard with my Colleagues towards achieving these goals.

In particular, H.R. 2123 provides additional resources for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) program expansion, which will allow for thousands of farm-worker children to exit the fields and enter the classroom. This expansion includes a 5% funding floor for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start. In step with this funding floor, the Secretary is required to compose a report determining how well we are serving children eligible for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start. The bill also requires a study on the status of limited-English-proficient children and their families in Head Start and Early Head Start programs. These provisions and many others included in the bill before us today will benefit all Head Start students and families and set kids on the right foot for competing with their peers throughout their school years.

Mr. Chairman, it is evident that the provisions in this year's bill will help millions of Head Start students and their families' edu-

cational, personal, and economic well-being. I ask, why, then, are we considering inserting a poison pill into this remarkable piece of legislation? The amendment offered by Mr. BOUSTANY would severely block the program's participants, children and parents, from climbing out of poverty to self-sufficiency. This is simply unacceptable in light of what Katrina has unearthed as a systemic problem in our country: widespread and unresolved poverty.

This amendment would prevent volunteer Head Start parents from moving off the welfare rolls into self-sufficiency as Head Start certified teachers, simply because they are the wrong religion. This outcome is not needed, not wanted, and definitely not helpful to the millions living in poverty today.

Additionally, this amendment also sets a dangerous precedent: such a change would allow faith-based organizations to discriminate not just on the basis of a person's religious affiliation, but also on how closely they follow the tenets of that religion. This could include religious beliefs on medical treatments, marriage, pregnancy, gender, and even race.

Don't let Head Start fail by excluding qualified teachers and engaged parents from Head Start programs run by faith-based organizations. I urge my colleagues to vote no on final passage if this dangerous amendment passes.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND
IDEALS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
AWARENESS MONTH

SPEECH OF
HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY
OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 27, 2005

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support all the women and children who have survived domestic violence, and for all the women whose lives have been claimed by domestic abuse. It is abhorrent that violence within our homes continues to be prevalent today—nearly one in four American women report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives. Violence against women is a profound and extremely pervasive problem, striking across borders, across economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and across all age groups. It is an epidemic that affects not only women, but their children and families as well.

As we recognize National Domestic Violence Awareness Month this October, it is time that we actively work to end violence against women. I would like to draw special attention to immigrant women who continue to lack access to many resources that would enable them to escape domestic abuse. While we were able to include many critical provisions of relief to battered immigrant women when we reauthorized the Violence Against Women Act in 2000, there are still battered immigrants, like asylees and the elderly, who are forced to remain in abusive relationships, unable to appeal for protection from law enforcement and the courts for fear of deportation. I have introduced H.R. 3188, the Immigrant Victims of Violence Protection Act, which will allow them to safely escape their abusers without fear of deportation or other negative immigration consequences. This legislation would also provide

a safety net for battered legal immigrants and their children by allowing them access to work permits, health insurance, food, and other benefits required to escape their abuser and gain economic independence.

It is time that we change attitudes in this country so that violence against women is no longer tolerated. We are devoting extensive resources to ending terror around the world, while at the same time one in four women continue to be terrorized by domestic violence and sexual assault in their lifetime. It is time that we devote the same amount of resources to ending a form of violence that terrorizes over half the population of this globe. We must teach our sons that violence of any kind is unacceptable; we must give our daughters encouragement and support so they have the self-esteem to leave abusive relationships; and we must start to envision a world free of violence against women. I believe that if we all work together, we can turn this vision into reality. But it is going to take resources, hard work, and, most of all, incredible resolve. I challenge my colleagues to make the fight against domestic violence a top priority, and together we can make this country a safer place for our mothers, daughters, sisters, and friends.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE
FRANK C. LEAL ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL UPON BEING NAMED A
NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL
OF EXCELLENCE

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ
OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, on September 22nd, the Frank C. Leal Elementary School of Cerritos was awarded the distinct honor of being named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. Frank C. Leal Elementary joins 33 other public schools and seven additional private schools in the State of California who have also been named National Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence. I commend the efforts of each and every one of these outstanding California schools.

The Blue Ribbon Schools is a national recognition program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The 22-year-old program encourages states to nominate public and private kindergarten through grade twelve schools that are either academically superior or demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement.

This Blue Ribbon distinction duly recognizes the level of excellence that is achieved everyday at Frank C. Leal Elementary School of Cerritos. This school is setting a national example of what it takes to be a superior learning environment. It is absolutely essential that our schools continue to strive for excellence, if we want our students to realize their academic potential.

Frank C. Leal Elementary School is a visual and performing arts magnet school, and is a testament to the impact that an arts education can have on a student's academic achievement. I commend the hard working teachers and school administrators of Frank C. Leal Elementary School of Cerritos for their contributions and commitment to our young people. I