

outstanding women who are emerging as leaders throughout the world. I sincerely commend the newly elected leaders and admire the female leaders from the past who paved the way for this newer group of women elected officials. It is evident that they are poised to demonstrate their ability to lead their countries into the future.

Portia Simpson-Miller, Jamaica's first woman Prime Minister and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Liberia's new President and the first elected female leader in Africa's history are surfacing to prominence with much support from their countrymen. The term referenced in the article to give a sense of the political climate in their countries is "national euphoria". This term clearly signifies the exuberance that is felt as these ladies take on the task of running their countries.

While I am overjoyed for the newly elected female officials, a disturbing part of the editorial addresses the declining number of males in the U.S. and in the Caribbean who are failing to take advantage of the educational opportunities that could lead to a more active role from men in politics of the future. The Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies ventured to say that in another decade women will be leading the Caribbean in most spheres of influence. Hopefully, opportunities will continue to exist for all and more young men and women will embrace and seize the opportunity to contribute to the political processes in their countries.

Mr. Speaker, I have deep respect for the fortitude and commitment of the many women leaders who are rising to the forefront as they embark on the mission to bring about positive changes in their countries. I enter this editorial into the RECORD to reiterate the point that women are emerging as leaders throughout the world and this emergence signifies that it is truly "Women's Time Now."

[From the NY Caribnews, April 4, 2006]

"WOMEN TIME NOW"

"It's woman time now, give her a chance."

Across Jamaica, indeed throughout the Caribbean and in the West Indian Diaspora in North America and Europe, both men and women are chanting that sentiment.

Although the words are meant for Portia Simpson-Miller, who in a few days time will make history in her country by becoming Jamaica's first woman Prime Minister, they are also being directed at Liberia's new President, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the first elected female leader in Africa's history, and the newly installed President of Chile, Latin America's first woman head of state and government.

Like others in different parts of world, Simpson Miller and Johnson Sirleaf, for instance, have come to office with national euphoria serving as the wind beneath their wings. It's up to them to lead their respective countries into a new and prosperous direction.

Simpson-Miller, perhaps the most popular politician in Jamaica is not the first woman to head a Caribbean government. Eugenia Charles, the Prime Minister of Dominica in the 1980s and Janet Jagan, Guyana's President in the 1990s, are but two who come quickly to mind. In addition, Haiti, the Netherlands Antilles and St. Marteen have all had women at the helm.

Across the Caribbean, indeed, around the world women are taking charge, enacting new laws, changing old bad habits, reshaping broken countries and companies and bringing a new sense of order and inspiration that augurs well for the future.

In the U.S., which by the way lags Rwanda in giving women a larger share of political and parliamentary power outstanding women now hold key positions in government, the judiciary, on college campuses, civil society, the trade unions, corporate America and elsewhere. But as outstanding as it sounds, the pace may have been a bit too slow and needs to be quickened.

Such outstanding women as Dame Billie Miller, Barbados' Senior Minister who has been her country's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade for a dozen years, Claris Charles, Grenada's Minister of Education, Dame Pearllette Louisy, St. Lucia's Governor General, and Pat Bishop of Trinidad and Tobago who is one of the Caribbean's most accomplished composers, arrangers and ethno musicologists are but a few of those who come to mind for having changed the course of government, the trade union movement or cultural expression in our part of the world.

Just the other day, Dr. Nigel Harris, Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, served notice that in another decade women would be leading the Caribbean in most spheres of influence. He based that on the fact that females account for more than 70 per cent of the students on UWI campuses in Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados. While that's a source of joy, it's also a reason to express regret as far as young men are concerned. The male of the species in both the U.S. and the Caribbean are failing to take advantage of educational opportunities, thus leaving us all to ask what does that tell us about the future?

Women, especially Black women around the world are seizing every chance they get to make a difference for themselves and society. The barriers they have broken down are mind-boggling and are a lesson to all about rising to the occasion.

That's not to suggest that the path has been easy or that the future is entirely rosy. They must expect challenges at every step but there is little doubt that they would be able to complete the task successfully.

GENERAL DEBATE OF H.R. 609

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, with great disappointment, I rise to voice my opposition to H.R. 609, a bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act.

College affordability is the major issue for this generation of students and their families. A higher education is increasingly out of reach for too many in America and for those who do attend, the average student debt amount continues to grow. Many of us know how difficult it can be to finance a college education and we also know that this education is a key to a successful economic future.

The Higher Education Act is one of the most important laws governing our Nation's education system because its intent is to create and improve access to college for millions of students each year. Discussion of this law should be focused on changes that will make college more affordable for all families and that will increase our global competitiveness. Instead the Republican leadership has put forward legislation that does nothing to increase the affordability of college and at the same time allows for-profit education companies access to limited education dollars.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is moving America in the wrong direction. While other nations around the world are investing in higher education, this Congress has passed a \$12 billion cut to student aid—the largest cut to students ever. That devastating cut, combined with the effort in this bill to eliminate fraud and abuse protections currently governing financial aid dollars, clearly show that the Majority has prioritized for-profit education companies over our students and our future.

In addition, Republicans have included language to broaden federal influence over colleges and universities. This bill gives Congress a role in overseeing daily campus activities, including monitoring classroom discussions, reviewing student grades, and setting curriculum. This sets a dangerous precedent for what has historically been an issue of academic freedom for our higher education system.

It is the American dream to have the opportunity to learn, to work in the career of your choice, and to succeed. If should not be the policy of the United States Government to limit the dreams of students. Mr. Speaker, I urge colleagues to reject H.R. 609 and to work for legislation that improves access to college and increase our ability to compete in the new global market. This is a priority for families and our communities and should be a priority for our leaders in Washington.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DEDICATED DENTAL SERVICE FOR HIV/AIDS ACT OF 2006

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to introduce the Dedicated Dental Service for HIV/AIDS (DDS for HIV/AIDS) Act of 2006 to establish a loan repayment program for dental school graduates in exchange for their agreement to remedy a critical shortage of dentists for the poor, particularly in areas with a high incidence of HIV and AIDS, by agreeing to serve such patients. This bill is similar to legislation Congress has enacted in the past to encourage other health professionals, such as physicians, nurses, optometrists and pharmacists to provide vital services in underserved areas.

Howard University professors of dentistry inform us that the first indicators of HIV/AIDS infection are often oral health problems. Oral health problems often not only constitute an important early signal of HIV/AIDS symptoms; they also serve as benchmarks for disease progression. One of the most serious problems with the spread of HIV/AIDS is the reluctance of people to be tested for such a disease, especially in the African American community and other big city and rural areas. Access to dental care, I therefore, is critically important from the earliest onset, especially in high impact areas. Access, of course, minimizes long term oral health complications for patients, but it also provides important linkages to good overall medical care to combat the disease in the community.

A recent RAND health study on HIV costs and services found that the vast majority of patients received care at their local AIDS clinic, not a primary dentist. Moreover, these

disfavored patients must look for service within the context of a nationwide drop in dental school applicants and graduates, and a projected 60 percent loss of active dentists due to retirement. As a result, the average American, especially those with HIV/AIDS, will or already are having difficulty in obtaining dental care.

For HIV/AIDS patients the crisis is palpable. They have even more difficulty than other Americans finding dentists who will accept Medicaid or treat patients at reduced cost. Some dentists are reluctant to provide care. Although only one case of transmission between dentist and patient has been documented, problems of access are acute. Many patients must travel long distances to find care. Many states do not include dental care as part of their Medicaid coverage. Patients often must search for providers such as schools of dentistry or local community clinics which receive some funds from the Dental Reimbursement Program (DRP), administered through the Ryan White CARE Act.

My bill would create a loan forgiveness program for dental school graduates who agree to serve HIV/AIDS populations in areas where there is a high incidence of such cases, as defined by the Department of Health and Human Services. This program is drawn from the nurse loan forgiveness program passed by Congress in 1998. The crisis for the dental profession, especially in the distribution of dentists in underserved areas, is even greater than for physicians. Dental school graduates incur an average loan debt of \$100,000. Under the guidelines of the program, the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services is authorized to pay 60 percent of the principal and interest on the loans in exchange for service for a period of no less than two years. If a dentist agrees to participate in a third year of service, another 25 percent of the principal and interest on his loans will be paid. Loan forgiveness programs bring important added value because many recipients remain in practice in the area to which they are assigned. The secretary of HHS is to submit to the Congress a report on the program, with information including the number of dentists enrolled, the number and amount of loan repayments, the placement location of loan repayment recipients, and the evaluation of the overall costs and benefits of the program.

With more than one million Americans with HIV/AIDS, and over 16,000 in the District of Columbia, and its impact among people of color, these health providers need greater attention. We are proud of the overworked and underfunded services that are available in the District of Columbia. The Howard School of Dentistry has a long history of providing dental services to the poor here, and the HU CARES program, provides care for nearly 1,200 patients a year. The vital Whitman Walker Clinic, the largest provider of comprehensive HIV/AIDS services in the District and the region serves over 1,500 dental patients a year.

I urge my colleagues to join with me in establishing this dental loan repayment program that will meet an immediate and pressing need in communities across the country, as we have for other professions.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 5216, THE PRESERVATION OF RECORDS OF SERVITUDE, EMANCIPATION, AND POST-CIVIL WAR RECONSTRUCTION ACT

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to introduce H.R. 5216, the Preservation of Records of Servitude, Emancipation, and Post-Civil War Reconstruction Act. This important legislation will build upon the success of the Freedmen's Bureau Records Preservation Act of 2000 (P.L. Number: 106-444), which passed both the House and the Senate unanimously in 2000 and was signed into law in November 2000. The law required the Archivist of the United States to create a searchable indexing system to catalogue the geological records from the post-Civil War Reconstruction period.

Based on the immense success of the Freedmen's Bureau Records Preservation Act, I have joined with my colleagues to introduce follow-up legislation to ensure that those Americans who want to trace their family's history in our country are not prevented from doing so because access to records is difficult. Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, for most Americans, researching their genealogical history involves searching through municipal birth, death, and marriage records—almost all of which have been properly archived as public historical documents. However, African Americans in the United States face a unique challenge when conducting genealogical research due to our Nation's history of slavery and discrimination. Instead of looking up wills, land deeds, birth and death certificates, and other traditional genealogical research documents, African-Americans must often try to identify the name of former slave owners, hoping that the owners kept records of pertinent information, such as births and deaths.

To compound this difficulty, African-American genealogists find that most current records of servitude, emancipation, and post-Civil War reconstruction are frequently inaccessible, poorly catalogued, and inadequately preserved from decay. While some States and localities have undertaken efforts to collect these documents with varying degrees of success, there has not been any national effort to preserve these pieces of public and personal history to make them readily and easily accessible to all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, the Freedmen's Bureau Records Preservation Act was an important first step towards ensuring that many of these valuable and important records are appropriately maintained. Without this Act, we run the risk today of losing other critically important historic documents.

The Preservation of Records of Servitude, Emancipation, and Post-Civil War Reconstruction Act, tackles this problem in two ways. First, it would ensure that existing records of servitude, emancipation, and post-Civil War reconstruction housed within the federal government that include the Southern Claims Commission Records, Records of the Freedmen's Bank, Slave Impressments Records, Slave Payroll Records, and Slave Manifests would be properly preserved by authorizing \$5

million for the Archivist of the United States to preserve, maintain and electronically catalog. Second, this legislation would also authorize \$5 million in grants to be distributed to States, academic institutions, and genealogical associations to preserve and establish databases of the important local records of servitude, emancipation, and post-Civil War reconstruction currently housed throughout the country. These grants will ensure that families doing research in my home State of California or anywhere in the country will have access to these treasure troves of genealogical information.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be joined by over forty of our colleagues from both sides of the aisle who are original cosponsors of my legislation and particularly appreciate the support of my good friends and colleagues, TOM DAVIS, and ELIJAH CUMMINGS, whose assistance in drafting this bill has been monumental. I would urge the rest of our colleagues to support this legislation and hope that we will be voting on this bill soon.

I would also like to call attention to the following websites, which will provide genealogical researchers, as well as people interested in the history of African-Americans, a true bounty of useful and meaningful information.

National Archives Genealogy Website (<http://www.archives.gov/genealogy/>)

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AFRICAN AMERICAN DOCUMENTARY RESOURCES*

African American Civil War Memorial, DC (<http://www.nps.gov/afam/index.htm>)

Booker T Washington National Monument, VA (<http://www.nps.gov/bowa/index.htm>)

Boston African American National Historic Site, MA (<http://www.nps.gov/boaf/index.htm>)

Brown v Board of Education National Historic Site, KS (<http://www.nps.gov/brvb/index.htm>)

Cane River Creole National Historical Park, LA (<http://www.nps.gov/cari/index.htm>)

Central High School National Historic Site, AR (<http://www.nps.gov/chsc/index.htm>)

Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park (Paul Laurence Dunbar State Memorial), OH (<http://www.nps.gov/daav/index.htm>)

Frederick Douglass National Historic Site, DC (<http://www.nps.gov/frdo/index.htm>)

George Washington Carver National Monument, MO (<http://www.nps.gov/gwca/index.htm>)

Maggie L Walker National Historic Site, VA (<http://www.nps.gov/malw/index.htm>)

Martin Luther King Jr National Historic Site, GA (<http://www.nps.gov/malu/index.htm>)

Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site, DC (<http://www.nps.gov/mamc/index.htm>)

Natchez National Historical Park, MS (<http://www.nps.gov/natc/index.htm>)

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park, LA (<http://www.nps.gov/jazz/index.htm>)

Nicodemus National Historic Site, KS (<http://www.nps.gov/nico/index.htm>)

Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, AL (<http://www.nps.gov/semo/index.htm>)

Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site, AL (<http://www.nps.gov/tuai/index.htm>)

Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, AL (<http://www.nps.gov/tuin/index.htm>)

*Parks have primary source documents, museum artifacts, historic structures, landscapes and related resources. Both primary and secondary sources at these sites contain lists of persons, families, institutions and organizations significant in African American