

as the Federal government in the interest of protecting students and limited taxpayer funds.

At issue here, Mr. Speaker, is the practice of lenders buying their way into colleges and universities through excessive "inducements," or what some might term bribery.

Over the last year stories have surfaced with lenders offering exotic vacations to employees of colleges as well as offering to run student aid offices during high volume times.

These activities often result in lenders securing a coveted place on a college's "preferred lender list."

While some may see this as not so troubling or not the business of government, I beg to differ. When these activities directly result in limited options for students and families in deciding how to pay for college, I believe it is not only our business but our responsibility to do something.

Preferred lender lists are, for the most part, a non-issue with some colleges and universities. These institutions have indeed done the work of looking for the best deal in the interest of students and families and can justify why lenders have a place on their preferred lender list.

But this is the exception rather than the rule. Entry into a school's preferred lender list means more than just having a coveted spot and a near guarantee of business, it means there are opportunities for lenders to prey on students and families and offer them private loans.

This problem is exacerbated by the fact that students are taking out loans in record number and doing so before having exhausted all of their options with federal student loans.

Why is this a problem? Private loans carry interest rates as high as 19 percent—compared to federal loans that are offered at 6.8 percent.

Something must be done about the practices by lenders to limit choice for students as well as encourage students to take out high-interest and risky private loans before exhausting all of their borrowing options through the federal programs.

To begin the process of addressing this, I join my colleagues from the Education and Labor Committee, RUBEN HINOJOSA, TIM BISHOP, JOE COURTNEY and JOHN YARMUTH in introducing the Student Loan Sunshine Act. The legislation: Requires full disclosure of special arrangements that lenders and institutions of higher education have to offer loan products at the institution; Bans lenders from offering gifts worth more than \$10 to college employees, including travel, lodging, entertainment, and in-kind services that lenders provide to college financial aid offices; Requires full disclosure of the reasons why an institution of higher education has selected a lender for its "preferred lender" list, including any special arrangements the lender has with the school; Encourages borrowers to maximize their borrowing through the government's loan programs before taking out alternative loans and direct-to-consumer loans with higher interest rates.

The legislation has also been introduced by Senators EDWARD KENNEDY and RICHARD DURBIN in the Senate.

It is clear that we need to take steps to address the complex activities of lenders and their relationships with institutions. The Student Loan Sunshine Act is a necessary first step in starting the dialogue at the national level.

HONORING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, the theme of the 33rd annual Catholic Schools Week is "Good News in Education," and there is much good news to share. There are over 7500 Catholic schools nationwide educating over 2 million students. Catholic high schools have an impressive graduation rate, with 97 percent of students going to college. Chicago boasts the second largest Catholic school system in the country, with 102,000 students and 5,400 teachers in 258 schools. In Chicago, as in other urban areas, Catholic schools play an important role in providing quality academic training to children and youth.

Yet, Catholic schools do more than educate, they emphasize discipline and service—two critical elements to raising responsible youth. In a society where many individuals place primacy on their personal needs, Catholic schools focus on preparing students to contribute to society by considering the needs of others. The close involvement of parents, a cornerstone of Catholic education, makes clear that education is not something that occurs only within the school house.

From Chicago to across this nation, Catholic schools have provided education and service to those who have been traditionally left behind in our society. They have taken in poor and neglected children and released to the nation leaders and champions. For this I want to commend the Catholic school system in America. It is a beacon of hope to neighborhoods and communities throughout the nation.

Catholic schools, however, like all other components of education, Madam Speaker, are facing difficult times. I would hope that as the year goes on and as we discuss and debate education, we commit to putting as many resources into education as we possibly can, ensuring the vitality of the institution, knowing that the investment secures the success of the future generations.

So I graciously thank our teachers, counselors, nuns, and priests in our Catholic schools for their years of dedicated service. I offer heartfelt appreciation for their enormous dedication to our nation's children, and I urge them to continue to strive for excellence as they prepare our young people's hearts and minds to lead the nation.

Again, I salute the Catholic schools for their outstanding contributions, and I would like to recite for the record those in my district, which are as follows:

Chicago Jesuit Academy, Divine Infant Jesus School, Divine Providence School, St. Bernardine School, St. Edmund School, St. Jerome School, St. Stanislaus Kostka, St. Elizabeth School, St. Helen School, Children of Peace School, Santa Lucia School, St. Pius V School, St. Therese School, Visitation School, St. Domitilla School, Ascension School, St. Giles School, St. Luke School.

St. Vincent Ferrer School, Old St. Mary's, St. Angela School, St. Malachy School, St. Nicholas Cathedral, San Miguel-Corner Campus, Frances Xavier Warde, Our Lady of the Westside, St. Catherine/St. Lucy, Immaculate Conception School, Archbishop Quigley Pre-

paratory, Fenwick High School, Holy Trinity High School, St. Ignatius College Prep., St. Joseph High School, Trinity High School.

TRIBUTE ON THE RETIREMENT OF JUDGE DIANE KARPINSKI

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Judge Diane Karpinski of Ohio's 8th District Court of Appeals who is retiring after a long and illustrious career. Actually, Judge Karpinski has had two careers. After earning both bachelor's and master's degrees in English from Ohio State University, she taught for 19 years, first at Ohio State and later at Cleveland State University. Then, upon graduation from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law in 1980, Judge Karpinski worked for thirteen years as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Ohio, trying more than 1600 cases at the trial level and practicing extensively in the appellate courts of five different districts in northern Ohio and at the Ohio Supreme Court. She was elected in 1995 to a six-year term as judge in the Court of Appeals of the 8th District of Ohio and subsequently re-elected to a second term. She was appointed as a visiting judge on the Ohio Supreme Court for a series of significant cases on automatic license suspension.

Judge Karpinski has demonstrated a strong commitment to her professions, first as a teacher and also as an attorney. Active in the Cuyahoga County Bar Association, she served on its Certified Grievance and the Court of Appeals Committees. Since 1998 she has been a Trustee of the Cuyahoga Bar. She is also a member of the Cleveland Bar Appellate Court Committee. In 2001, she was the first to chair a new committee of the Ohio State Bar Association: On the Independent Judiciary and Unjust Criticism of Judges. Because of her dual professions, she is often invited to lecture on appellate writing.

Judge Karpinski values her community and her Polish ethnic heritage. With her two sisters, Mercedes Spotts and Gloria Joy Battisti, she was a founding trustee of the East Side Catholic Shelter for the Homeless. For years she has sung in Our Lady of Peace Church Choir, and for one summer was its interim organist. After studying Polish at the Alliance of Poles for three years, she joined a team of teachers who traveled to Gdansk to teach English in the summer of 1993. Continuing her mother's interest in ethnic affairs, especially in the Cleveland Cultural Garden Federation, Judge Karpinski volunteered her services as its counsel. She was a long-time member of the American Polish Women's Club, has chaired the Budget and By-Laws Committees at Alliance of Poles Conventions, and served as Treasurer of Group 88 of the Polish Women's Alliance. For two years she was a judge for the Polonia Foundation Scholarship Committee and currently is a member of the Foundation Board.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognizing the great accomplishments of Judge Diane Karpinski and her tremendous commitment to the people of Northeast Ohio. Let us wish her tremendous success in her

upcoming third career as retired citizen, where she is sure to continue serving the people with energy, distinction, and talent.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 5, 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 35—Supporting the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. While we do not yet have a cure, and HIV/AIDS continues to consume the lives of Black people, their values and their worth here in the United States and in other parts of the world, we know Black AIDS Day can help to mobilize our communities to help shift and turn this epidemic around.

In the past decades and sadly still today, HIV infection rates continue to escalate at an alarming pace among Black men and women as shown by reports year after year. Although Blacks make up around 13 percent of the population of the United States, they represent 49 percent of the total AIDS cases reported in this country, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Sixty-four percent of all American women living with HIV/AIDS are black, and this disease has become the leading cause of death for black women ages 25 to 34. Every day, 72 African Americans are infected with HIV in the U.S.

While poverty plays a role and access to health care and lack of information are factors, we cannot deny that the main reason for this plague is the silence, the closed-mouth social conservatism, of a people still ill at ease discussing sexuality, homosexuality, drug use and other realities. Instead, we mouth piety, prayers and platitudes.

We now recognize National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, as declared six years ago by the Community Capacity Building Coalition, an affiliate of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and we cannot remain still. We must work together to ensure that programs for prevention remain adequately funded and that programs such as Ryan White CARE Act can be used for early detection of HIV so we can use all tools available to us to fight this epidemic. Everyone should be encouraged to get tested for HIV, learn more about the disease and how it is transmitted, seek medical advice if infected, and become involved in local community efforts to educate people and fight this disease.

It is also important that Blacks are at the forefront of clinical research to achieve culturally appropriate results for treatment in our communities. Some of the biggest challenges we face, particularly in the Black community today are the misperceptions of and lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS, and fear related to clinical research.

I encourage my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus and the rest of Congress to stay committed in their effort in whatever way possible to combat this epidemic which has taken too many lives, too early, and unnecessarily.

INTRODUCTION OF ROCKY FLATS SPECIAL EXPOSURE COHORT ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I am today again introducing a bill to make it more likely that red tape and missing documents will not frustrate Congress's attempt to provide compensation and care for some nuclear-weapons workers made sick by on-the-job exposure to radiation.

The bill is cosponsored by my colleague from Colorado, Mr. PERLMUTTER. I appreciate his support and that of Senator KEN SALAZAR, who is introducing a similar bill in the Senate.

The bill would revise the part of the Energy Employees Occupational Injury Compensation Act ("the Act") that specifies which covered workers are part of what the law designates as the "Special Exposure Cohort."

The revision would extend this "special exposure cohort" status to Department of Energy employees, Department of Energy contractor employees, or atomic weapons employees—all terms defined by the current law—who worked at the Rocky Flats site, in Colorado, for at least 250 days prior to January 1, 2006.

The result would be to help provide the Act's benefits to any of those workers who contracted a radiation-linked cancer specified in the Act after beginning employment at Rocky Flats.

As the law now stands, before a Rocky Flats worker suffering from a covered cancer can receive benefits, it must be established that the cancer is as likely as not to have resulted from on-the-job exposure to radiation.

That sounds like a reasonable requirement—and it would be appropriate for Rocky Flats if we had adequate documentation of radiation exposures for the years when it was producing nuclear-weapons components as well as for the more recent time when DOE and its contractors have been working to clean it up and prepare it for closure.

However, in fact there were serious shortcomings in the monitoring of Rocky Flats workers' radiation exposures and in the necessary recordkeeping—to say nothing of the slowness of the current administrative process for making the required determinations concerning links between exposure and employment.

So there is a risk that a significant number of Rocky Flats workers who should be able to benefit from the Act will not obtain its benefits in a timely manner or will be denied them entirely.

The bill would prevent this miscarriage of justice, by recognizing that Rocky Flats workers have been plagued by the same kinds of administrative problems that entangled workers at some other locations—administrative problems that were addressed through inclusion in the Act of the provisions related to the "Special Exposure Cohort."

My understating of the need for this bill came from meeting with Rocky Flats workers and their representatives and by consulting experts. I have particularly benefited from the great experience and expertise of Dr. Robert Bistline. Dr. Bistline has served as Program Manager of the Energy Department's Oversight of Radiation Protection Program at the

Rocky Flats field office and has few if any peers in terms of his understanding of the problems addressed by the bill.

In particular, the bill reflects these aspects of Rocky Flats history—

Many worker exposures were unmonitored over the plant's history. For some, estimated doses were assigned, and radiation exposures for many others are missing. As a result, there are at best incomplete records and many inaccuracies in the exposure records that do exist.

No lung counter for detecting and measuring plutonium and americium in the lungs existed at Rocky Flats until the late 1960s. Without this equipment the very insoluble oxide forms of plutonium cannot be detected and a large number of workers had inhalation exposures that went undetected and unmeasured.

Exposure to neutron radiation was not monitored until the late 1950s and most of those measurements through 1970 have been found to be in error. In some areas of the plant the neutron doses were as much as 2 to 10 times as great as the gamma doses received by workers but only gamma doses were recorded.

As a result of these and other shortcomings, some Rocky Flats workers have been denied compensation under the Act despite having worked with tons of plutonium and having known exposures leading to serious health effects.

Since early in my tenure in Congress I have worked to make good on promises of a fairer deal for the nuclear-weapons workers who helped America win the Cold War. That was why enactment and improvement of the compensation Act has been one of my top priorities. I saw this as a very important matter for our country—and especially for many Coloradans because our state is home to the Rocky Flats site, which for decades was a key part of the nuclear-weapons complex.

Now the site's military mission has ended and the last of the Rocky Flats workers have completed the job of cleaning it up for closure. And just as they worked to take care of the site, we in Congress need to take care of them and the others who worked there in the past.

That was the purpose of the compensation act. I am very proud that I was able to help achieve its enactment, but I am also aware that it is not perfect. The bill being introduced today will not remedy all the shortcomings of the current law, but it will make it better.

For the benefit of our colleague, I am attaching an outline of the bill's provisions.

OUTLINE OF ROCKY FLATS SPECIAL COHORT BILL

Section 1: Short Title, Findings, and Purpose

Subsection (a) provides a short title, "Rocky Flats Special Cohort Act."

Subsection (b) sets forth several findings regarding the need for the legislation.

Subsection (c) states the bill's purpose: "to revise the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Act of 2000 to include certain past Rocky Flats workers as members of the special exposure cohort."

Section 2: Definition of Member of Special Exposure Cohort

Subsection (a) amends section 3621(14) of the Energy Employees Occupational Injury Compensation Act (EEOICPA). The effect of the amendment is to provide that a person