

of the 2 million vouchers authorized turn over each year. This means that about 240,000 vouchers are relinquished each year and provided to new families or individuals.

The amendment, if adopted, would mean that about 47,000 vouchers could not be renewed upon turnover nationwide. And after years of trying to increase the use of vouchers so more families could receive assistance, this amendment would greatly undermine that effort.

While it is true that in 2007 the appropriations bill provided significantly more funding than was called for or was needed, reducing next year's funding level will offset the overage provided in 2007. Instead, 2007 funds should be recaptured and used by the Congress. So therefore, I must stand in opposition to this amendment.

Mr. OLVER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. I would be happy to yield.

Mr. OLVER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I would also like to point out to the gentleman from Ohio that we have available about, under authorization, 2.1 million vouchers of which this bill only funds 1.9 million of them at the level that we have provided the money with the 4,000 additional vouchers.

I would like to remind that the authorizing committee just brought out legislation and has added 20,000 in authorization for each of the next 5 years. Whether we will have the funding next year to actually provide that money, I do not know, but they're asking for us not only to move upward toward filling the vouchers that presently are authorized, but also adding some additional ones.

And the reason for that is that we have 8 million families roughly, 8 million households in this country which are living at incomes below 30 percent of the median income in their areas, and we are only providing somewhere in the range of 2 million, a little bit less even in this funding, of money for rental assistance for those people. So we're not coming anywhere close to dealing with the poorest people who are eligible under the law as it is written for that rental assistance because their income lies below 30 percent of median income in the area involved.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Ohio will be postponed.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. HIRONO) having assumed the chair, Ms. BALDWIN, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3074) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. HIRONO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. LEE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. McCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. McCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for half the time until midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for the opportunity to address the House.

I want to, first of all, thank Speaker PELOSI for granting to the Congressional Black Caucus this time on this evening.

I also want to thank our chairperson, Representative CAROLYN KILPATRICK, for deciding that each Monday members of the Congressional Black Caucus will come to the floor with a message to address issues, issues that affect not only African Americans, but issues which are pertinent to the quality of life in these United States of America.

This evening we have chosen to take a look at something called Second Chance, and that is we've chosen to take a look at how do we help successfully reintegrate the more than 650,000 people who come home from jail and prison each year back into a normal setting so that they can become contributing members of society, so that

they can become assets and not liabilities, and so that they can be the productive citizens that they have the potential of being.

We all know that it's common knowledge that people being released from prison and jail have complex needs, and that's why Second Chance is so important. Three out of four have a substance abuse problem, but only 10 percent in State prisons and 3 percent in local jails receive formal treatment prior to release. Fifty-five percent have children under 18, and about 2 percent of all United States minors either have or have had a parent in prison. Two out of three lack a high school diploma. And 40 percent have neither a diploma nor GED, and only about one out of three gets vocational training at any point during their incarceration.

Nearly half of those in jail earned less than \$600 a month just prior to incarceration, and more than one of three jail inmates reported some physical or mental disability. About one out of five prisoners is released from prison without any real supervision or without any kind of help.

And so when we look at this enormous problem, it is essential that we provide all of the assistance. We know, for example, that those individuals who come out of prison and receive no help, within a 3-year period of time, 67 percent of them would have done what we call reoffend. About 53 percent of them will be back reincarcerated after having used up thousands of dollars of public resources just to get them back in jail or back in prison, not to mention the enormous cost of maintaining them during their stay.

□ 2230

That is why we believe that it makes far more sense to help these individuals return.

You know, it is not easy to get people to come over on a Monday night at 10:30. But one Member of the Congressional Black Caucus has come this evening. Not only has he come this evening, but he comes often. He comes often in terms of the kind of representation that he has provided in this House during his entire tenure, but also the kind of representation that he has provided throughout America trying to make sure that people experience equality, equal opportunity, a sense of justice, and a sense of hope. So I am very pleased that Representative BOBBY SCOTT has joined me.

Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield to him to further discuss this issue.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois for scheduling this special order on the Second Chance Act and for his long and diligent labors to move the bill forward as part of his lifetime of dedication to protecting and serving the public's interest.

He has been a dedicated public servant on this issue, ensuring that those who are in prison have a chance to turn their lives around and become productive citizens. That is why he is the chief sponsor of the Second Chance Act.

Congressman DAVIS' efforts not only benefit the offenders, because for everyone who comes out and establishes a law-abiding and productive life, one or more potential victims of crime never become victims, and the taxpayers have to pay less in prison expenses because one less person is not going back to prison.

This is the third Congress in a row that we have been working on this bill on a bipartisan basis. I believe this year we will be successful in passing the bill.

Madam Speaker, over the last decade we have seen an unprecedented explosion in our prison and jail populations. Now there are more than 2.2 million people incarcerated in Federal and State prisons and local jails, a tenfold increase since just 1980. Moreover, the annual expenses for corrections have increased from \$9 billion in 1982 to more than \$65 billion today. The figures continue to grow. These figures do not include the cost of arrest and prosecution, nor do they take into account the cost to victims of crime.

As a result of this focus in incarceration, the United States leads the world in per capita incarceration rates. The United States locks up 726 inmates for every 100,000 in population, according to 2004 data.

The international average is about 100 per 100,000. 142 in England and Wales, 117 in Australia, 116 in Canada, 91 in Germany, 85 in France. So the United States average is more than seven times the international average of about 100 per 100,000. The closest competitor is 532 inmates per 100,000 in Russia. That is 726 in the United States, Russia, second place, 532 per 100,000.

This year, more than 650,000 people will be released from State and Federal prisons to communities nationwide, along with more than 9 million people leaving our local jails. According to the Department of Justice, 67 percent of offenders leaving State and Federal prison will be rearrested within the next 3 years.

There is a pressing need to provide ex-offenders with education and training, drug treatment and medical and mental health services necessary to afford them the ability to obtain and hold steady jobs.

The statistics underlying the needs of our prison population are staggering. For example, 57 percent of Federal and 70 percent of State inmates used drugs regularly before prison, with some estimates going as high as 84 percent of alcohol or drug use at the time the offense occurred.

Furthermore, one-third of all jail inmates will have some physical or mental disability. Twenty-five percent of

jail inmates in fact have been treated at some time for mental or emotional problems. And as has been detailed by many researchers, other deficiencies include limited education and few job skills or job experience.

Evidence from the Department of Justice indicates that the needs for prison population are not being met under the current system. If we allow them to return to their communities with few economic opportunities where they were actually involved in crime and where their friends and associates may still be involved in crime and substance abuse, if we allow them to return to those communities without support, we can only expect to see the extension of the cycle of recidivism.

With bipartisan support in this legislation, we are set to build a broad web of programs which will help break the cycle of recidivism laying at the heart of our prison population explosion. The Second Chance Act provides a host of evidence-based approaches designed to reduce the high rate of recidivism that we are now experiencing.

If we are going to continue to send more and more people to prison with longer and longer sentences, we should do as much as we reasonably can to assure that when they do return to their communities, they don't turn around and commit new offenses and have to go back to prison.

Madam Speaker, let's be clear: The primary reason for supporting the Second Chance Act is not to benefit the offenders, although it does benefit the offenders. The primary reason for doing so is it better assures us that we and other Members of the community will not be victims of crime in the future and because the taxpayer will have to pay less in services under the Second Chance Act than we now have to pay because of the high recidivism rate and having people go back to prison.

So I want to thank again the gentleman from Illinois for holding this special order to bring attention to this important issue and the legislation that has been carefully drawn up to address it. I thank Mr. DAVIS for being the chief sponsor of the Second Chance Act. We are going to work as hard as we can to make sure it passes the House and the Senate.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Representative SCOTT again for leading the charge in the Judiciary Committee to make sure that this legislation was in fact passed. It has passed out of Judiciary. Without your leadership and the leadership of Chairman CONYERS and the help of individuals like Representative WATERS and Representative WATTS and Representative SENSENBRENNER and a number of others, it never would have happened. So we definitely appreciate that.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. If the gentleman will yield further, I would also like to point out it is bipartisan. Representative CHABOT from Ohio and many Republicans on the committee

have been strong supporters of the Second Chance Act. That is how it received such an overwhelming vote in the committee.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. And definitely Representative Chris Cohen was very helpful and was a chief Republican sponsor of the legislation.

Let me also indicate that I agree with what you just said about America having more of its people in prison than any other developed nation in the world. But the vast majority, 95 percent of those individuals, will eventually return to the community. That is, they will return to the communities from whence they came. That means that every year about 650,000 are released. These men and women deserve a second chance. Their families, spouses and children deserve a second chance, and their communities indeed deserve a second chance. "Second chance" really means an opportunity to turn a life around, a chance to break the grip of a drug habit, a chance to support a family, to pay taxes, to be self-sufficient.

Today, few of those who return to their communities are prepared for their release or receive any supportive services. When the prison door swings open, an ex-offender may receive a bus ticket and spending money for a day or two. Many leave prison to return to the same environment which saw them offend in the first place. But, as they return, they often face additional barriers to reentry: Serious physical and mental health problems, as you just in-

dicated; no place to stay; a lack of education or qualifications to hold a job.

As a result, two out of three will be re-arrested for new crimes within the first 3 years of their release. Youthful offenders are even more likely to re-offend. One-third of all correction departments provide no services to released offenders, and most departments do not offer a transitional program, placing a heavy burden on families and communities.

Considering the cost of incarceration, as much as \$40,000 per year, and all the social and economic costs of crime to the community, it is just plain common sense to act to help these individuals reenter, become useful and reduce the level of recidivism.

When we think about it, the Second Chance Act will provide transitional assistance to assist ex-offenders in coping with the challenges of reentry. It will help reunite families and protect communities. It will enhance public safety and save taxpayer dollars. It is the humane thing to do, it is the responsible thing to do, and it is indeed the right thing to do.

The bill has the support of more than 200 criminal justice, service provider, faith-based, housing, governmental, disability and civil rights organizations, and President Bush has signaled his support for the legislation as well.

No single piece of legislation is going to solve the reentry crisis we are facing, but the Second Chance Act is a good start. I believe that with its passage, then we put the spotlight not just

on the problem, but on the opportunities for solutions.

I am convinced, however, that any serious effort to facilitate the reentry of men and women with criminal records to civil society must be prepared to do two things: First we must be prepared to help with drug treatment on demand for everyone who requests it; secondly, we must find work for ex-offenders. Programs won't supply jobs. And after ex-offenders have undergone rehabilitation and receive appropriate training, employers will have to open their hearts and put these men and women back into the workforce, or they will surely and certainly end up back in prison.

I hope that everyone watching does in fact agree. I hope that everyone listening does in fact agree. And I certainly hope that all of the Members of this body and all of the Members in the other body will agree. Because when we help a person successfully reenter, we are not really just helping them, we are helping ourselves. I would much rather help an individual get rid of a drug problem than have to watch behind me when I walk down the street, or have to wonder whether or not I am going to be under attack because some person is in need of a \$15 fix.

Madam Speaker, this legislation is legislation for America.

Madam Speaker, I include for the RECORD the following statistics on adults on parole.

Adults on Parole, by Race/Ethnic Origin, 2005

State	Parole population, 12/31/2005	White	Black/African American	Hispanic or Latino	American Indian/Alaskan Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	Two or more races	Unknown or not reported
New Jersey	13,874	2,906	6,679	2,563	19	25	53	0	1,629
New York	53,533	8,770	24,467	18,739	225	312	0	0	1,020
Pennsylvania ^a	75,678	39,517	28,271	6,022	62	295	3	56	1,452
Illinois ^b	34,576	10,124	20,386	3,923	30	90	**	**	23
Michigan	19,978	9,170	10,209	309	132	38	0	0	120
Minnesota	3,966	2,350	996	319	201	0	0	0	100
Missouri	18,374	12,246	5,665	356	55	37	0	0	15
Ohio ^b	19,512	9,717	9,580	156	39	20	0	0	0
Wisconsin ^a	15,505	6,983	6,712	1,209	432	122	**	**	47
Alabama ^b	7,252	2,503	4,670	32	2	8	0	2	35
Florida	4,785	1,940	2,725	105	5	0	0	**	10
Georgia	22,851	7,979	14,872	**	**	**	**	**	0
Louisiana	24,072	8,519	15,432	4	4	2	**	**	111
Maryland	14,271	3,617	10,602	**	13	17	**	**	22
Mississippi	1,970	847	1,104	11	4	2	0	0	2
North Carolina	3,101	1,096	1,801	126	50	9	1	**	18
South Carolina	3,155	1,029	2,081	20	8	1	0	**	16
Texas	101,916	34,561	39,718	26,920	70	163	0	0	484
Virginia ^b	4,499	2,144	2,243	0	2	0	0	0	110
California	111,743	34,535	27,825	44,135	897	1,018	193	0	3,140

** Not known.

^a See Explanatory notes for more detail.

^b Some or all detailed data are estimated for race.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Representative SCOTT, I don't know if you have anything else you would like to add. If so, please feel free to do so.

□ 2245

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you for introducing the legislation. It not only helps individuals, but saves taxpayer money and reduces crime in a cost-effective manner. Everybody wins with passage of this legislation. I thank you for your leadership.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I thank the gentleman.

Madam Speaker, I hope the next time we come to the floor to talk about ex-offender reentry, we will be congratulating ourselves, we will be congratulating the House, the Senate and the President for having put into play a meaningful piece of legislation that is going to be good for America.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Second Chance Act, and I thank Mr. DAVIS for introducing this important piece of legislation.

In American we have more than 2-million people in prison. Of these, over 600-thousand are released each year.

Very few of these individuals are prepared to return to their communities or receive support services to ease their transition.

These ex-offenders face serious impediments in obtaining employment, and often have serious mental or physical ailments that remain unaddressed.

Today, approximately half of all black men are jobless. Amongst ex-offenders this number is even higher.

There is revolving door of ex-offenders into many of our neighborhoods.

With few opportunities two-thirds of all ex-offenders are arrested for new crimes within a few years of their release.

We must give these individuals the opportunity to become productive citizens.

The Second Chance Act will go a long way towards this goal by providing transitional assistance to ex-offenders reentering their communities.

It will work to reunite families and provide the appropriate training and rehabilitation for these individuals.

This bill will increase public safety and give millions of ex-offenders a chance to be positive productive citizens. I strongly urge my colleagues support.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker. I would also like to thank Congressman DAVIS for his leadership on this issue, and for introducing H.R. 1593, The Second Chance Act, which injects a much needed dose of reality into this debate.

The reality is, recidivism rates continue to rise with nearly 70 percent of released offenders returning to prison within 3 years. By releasing ex-offenders back into our communities without arming them with the necessary tools for survival, we are condemning them to repeat their past mistakes. And this does nothing to reduce the crime rate and provide for safe communities.

Today, we can change the landscape of ex-offender re-entry programs in this country. We need to make rehabilitation a reality not just an abstract proposal. By providing all formerly incarcerated individuals with greater access to education, health care, job placement, and drug treatment we will reduce recidivism rates across the board.

Re-entry programs are critical to re-integrating ex-offenders into civil society. Up to 60 percent of ex-offenders are unemployed a year after their release and up to 30 percent go directly to homeless shelters upon their release. The incidence of drug use among ex-offenders is over 80 percent, twice the rate of the United States population. It's more than clear that something needs to be done.

Madam Speaker, this legislation is especially important to me due to large number of formerly incarcerated prisoners in my district. I am currently helping those who qualify to legally clean up their records. Following the lead of my colleague from Illinois, Congressman DANNY DAVIS, I have hosted two Record Remedy summits in my district. These summits are a resource for the nearly 10,000 people who come back to my District every year after having served their time in jail. We have a vested interest in making sure that people reentering our community do so successfully. Help with cleaning their records provides an opportunity for a second chance to read an application, get a job or go back to school.

Madam Speaker, our criminal justice systems are sorely in need of reform. We must provide formerly incarcerated individuals with the required skills to successfully reenter our communities. And, we must end the cycle of injustice that is perpetuated by a system that continues to punish people, long after they have paid their debt to society. H.R. 1593, the Second Chance Act, is a critical step forward. No one condones criminal activity but I tell you once one serves their time, they should be able to feed their family and move on with their lives.

I urge my colleagues and support the Second Chance Act.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I have been waiting nearly 30 years for Congress to enact meaningful reentry legislation, as I have been deeply involved in prisoner reentry issues since my days as a judge and county prosecutor in Cleveland, Ohio before serving in Congress. While Cuyahoga County Prosecutor, I helped establish the "Pretrial Diversion Program," as well as the "Municipal Drug Court." Both programs, I am proud to say, still exist and continue to help ex-offenders move on with their lives and become productive citizens of society.

Prisoner reentry is not a Democratic issue. It is not a Republican issue. It is a common sense issue. The facts are clear—meaningful reentry programs significantly diminish the chances that ex-offenders will return to prison. That saves taxpayer dollars and increases public safety. So why not invest in enhancing reentry programs in order to end the cycle of recidivism? That is exactly what the Second Chance Act does.

In 2002, two million people were incarcerated in all federal and state prisons. Each year, nearly 650,000 people are released from prison to communities nationwide. Nearly two thirds of released prisoners are expected to be re-arrested for a felony or serious misdemeanor within three years of their release.

The State of Ohio has one of the largest populations of ex-offenders re-entering the community, with about 24,000 ex-offenders returning to their respective communities annually. Of those ex-offenders, about 6,000 will return to Cuyahoga County and almost 5,000 will re-enter in the City of Cleveland. Statewide, about 40 percent of ex-offenders will return to prison. In Cuyahoga County, about 41 percent will return to prison. Such high recidivism rates translate into thousands of new crimes each year and wasted taxpayer dollars, which can be averted through improved prisoner reentry efforts.

Today, I am proud to stand with my colleague Representative DANNY K. DAVIS as an original co-sponsor of the "Second Chance Act of 2007. This legislation allocates \$360 million towards a variety of reentry programs. One of the main components of the bill is the funding of demonstration projects that would provide ex-offenders with a coordinated continuum of housing, education, health, employment, and mentoring services. This broad array of services would provide stability and make the transition for ex-offenders easier, in turn reducing recidivism.

This legislation is critical to successful reentry of offenders. The bill provides as a beginning the essential ingredients necessary to assure public safety and recovery. It will help begin the process of breaking down barriers to successful re-entry and allow offenders and their families the tools necessary to break the cycle of criminality.

This is first-of-a-kind legislation that is critical to successful reentry of ex-offenders. It provides as a beginning the essential ingredients necessary to assure public safety and recovery. It will help begin the process of breaking down barriers to successful reentry and allow offenders and their families the tools necessary to break the cycle of criminality.

A key component of the Second Chance Act is that it makes funds for reentry services directly available to state and local governments and non-profit organizations that offer reentry services. This is important because these are

the groups that are committed to reentry and are "on the ground." And if one thing is true, it is that that state and local governments and non-profits need more funds in order to provide reentry services more effectively.

Let me highlight two entities that do wonderful reentry work in my State of Ohio and would stand to benefit from the Second Chance Act: (1) Community Reentry in Cleveland, Ohio, led by Charles See, and on which I sit on the Board of Directors, and (2) the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, formerly headed by Reggie Wilkinson, who devoted 33 years of public service to the Department.

Community Reentry, which is part of the Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry, has served the City of Cleveland since 1973 by resettling people who have been involved with the justice system to reduce recidivism and enhance the quality of their lives and the life of the community.

Community Reentry also provides prevention and intervention social services to youth in low-income public housing facilities who are at high risk for involvement in drug or gang activity and future incarceration.

Community Reentry administers a variety of reentry services that benefit the Cleveland community. Let me underscore a few of their programs, all of which are comprised of ex-offenders.

Care Team. Care Team members, also known as "Red Jackets," that serve elderly people and people with disabilities who live in apartments managed by Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA). Care Team members escort residents to the market, doctor's offices and the bank, run errands and assist with light chores.

When one elderly woman was asked how she feels about two of the members of her building's Care Team, she replied, "They're not criminals. They are just like my sons!"

Care Team members are paid employees of Community Reentry. Full time employees receive a full benefits package that includes vacation, health insurance, and pension that is fully vested after 1 year. The recidivism rate for Care Team members is less than 5 percent.

Friend to Friend. The Friend to Friend program recruits, trains and coordinates volunteers to visit men and women in prison. Male volunteers are matched with men at Lorain Correctional and Grafton Prison—both located in Lorain County, Ohio. Female volunteers are matched with women at the Pre-Release Center in Cleveland. The purpose of the program is to reduce social isolation of people who are incarcerated and to help prepare them for reentry into the community.

Volunteers are not asked to do anything they don't already know how to do, and their only job is to be a friend to someone who needs one.

Women's Re-Entry Network (WREN). WREN's mission is to enhance the quality of life for women involved in the criminal justice system, their families, and the community, by helping participants reenter society. The program enhances self-sufficiency and access to resources, increases positive social supports and family ties, overcomes barriers to goal achievement, and reduces the risk of recidivism.

WREN provides a holistic network of mental health, education, employment, family and supportive services in a safe and welcoming

environment. It is a place where women can begin the process of rebuilding their lives, reconnecting with family and reclaiming their place as productive members of the community.

As a member of Community Reentry's Board of Directors, I can tell you that these reentry programs work, and investing in their expansion makes sense. I urge you to contact your Representatives and Senators so that they support the Second Chance Act and see that it passes the House and Senate as soon as possible.

THE OFFICIAL TRUTH SQUAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my leadership on the Republican side of the aisle for allowing me to address the House this evening. It is always an honor to come before the House of Representatives and to discuss issues of importance to this Chamber, to this Capitol and to the Nation.

This is a truncated version of the Official Truth Squad because of the hour of the evening. The Official Truth Squad is a group of individuals who come to the floor of the House and try to shed a little light, try to shed a little truth, if you will, on the deliberations going on here in our Nation's Capital and hopefully bring a perspective that will allow Members of the House and this Chamber and men and women across our Nation to be able to gain a little greater perspective on exactly what is going on here in Washington as we struggle with the challenges that we have facing the issues that we have in our Nation that demand so much of our attention and demand, frankly, a greater level of cooperation than is frequently seen here in Washington.

It is one of the things that I strive, along with my colleagues, try to bring about, and that is a greater sense of urgency to solve the challenges that we have, and to address honestly and openly and truthfully the issues we have before us.

We have one special quote that I like to quote that I think kind of puts it all into perspective, especially when you are talking about issues that are so complex in Washington. It comes from Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. He used to say everybody is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts.

So often here in Washington, people want their opinions to be facts. It is one of the items or issues that the Official Truth Squad attempts to address, and that is trying to talk about facts, trying to bring facts to the table as it relates to any particular issue.

Tonight we are going to talk about at least one issue that is in great need of facts. Madam Speaker, we are in ap-

propriation season. During this period of time, the House works on its multiple appropriations bills and tries to determine exactly how we as a Nation ought to set priorities from an appropriations or a spending standpoint, what level of spending ought to go into the various programs of the Federal Government. And so often, and we just heard it this evening, many people come to the floor and they say, if we just had more money, if we just had more money for this program or that program, that would solve the problem.

And so often it is not money that is needed for programs, especially out across our Nation, because what is needed most often is to free up the wonderful enthusiasm of the American people and the wonderful ingenuity of the American people. What happens is along with the money that comes from Washington comes rules and regulations and strings and stipulations, and makes it that those individuals who are trying as hard as they can to make ends meet and improve their communities and make certain that they are providing for their families, so often what Washington does is ties their hands behind their back and makes it so they are not able to realize the kinds of dreams that they would otherwise be able to realize.

We cite often the Golden Rule. You know what that is. Most folks know what that is, but the Golden Rule of Washington is not what most people across this Nation know. The Golden Rule across this Nation is to do unto others as you would have them do unto you. But the Golden Rule here in Washington is he who has the gold makes the rules. That is especially true during appropriation season because we put all kinds of strings attached to the money that the Federal Government spends.

We often forget, as I am fond of reminding my friends here in the House, of whose money it is, because it is not government's money, it is the people's money. It is hard-earned American taxpayer money.

We have had individuals come even to this well and say, "Keep your hands off my money." My money. It is phenomenal when you hear that, when I go home to the Sixth Congressional District in Georgia, and my constituents ask incredibly insightful questions about that kind of mindset that exists here in Washington. "How can politicians believe it is their money?" This is so important as we are in this appropriation season and as we determine exactly how to spend that hard-earned taxpayer money, and we ought to do it more responsibly, I would suggest, Madam Speaker.

I want to talk tonight about an issue that is near and dear to my heart, and to the heart and well-being of every single American, and that is the issue of health care. Before I came to this body, I was a practicing physician. I was an orthopedic surgeon and practiced for over 20 years in the Atlanta area.

One of the things that drove me into politics or had me stand up and volunteer to get into politics was the recognition and the appreciation that year after year after year would go by as I tried the best I could to care for my patients and worked with my colleagues to provide the best and highest quality of health care we could provide, and year after year, and month after month, and day after day each of us appreciated that there were more individuals in our State capital and in this Capital right here who were making decisions about health care that affected very directly what I could do for and with my patients than anybody I ever met in medical school and anybody I met in residency and training as I was training to become an orthopedic surgeon. That was true for every specialty that I talked to, every single colleague.

If you talk to your doctor, Madam Speaker, or if the Members of Congress would speak to their physicians and to their neighbors, they would appreciate readily that there are so many rules and regulations that are coming from Washington and from State capitals around this Nation that tie the hands, that make it more difficult, not easier, more difficult for physicians and other health care providers to be able to take care of patients. And that's wrong. That is wrong because what it means is we have a lesser quality of health care system than we would otherwise have if the government weren't involved in the way that it is.

And there are all sorts of programs that you can talk about that would lend truth and credibility to that statement, but I want to talk about one specifically this evening that is going to get a lot of discussion, Madam Speaker, here over the next week or two and maybe number of months as we move forward in Washington, and that is the program known as SCHIP, or the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

That is a program that was begun 10 years ago. It was part of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. It was a program that had wonderful goals. The goals were, specifically, there was a recognition that low-income individuals who weren't eligible for Medicaid, they made too much money to be eligible for Medicaid, but they didn't make enough money to be able to afford health insurance for their families, those individuals ought to be able to have some sort of assistance provided by States and the Federal Government in a complex formula that would allow those families to be able to have health insurance for their children. So hence the name State Children's Health Insurance Program. And it was a laudable goal, without any doubt. And it was passed by a significant majority, and the goal was to increase the enrollment of children who were below 200 percent of the poverty level. That is what was selected as the limit at the time.

Over the last 10 years what happened, however, is a distortion, a significant