

I am very excited that almost every county in my district has established a teen pregnancy task force. Made up of a cross-section of the community—teachers, public health nurses, parents, teens, and representatives from local civic groups and organizations—the task forces work together to increase awareness and education.

Let me tell you about the effective programs in my district. In Alachua County, for example, Planned Parenthood of North Central Florida has teamed up with the Alachua County Public Health Unit to develop an exciting pilot program called Planned Parenthood “in the Hood.”

Although just 4 years old, this wonderful program is an excellent example of the unique partnerships which can be formed when the entire community works together to tackle a program. “In the Hood” has begun to conquer the obstacles that teens typically face when attempting to use traditional health care services.

“In the Hood’s” approach is unique because teens deal with one personal counselor throughout their ordeal, not just a faceless voice at the other end of a telephone line. Through home visits, one-on-one counseling, and follow-up with teens, “In the Hood” has become a model of innovative community dedication. Through active involvement and personal contact with teens, the “In the Hood” counselor has become both a role model and mentor for teens who have been fortunate enough to participate in this program.

More importantly, the program works. In 1994, of those teens who participated in this program, only 12.5 percent became pregnant for the first time, while 61 percent of those who participated in traditional programs had first-time pregnancies.

One of the most troubling realities associated with adolescent pregnancy is what comes after the birth of the child. Inevitably, many children who have children don’t finish school. Therefore, they have limited job prospects, reduced earning capacity, and, in the end, often depend on public welfare to make ends meet.

Before coming to Congress, I taught middle-school math in Dunnellon, FL. I have seen the tragedy of promising young students becoming pregnant and dropping out of school—abandoning their dreams of college and a successful future. I know it makes sense for schools to emphasize pregnancy prevention in their curriculum to prevent this tremendous waste of potential.

Citrus County, in a collaborative effort between its Public Health Unit and School Board, is doing just that. As 1 of 11 pilot sites in Florida to receive what is known as an Education Now and Babies Later grant, [ENABL], Citrus County has been able to participate in Postpone Sexual Involvement, a multifaceted program designed to get to the heart of the teen pregnancy problem.

The Postpone Sexual Involvement Program begins with direct education

of 5th and 6th graders, with major emphasis placed on abstinence. Through the program’s curriculum, young people are taught both the consequences of early pregnancy and how to deal with peer pressure; it teaches them confidence so that they can say “no” to sexual involvement and have their “no” accepted. This program also involves parents by creating a curriculum that gives parents the tools necessary to discuss candidly the issue of sex and the need to postpone sexual involvement.

In addition to the many successful programs I have already mentioned, this discussion would be incomplete without a reference to a very successful teen parenting program in Pasco County. During my tenure in the Florida Senate, I became actively involved in the Youth and Family Alternatives Teen Parenting Program. This program is designed to provide pregnant adolescents the education and support they need. Through home visits, this program aims at assisting, supporting and educating young mothers during and after their pregnancies.

Mr. Speaker, in all of the successful programs I have been involved with, the key to their success has been getting the whole community involved: students, parents, teachers, churches and Government. This makes sense. Teen pregnancy is a problem for an entire community, not just one woman, or one family. We must continue to work together to solve this terrible problem. I am delighted we have the opportunity tonight to take an important step in this positive direction.

I have lots more I could say, Mr. Speaker. I hopefully will have an opportunity to continue this as time goes on. I have much more that I could offer than just in 5 minutes.

SUPPORT PARTIAL BIRTH ABORTION BAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. FUNDERBURK] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, I want to strongly express my support for the partial birth abortion ban. I consider this procedure a horrible one that people would not support if they saw it.

Mr. Speaker, President Clinton’s veto of the partial birth abortion ban, which passed Congress with overwhelming support, shows once again his absolute loyalty to the most extreme abortion advocates. H.R. 1833 passed both Houses with wider margins than almost any bill this session.

Polls have revealed that the vast majority of Americans, more than two-thirds, support restrictions on abortion. Among just women, the numbers are even higher who support restrictions, especially in these late term abortions. These numbers tell a story that every man and woman of con-

science understands. People do not want to see life casually ended, and they do not accept abortion as the highest and best offering of our Constitution. They are troubled by a 1.5 million-person death count every year. They are even more troubled by a gruesome procedure covered by this legislation, an abortion in which a child’s brains are removed and the baby is systematically executed as it comes down the birth canal.

□ 1715

This is one of the most horrific medical procedures in the world today. President Clinton has disappointed and deeply offended one of the largest voting blocks in the American electorate. The overwhelming success of pro-life candidates in the last election, both Democrat and Republican, underscores the troubled electorate’s concern for run away abortion rights turned into societal wrongs.

Bill Clinton has again aligned himself with the most extremist elements of the abortion lobby, those who see no value in life poised on the edge of birth. The President said he wants abortion to be rare, but he seems to see no life worth saving, not even a fully viable child whose living brain tissue issue is vacuumed out causing painful death.

Partial birth abortions take place on babies from 20 weeks up until 40 weeks. The House Committee on the Judiciary has compiled documentation of the practice of this procedure by physicians of its being used on living human fetuses, of the pain that these children likely incur and of its use for elective purposes. In describing one such partial birth abortion she witnessed, nurse Brenda Shafer stated, the baby’s body was moving. His little fingers were clasped together. He was kicking his feet all the while his little head was still stuck inside.

In a Christian Coalition letter to Congress, they stated Americans across the Nation are now aware of this inhumane practice and please cast your vote on the side of protecting these little babies from this painful death. Enactment of a ban on partial birth abortions is a key element of the Christian Coalition’s contract with the American family. A partial birth abortion ban act is the right thing to do and I support it.

THE INCREASED NEED FOR CIVILITY IN OUR SOCIETY TODAY SHOULD START IN CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, I want to shift gears for a second. I can be as partisan as anybody can, I think, and probably have been, but it has also become increasingly clear to me that there is a need for a nonpartisan approach to this institution, this institution called Congress.

There is a need for Members, all of us, to be thinking carefully about the messages that we send to the public, because if we say it enough times about ourselves, then after a while people begin to believe us. And the messages that go forth about this institution, Republican and Democrat alike sending them, I might add, I think have caused a lot of people to wonder.

The fact of the matter is that each of the Members who chose to run for this institution chose to run. And I believe deeply that Members who are here believe in what they are doing. It is in that capacity, then, that we need to make sure that we communicate the best of this institution as well as our constantly trying to change it.

I listened to a debate the other day on a contentious issue. It was not necessarily Republican or Democrat, it was just a very, very contentious issue. And I heard from both sides the charges back and forth of, well, this person is in the pocket of so-and-so, or this person who just spoke is speaking up for such-and-such a group. As it rang back and forth I thought how does this debate come across to those who are watching and listening. And the answer is these folks must know what they are talking about and maybe they are all in the pockets of so-and-so.

My feeling is, and I believe the way most people here feel, is that Members of Congress are not in the pockets of anybody and that they are here wrestling with some honest to goodness difficult questions.

I look around this Chamber and what I see in these seats is this is where the Nation comes together. This is the crossroads of the country and this is where the country comes to try to work out its problems. Somebody from California or someone who lives on the seacoast may not know what it is like to live up a mountain hollow in West Virginia. By the same token, I have to learn what it is like to live in many other parts of the country and the problems that are faced there, and sometimes that is a slow process and sometimes it requires a lot of deliberation. So it is a process of trying to come to a consensus and understand one another.

I will say this. This is probably about as divergent a Congress as I have ever had the privilege to serve in terms of political views, ranging from the extreme conservative to the extreme liberal. But I also know that the best hope that this country has is to be able to work this out within the confines of this institution. That is why it exists. It is called Congress. Congress means coming together. Obviously, with the divergent viewpoints we all have, it may take a little longer to come together.

We can have vigorous debate. We have to have that debate. We can have tough aggressive partisanship. But I also ask that we be thinking about respect for this institution. Because if we are truly leaders, and people elect us to

be leaders, then that means people are following our example. And if we are in here wrestling around and calling each other names, then I wonder whether or not that becomes the commonplace form or method of operation or mode of communication for those of our constituents. If it is okay for those folks in Congress, it must be okay for me.

There is a need for civility, an increased need for civility in our society today, and I think one place it needs to begin is here in Congress.

PRESIDENT CLINTON TAKES EXTREME POSITION ON VETO OF PARTIAL BIRTH ABORTION BAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. CHABOT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, like many of my colleagues, I am unapologetically pro-life. Recently we were joined by a number of our pro-choice colleagues in voting to outlaw partial birth abortions. Those folks also believed the procedure to be violent and gruesome and in no way consistent with their views that some abortions ought to be legal.

President Clinton, on the other hand, who has often said that he personally opposes abortion, says that he believes abortion ought to be legal but rare. In this particular instance I think he has finally shown his true colors. He has reached out to the most radical of the pro-abortion lobby by vetoing the partial birth abortion bill. The veto was a slap in the face to all of those who respect human life.

The President has shown once and for all that he favors abortion on demand, even in the final weeks of pregnancy, and that is a tragically extreme position.

I would remind my colleagues that the partial birth abortion ban was supported by 288 Members of this body, both Republicans and Democrats. Most thoughtful legislators did not consider the bill to be controversial and agreed it was something long overdue, a prohibition on a particularly grotesque and inhumane practice, yet the President did not see it that way.

Let us recap for a moment what it is we are talking about here. A partial birth abortion is performed by using forceps to pull a living baby, feet first, through the birth canal until the baby's body is exposed, leaving the head just within the uterus. The abortionist then forces surgical scissors into the base of the skull, creating an incision through which he then inserts a suction tube to evacuate the brain tissue from the baby. This causes the skull to collapse, allowing the baby to be pulled from the birth canal.

The Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act would outlaw such abortions. The President, who says that abortions should be rare, says that there is no question this is a gruesome procedure.

The President says that abortions should be rare, but he vetoed this particular legislation. I think that was outrageous.

Mr. Speaker, I will say one thing for the President, however, he has been consistent. He says one thing and then does another. He promised to end welfare as we know it. He vetoed welfare reform. He promised the middle-class tax cut and then he vetoed the middle-class tax cut that was passed by this Congress. He said that abortion should be rare, but his record shows that he supports abortions on demand at any time for any reason.

I would agree with Robert Casey, the former Democratic Governor of Pennsylvania, who said President Clinton says he wants abortions to be safe, legal, and rare, but he has helped make it safe, legal, and everywhere. Yesterday Cleveland Bishop Anthony Pilla, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, joined by eight American cardinals, sent an extremely thoughtful, strongly worded letter to President Clinton in response to the President's veto, and I would like to quote from that letter at this time.

In the letter the bishop stated as follows: Your veto of this bill is beyond comprehension for those who hold human life sacred. It will ensure the continued use of the most heinous act to kill a tiny infant just seconds from taking his or her first breath outside the womb.

And the letter goes on: At the veto ceremony, you told the American people that you had no choice but to veto the bill. Mr. President, you and you alone have a choice of whether or not to allow children almost completely born to be killed brutally in partial birth abortions. Members of both Houses of Congress made their choice. They said no to partial birth abortions. Your choice was to say yes and to allow this killing more akin to infanticide than abortion to continue.

That is what the Catholic bishops had to say to the President of the United States. It would be an understatement to say that I am disappointed and saddened by President Clinton's unconscionable veto of the partial birth abortion ban. I think my sentiments are shared by many, including a large number of people who consider themselves to be pro-choice, and I cannot stress in strong enough terms my hope that this Congress when it is given the opportunity will vote to override the President's veto.

Mr. Speaker, we cast hundreds of votes in this body every year. This vote will not be forgotten and we hope that we override this terrible veto the President made.

TRIBUTE TO OUR FALLEN FRIEND, RON BROWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. RANGEL] is recognized for 5 minutes.