

honor to Andrew. It is an appropriate tribute for his remarkable efforts during those harrowing and darkest of days in Budapest during 1944. Andrew repeatedly risked his own life to save the lives of others. He was motivated not simply by the instinct to survive and to preserve himself, but by the drive and the passion and the commitment to help others, and that is what makes Andrew unique.

For all of these reasons, Mr. Speaker, it is most appropriate and meaningful that Andrew Stevens has been honored by President Goncz of Hungary and by the people of Hungary in presenting to him this high honor. It is also a tribute to the Government and people of the newly democratic Hungary that they have chosen to honor Andrew Stevens.

Mr. Speaker, the people of the United States are fortunate to have as an honored citizen of our Nation a man of integrity, compassion, and commitment such as Andrew Stevens. America is richer for his life and for the contributions he has made to his adopted country.

It is my sincere hope, Mr. Speaker, that the awarding of this honor to Andrew will strengthen the ties of mutual friendship between the United States and Hungary. I invite my colleagues in the Congress to join me in paying tribute to Andrew Stevens.

WORKING FAMILIES FLEXIBILITY
ACT OF 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 19, 1997

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1) to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide compensatory time for employees in the private sector:

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Chairman, I wish to express my opposition to the so-called Working Families Flexibility Act, H.R. 1. While skillfully titled, this legislation will not, in fact, help today's working families cope with the struggles they face. Instead, this legislation will make life harder for those who toil each week to provide for their families. Perhaps it is unintentional, but unfortunately this bill represents yet another proposal put forth by the majority which will increase the strain on working families and jeopardize our Nation's basic workplace protections. The Democratic substitute that I support, on the other hand, offers employees the work schedule flexibility they desire while ensuring that the choice for compensatory time off rather than overtime pay is truly voluntary.

H.R. 1 attempts to offer workers a choice between overtime pay and compensatory time off when they work more than 40 hours per week, a goal which many of us would agree is reasonable. However, the bill does not assure that the employer-employee agreements on this subject will be truly voluntary. Under the bill, employers who wish to offer compensatory time rather than overtime retain authority to impose this choice on their employees. Today's workers, who face a climate of reduced job security and corporate downsizing, will find it difficult to reject their employers

stated preference for time off rather than overtime pay. For example, employers could screen job applicants or assign overtime to employees according to their willingness to accept comptime.

Another flaw with H.R. 1 is that it gives employers too much authority over when an employee could take the comptime he or she has earned. Employers would have the power to deny an employee's request for comptime on the grounds that it unduly disrupts their business operations, or they could deny the request for the day requested and instead offer another day which suits the employer's schedule. With employees thus having insufficient say over when their earned comptime can be used, the goal of providing flexibility for workers to attend to family matters has not been achieved.

By reducing opportunities for overtime pay, H.R. 1 is particularly damaging to the many workers in today's economy who depend on overtime to maintain a decent standard of living for themselves and their families. Fully two-thirds of the workers who earned overtime in 1994 had a total family income of less than \$40,000. For these many workers at the low end of the wage scale, the extra dollars earned from overtime can mean the difference between family self-sufficiency and government dependence. At a time when we are rightly demanding that people move from welfare to work, we must not remove a basic safeguard—overtime pay for hours worked in excess of 40 per week—that has allowed low-wage workers to stand on their own.

Unlike the majority's bill, the Democratic substitute ensures that the choice for comptime will be exclusively the employee's so that those who depend on overtime pay to make ends meet will not be forced to abandon this important source of income. In addition to requiring that it be the employee who requests comptime, the Democratic substitute also requires employers to offer comptime to all employees who are similarly situated. The majority's bill, on the other hand, would allow employers to pick and choose which employees will be offered comptime. The Democratic substitute also exempts from the comptime provisions certain segments of the work force that are particularly dependent on overtime wages, including part-time, temporary, and seasonal workers, and those in the garment, construction, and agriculture trades.

Mr. Chairman, the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act have served this Nation well. They protect workers from demands for excessive work, reward—in a financially meaningful way—those who put in extra time for their employer, and—by requiring premium pay for overtime—provide an incentive for businesses to create additional jobs. Thus, we must proceed carefully when enacting legislation which makes changes to our overtime laws, even for the laudable goal of giving employees greater flexibility with respect to their work schedules. Unfortunately, H.R. 1 does not demonstrate the requisite legislative caution. It weakens the Fair Labor Standards Act's overtime provisions while giving employers additional authority over the work schedules of their employees. This is not the way to help today's working families. Instead, we should pursue the course laid out in the Democratic substitute—offer flexibility to employees while protecting absolutely their ability to choose overtime rather than comptime.

IN HONOR OF THE PARISHIONERS
OF THE CHURCH OF ST. LEO THE
GREAT ON THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 1997

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the dedication and achievement of the parishioners of the Church of St. Leo the Great of Cleveland, OH, on their 25th anniversary.

Approximately 120 members have assisted the pastor and associates with a multitude of volunteer work. They have performed the important functions of acolytes, readers, and eucharistic ministers. They have contributed a portion of their earnings to the Vincent De Paul Society, which looks after the poor of the parish. They have visited the sick and aged at hospitals and nursing homes. They have sung in the choir and they have helped families in their times of mourning.

St. Leo's volunteers give of themselves, and in doing that, they make Cleveland a better place.

BOB DORNAN'S DAY

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 21, 1997

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, if Bob Dornan had appeared in the well during the recent St. Patrick's period, he would have recited the following, which he described as coming from an Irish voice.

We appreciated Bob Dornan's wonderful flights of history and rhetoric and we do this in his stead and in his honor.

The article follows:

I arise today
Through a mighty strength, the invocation
of the Trinity,
Through belief in the threeness,
Through confession of the oneness
Of the Creator of Creation.
I arise today
Through the strength of Christ's birth with
his baptism,
Through the strength of his crucifixion with
his burial,
Through the strength of his resurrection
with his ascension,
Through the strength of his descent for the
judgment of Doom.
I arise today
Through the strength of the love of Cheru-
bim,
In obedience of angels,
In the service of archangels,
In hope of resurrection to meet with reward,
In prayers of patriarchs,
In predictions of prophets,
In preaching of apostles,
In faith of confessors,
In innocence of holy virgins,
In deeds of righteous men.
I arise today
Through the strength of heaven,
Light of sun,
Radiance of moon,
Splendor of fire,
Speed of lightning,
Swiftiness of wind,
Depth of sea,