

WELCOMING THE FIRST-EVER DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WNBA TEAM—THE WASHINGTON MYSTICS

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 18, 1998

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to welcome the first-ever D.C. Women's National Basketball Association team to our nation's capital. This moment comes on top of other news that the District for the first time received acclaim as the best place to live in the East from Money Magazine. Together these firsts affirm that Washington, D.C. is truly a special city, and not only because D.C. is our nation's capital.

Tomorrow, I will join thousands of fans at the MCI Center to see our first home game against Utah. The District is very proud of this team, which will be led by standout shooting guard Nikki McCray, the lead scorer on the 1996 gold medal winning U.S. Olympic team. Head Coach Jim Lewis promises a full-court offense, using the fast break and aggressive defense, which are sure to be exciting viewing for the fans here in Washington.

I would also like to commend and thank team owner, Abe Pollin, Irene Pollin and Susan O'Malley, president of the Mystics organization, for their vision and commitment to making women's professional basketball a reality here in the District.

This team is important to the fans here in the District, including the many young girls among them who look to these outstanding women athletes as role models. Last year, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of Title IX and today the fruits of this achievement are being recognized. This important legislation contributed in large part to the participation of more than 100,000 women in intercollegiate athletics in 1997, a fourfold increase since 1971. In the 1996 Summer Olympic Games, American women won a record 19 Olympic medals. Thousands of women today, including many WNBA players have benefitted from athletic scholarships that simply were unheard of before Title IX. The number of girls participating in high school athletics has risen from fewer than 300,000 in 1971 to 2.4 million today. Girls' participation in high school basketball increased 300% from 1971 to 1995! Research suggests that girls who participate in sports are more likely to experience academic success and to graduate from high school than those who do not play sports. Half of all girls who participate in sports experience higher-than-average levels of self-esteem and less depression.

We welcome the Washington Mystics' team—Nikki McCray, Heidi Burge, Deborah Carter, Keri Chaconas, Tammy Jackson, Penny Moore, Murriel Page, Alessandra Santos de Oliveira, Adreinne Shuler, Leila de Souza Sobral, and Rita Williams. We look forward to their contributions to the community and to the basketball profession. Go Mystics!

TRIBUTE TO MR. ELLIOT ROBSON

HON. HAROLD E. FORD, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 18, 1998

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring an accomplished young man from Memphis, Tennessee, Mr. Elliot Robson. As a student at White Station High School in Memphis, Tennessee, Elliot has excelled in all of his subjects, but he has developed exceptional competence in history.

This week, Mr. Robson is participating in the National History Day Competition at University of Maryland at College Park where he is competing with approximately 78 of his peers for the Senior Individual Exhibit Award. This national competition is the culmination of a rigorous set of contests at the local and state level where middle, junior, and high school students conduct primary research, write papers, and prepare media presentations on significant historical events.

National History Day is the product of a year-long educational program aimed at fostering achievement and intellectual growth among students from all backgrounds and regions of the nation. This year, the National History Day theme is "Migrations in History: People, Ideas, Culture." Mr. Robson chose to study Jewish immigration, a topic about which he gained knowledge during his education at Beth Shalom Religious School.

Mr. Robson is to be commended for his success. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring an individual who through his efforts in this competition has demonstrated exceptional educational achievement. I urge Mr. Robson to continue to build upon this strong educational base and to continue to provide a model for other students around the country. Please join me in commending Mr. Robson and wishing him the best in his future endeavors.

GAMBLING AND AMERICA'S YOUTH

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 18, 1998

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to call to my colleagues' attention a story on the front page of the June 16 New York Times titled, "Those Seductive Snake Eyes: Tales of Growing Up Gambling." The bad news is that gambling is growing. The worse news is that gambling addiction is growing fastest among young people.

The article says, "There is a growing concern among experts on compulsive gambling about the number of youths who—confronted with state lotteries, the growth of family-oriented casinos and sometimes lax enforcement of wagering laws—gamble at an earlier and earlier age and gamble excessively."

The story quotes a recent Harvard Medical School study which was conducted by Dr. Howard Shaffer which found that the rate of problem gambling among adolescents is more than twice the rate for adults.

This article is shocking. It cites stories of young people who have hit the bottom young—and all because of gambling.

One young man got hooked on gambling as a teenager. The problem was so bad, his parents had to put locks on all the rooms and closets in the house so he wouldn't run out and sell the family belongings to gamble. He has been to prison twice for credit card fraud and writing false checks. Later in the article, he talks about how he first got interested in gambling. When he was growing up, he used to help his grandmother pick lottery numbers at a neighborhood store, and he used to go with her on her gambling trips to Atlantic City. He would wait for her outside the casino, peering in the window and wishing he could play, too.

The article talks about another young person who started gambling when he was 13 years old. With his buddies, this teen used to pay craps near his house, place bets on pick-up basketball games, and play a dice game called "see-low." Now he is in a treatment center for drug and gambling problems.

The New York Times piece said that in one high school in the Northeast U.S., kids said they knew a fellow student who was a professional bookie who booked bets right there at their high school. Amazingly, that school set up a mock-casino as part of its prom night festivities. The school principal said the students had no problem with the various games—they knew them well and apparently needed no coaching.

But this is a problem everywhere, in all of America. According to the article, a Louisiana State University study conducted last year found that among Louisiana young people aged 18 to 21, one in seven were, and I quote, "problem gamblers, some of them pathological—youths with a chronic and progressive psychological disorder characterized by an emotional dependence on gambling and a loss of control over their gambling."

Everyone is worried about tobacco use among teenagers, and I am, too. But we've got another problem, and we really need to pay attention.

I hope this country wakes up. I hope our governors wake up. I hope this Congress wakes up.

[From the New York Times, June 16, 1998]

THOSE SEDUCTIVE SNAKE EYES: TALES OF GROWING UP GAMBLING

(By Brett Pulley)

ATLANTIC CITY—Like a first kiss, getting the car keys for the first time or walking into a bar and buying a first drink, gambling has become a rite of passage for young people on their way to adulthood.

With casinos in 26 states and lotteries in 38, youths who have watched their parents choose from a hefty menu of legal gambling activities right in their backyards are going on dates, spending their prom nights and joining college classmates at the nearest casinos.

Along with this change in the American cultural scene, there is a growing concern among experts on compulsive gambling about the number of youths who—confronted with state lotteries, the growth of family-oriented casinos and sometimes lax enforcement of wagering laws—gamble at an earlier and earlier age and gamble excessively.

These experts fear that the proliferation of youthful gambling will lead to more cases like that of a young Philadelphia man who became an addicted gambler as a teen-ager. For the young man, now 27, the "bottom" came after he had made two trips to prison for credit card fraud and writing false