

Mr. Speaker, it is with enthusiasm that I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this wonderful celebration of Dominican culture, which has brought much pride to the Bronx community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HERBERT H. BATEMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 1998

Mr. BATEMAN. Mr. Speaker, due to continued convalescence from a recent surgery, I missed 2 votes on June 4, 1998. I wish to ask unanimous consent to include in the RECORD my statement as to how I would have voted had I been present.

On rollcall vote No. 204, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall vote No. 205, I would have voted "aye."

THE HEAD START ACT OF 1998

HON. FRANK RIGGS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 1998

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to extend the Head Start program. This legislation strengthens the quality and accountability of Head Start while supporting those receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, the goals of welfare reform, collaborations at the local, State, and national levels, and Head Start staff. For the first time ever, Head Start will be judged on its outcomes for children and families.

The Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth, and Families that I chair has heard testimony in four hearings from respected academicians, researchers, educators, parents, and practitioners. These witnesses and the many experts with whom committee staff spoke consistently called for an increased focus on outcomes and for higher Head Start staff qualifications. Great care has been taken to craft a bill that addresses these issues by emphasizing quality, accountability, flexibility and collaboration.

We have proposed a simple and effective update of the formula allotting Head Start funds to states: 1998 would become the "hold harmless" year for funding. Future expansion and quality appropriations would be allotted based solely on child poverty statistics, thus avoiding possible negative impacts on States successful in moving recipients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families into jobs. No State would lose Head Start funding under this proposal.

We have redefined the primary purpose of Head Start in this bill to be school readiness. The bill adds new education performance standards and measures that strengthen the cognitive development of children, and requires that the majority of Head Start teachers must have at least an associate degree in early childhood education by the end of the reauthorization period in 2003.

To support the need for increased teacher training and greater attention to school readi-

ness, emphasis has been shifted for a limited period of time from expansion to quality. This will give programs an opportunity to address teacher salaries and program quality. Teachers are specifically targeted in the bill for needed salary increases based upon their education and credentials.

The professional development of teachers and other Head Start staff is enhanced under this legislation by explicitly allowing the use of funds for training in language, literacy, English acquisition, and child disabilities, and by the provision of special collaboration grants that encourage Head Start participation in State, regional, and local early childhood professional development systems.

These special collaboration grants also can be used for similar collaborative efforts to develop more full-day, full-year child care/Head Start services. Similarly, waivers of income eligibility rules would be allowed through joint agreement of the Governor, the State Head Start Association, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Up to 25 percent of a program's enrollment could be "over income," but families could not exceed 140 percent of the poverty level. In cases where Child Care Development Block Grant or other child care funds are blended to offer combined Head Start/child care services, copayments by Head Start parents would be explicitly allowed to meet the requirements of the cofunding agency.

Funding priority for any increased appropriations is given by this bill to expansion of full-day, full-year services to meet the child care needs of working poor. Additionally, Early Head Start funding would grow to 10 percent of Head Start funding by the year 2003 to serve more children in the critical years before age three.

To help prepare Head Start children for success in kindergarten, a new section in the bill defines in greater detail transition activities and goals. The needs of Head Start parents are addressed with start-up funding for up to 100 family literacy demonstrations. Training and technical assistance will be available to all Head Start family literacy programs. The best of these programs would be designated as mentor programs; they would assist other agencies with the implementation and improvement of family literacy. Progress towards quality also would be achieved by allowing for-profit entities to participate with public and non-profit entities in any open grant competitions for Head Start funding.

Accountability is the other key issue emphasized in this bill. As mentioned earlier, school readiness has been reestablished as the goal of Head Start, and new transition goals and educational performance standards and measures will be implemented. Head Start agencies are also required to ensure that parents receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families who are enrolled in the program meet paternity requirements. Other single Head Start parents shall receive information about resources for establishing paternity. In addition, the bill directs that local performance measures be established for child and family outcomes at the individual grantee level by January 1, 1999.

The biggest accountability question is whether Head Start truly makes a difference for children and families; a large-scale impact study has never been conducted. For this reason, a national study on the impact of Head

Start services is commissioned in this bill to provide the kind of information that policy makers so sorely need.

Head Start is a program that benefits America's most vulnerable children. It is our solemn duty as policy and law makers to ensure that these at-risk children and their families receive the quality developmental and educational services that they need to be successful in school and become productive members of society. I urge all of my colleagues on a bipartisan basis to support this measure.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE
WOMEN IN SKILLED TRADES
PROGRAM

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 1998

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the Women In Skilled Trades (WIST) program, which is based in Oakland, California, on the occasion of its 10th Anniversary. Since its inception, this outstanding program has trained over 300 women for well-paying jobs in the construction industry.

WIST was established in 1988 by the Oakland Private Industry Council in order to provide economically disadvantaged women, displaced homemakers, and dislocated workers with high quality pre-apprenticeship training. The program offers an excellent solution for women seeking to achieve economic self-sufficiency and to serve as role models for their children. The pool of well-trained, motivated workers that graduate from the program is a benefit both to area employers as well to our community.

The WIST program is a nationally acclaimed model for nontraditional training programs, with a comprehensive training curriculum and dedicated instructors and staff. It is also an outstanding example of how a partnership of public, private, and non-profit entities can work together to affect positive change in the lives of women and their families.

On Monday, July 20, 1998, the Women in Skilled Trades program will be celebrating its anniversary in Oakland, California. I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing the achievements of this organization. I would also like to commend the many women who have graduated from the WIST program. I look forward to ten more years of progress!

RECOGNIZING RUSSELL
PATTERSON

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 1998

Ms. McCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Russell Patterson, a major contributor to the arts community in Missouri and a friend of mine who is retiring after 40 years as founder and Artistic Leader of the Lyric Opera of Kansas City. He also organized The Kansas City Symphony and has served as its Artistic Director.