

NAACP, a life member of the National Council of Negro Women, a member of Lansing Association Women's Clubhouse, and Valiant Lady Church Women United. She is a long-time member of Trinity AME, and was a Sunday school teacher for many years, and worked with the Old Newsboys, an organization that raised money to give shoes and boots to hundreds of needy children. Mrs. Brown continues to volunteer at Sparrow Hospital's surgical wing where she has been a cheerful and dependable fixture for almost 15 years. And, Mrs. Brown, in all of her years of voting in public elections, has missed only 4 votes, and all of those were missed for family emergencies.

Mrs. Brown has been married to her husband Robert Brown for 68 years and is the mother of 8 children, 19 grandchildren, and 24 great-grandchildren.

Our community has been enriched by the contributions of these selfless volunteers. As we gather on Saturday, many generations of Lansing residents, we will celebrate our community role models, Mrs. Grace L. Demps, Mrs. Geri Roossien, and Mrs. Georgia Brown.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NAOMI
LAUTER

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 1998

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, a young nation with a long and honorable history, Israel has been a symbol of hope and a land of opportunity for millions of Jews throughout the world. Surviving six wars, constant terrorism, and severe economic boycotts, Israel's 600,000 citizens have shown the world what it means to be committed to one's homeland. And like Israel, Naomi Lauter's independence, determination and strength have helped to build AIPAC into the leading organization for Jewish concerns.

I would like to congratulate Naomi Lauter on 16 years of incredible leadership as the Western Regional Director of AIPAC. Naomi's commitment to AIPAC and her vision has been unwavering and inspiring for all those who have worked with her.

The Jewish community has been served well by Naomi's spirit, innovation and devotion to Israel and pro-Israel legislation. Naomi has helped build AIPAC into what it has become in the Pacific Northwest, focused, effective, and powerful. We are all grateful for her for the work she has accomplished during her years of involvement with AIPAC.

And we look forward to her involvement for years to come. While Naomi is leaving as the Regional Director, we should all be grateful that she is not leaving AIPAC altogether. Becoming its National Consultant, AIPAC is fortunate to be able to rely on her insight and institutional knowledge of this great organization.

Every Jewish American can take pride in her dedication to bringing together persons of any political persuasions to sit up and take notice for Jewish and pro-Jewish communities.

Thank you Naomi for your service to AIPAC. We are thankful for your work, and look forward to a continuing friendship and wish you a successful future.

AS GAMBLING SPREADS
THROUGHOUT THE STATES SO
DOES GAMBLING ADDICTION

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 1998

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, as the 105th Congress prepares to adjourn, I want to bring to the attention of our colleagues an important issue which, unfortunately, hasn't seemed to register with many of America's leaders. But it's one that needs our focused attention, and that's gambling.

Twenty years ago, if you wanted to gamble you had to go to Atlantic City or Las Vegas. But today, gambling has spread in one form or another to most of the 50 States. There are only two States which have completely banned gambling, and that's Utah and Hawaii.

One reason for the incredible rate at which gambling is spreading is through the proliferation of gambling casinos in many States. I certainly respect Native American Indians, but I'm really concerned about the number of gambling establishments on tribal lands.

For those of us who say we really care about Native Americans, we need to show our concern about what gambling is doing to them. A new University of Montana Bureau of Business and Economic Research study found that Native Americans in Montana have a compulsive gambling rate that is double the rate of other adults in the State. My point is that as gambling spreads throughout the States, so does gambling addiction. Montana is just one State that has a real battle on its hands. The Montana study found that 78 percent of Montanans gamble, and that figure is regardless of income, education, age, sex, and marital status. Compulsive gambling rates are on the increase, the study also said, up from 2.2 percent of the adult population six years ago to 3.6 percent now.

First, gambling is corrupting the political process. I have mentioned before my concern about the incredible amounts of money the gambling interests are pouring into the political process. Both sides are taking the money—Republicans and Democrats. And we are reading news reports more frequently than ever about one government official after another being investigated for gambling-related corruption, from an ex-governor and his son to even a member of the President's cabinet.

Second, it's hurting local businesses. People only have so many extra dollars to spend on food and entertainment. If they're spending their disposable income at the new casino in town, that's money that the local restaurant doesn't get, or the movie theater, or local retailers. Local business is being cannibalized by the casinos. Mom and pop restaurants can't compete with the discounted and even free meal deals at the gambling operations.

Another thing that happens when gambling comes to town is that crime goes up. The U.S. Treasury Department has been increasingly concerned at the way casinos attract criminal elements and suspicious activity, especially money-laundering and has proposed new regulations that would require casinos and card clubs to report to Treasury any suspicious transactions of \$3,000 or more. Of course, the casinos are fighting these regulations tooth and nail. But the fact is, a cash-heavy criminal

can find a safe haven in a casino. Drug dealers, armed robbers, embezzlers—these kind of people can walk in, buy a few thousand dollars worth of chips, then turn them in for a casino check later that night and can go relatively unnoticed.

Just a few months ago, four employees at some casinos in Atlantic City were arrested in a sting operation as they allowed undercover agents to launder more than \$400,000 in what they allegedly believed was drug money. So the Treasury Department is concerned for good reason.

But crime is not the only issue. We are in a period of record bankruptcies all across the country, so much so that we had to appropriate money to pay for more bankruptcy judges. Studies have shown a significant link between gambling and bankruptcy, even geographically. Where there are more gambling facilities, there are more bankruptcies. This is an issue that must be addressed. It is out of control. Just the other day, a federal judge in Memphis said that because a woman had a gambling addiction problem, she didn't have to pay back the \$8,200 in gambling debts she ran up on her credit card just before she filed for bankruptcy. Is there any doubt that the gambling issue must be addressed if we're talking about bankruptcy reform?

But not only bankruptcies increase when gambling comes in. Tragically, so do suicides. The American Association of Suicidology published the study "Elevated Suicide Levels Associated with Legalized Gambling" in the Winter 1997 issue of its journal *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*. The study, which was conducted by Dr. David P. Phillips of the University of California at San Diego, found that there is a link between gambling and suicide.

Las Vegas, the premier U.S. gambling setting, displays the highest levels of suicide in the nation, both for residents of Las Vegas and for visitors to that setting, the study said.

In general, visitors to and residents of major gaming communities experience significantly elevated suicide levels. In Atlantic City, abnormally high suicide levels for visitors and residents appeared only after gambling settings were opened. The findings do not seem to result merely because gaming settings attract suicidal individuals.

But how do people get to the point where they're ready to take their own lives? It can actually start at a very young age. We're seeing and hearing more and more these days about how gambling is hurting young people. And by "young," I'm talking about small children. Some critics, including Ed Looney, executive director of the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, say that amusement arcades teach children that gambling is okay, and that it opens the door for later problems.

According to an article last month in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, gambling cities such as Las Vegas have tried to fashion themselves into "family-friendly" entertainment by providing casino arcades. But most of the games in the arcades, the article says, are gambling devices. The biggest difference between what's happening to the parents on the casino floor and what's happening to the kids in the casino arcades, the article says, is that "the kids are ripped off even more than the adults."

"These are not pinball machines or video games to afford entertainment time for the

money," the article says, but they are "virtual slot machines designed to turn money over quickly. One watches the children in the arcades with dismay. Many exhibit the same agitated and frustrated demeanor of gambling-addicted adults as they pump their coins into the machines."

Gambling proponents say they are concerned about unattended children in casinos. That new found concern may have been spurned by high-publicity cases like the one last year in a Primm, Nev., casino hotel. A 7-year-old girl from Los Angeles, a second-grader, had been playing in and around a casino arcade, left on her own, while her father gambled. She was raped and murdered.

Syndicated columnists Don Feder and William Safire have both written recent op-ed articles decrying the gambling industry's targeting of children. In a recent column, Feder reported that the Las Vegas Hilton spent \$70 million on a ride called "Star Trek: The Experience." Young people waited for hours in line to get on the ride, and the line stretched through a gambling area. Hundreds of kids took the opportunity to play the slot machines, Feder reported. Something tells me the casino was not at all unhappy about this experience. If they are to exist in the future, they have to seduce the next generation of customers.

Consumer advocate Ralph Nader is saying the same thing these days. "The idea is that parents will feel less guilty if they are subjected to family entertainment, and that the next generation of gambling addicts must be given attention," Nader said at a recent speech in Washington, D.C. "The gambling industry is as brazen as the tobacco and alcohol industry," Nader said. "It is even more brazen."

More and more teens are finding themselves trapped in a web of gambling from which they can't break free. The New York Times printed a shocking front-page story about this a few months ago. The article cited a study by Harvard Medical School's Dr. Howard Shaffer, who published a recent study which found that young people are becoming addicted to gambling at a rate almost three times higher than that of adults. The article also cited a Louisiana State University study which found that one in seven 18- to 21-year-olds in Louisiana were problem gamblers. These are young people with a "chronic and progressive psychological disorder characterized by an emotional dependence on gambling and a loss of control over their gambling."

The 1996 New Mexico Survey of Gambling Behavior conducted a similar study and found that more than 85 percent of New Mexico's 18- to through 20-year-olds gamble. More than 66 percent said they had gambled in the previous month. Out of the 85 percent of young people who gamble, 37 percent said they were having gambling problems and 12 percent said they had a serious problem with gambling. The study also found a strong link between gambling behavior before the age of 21 and the development of serious gambling-related problems.

In New Jersey, gambling among teens is on the rise, according to the Council of Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey's Edward Looney. Looney says there is gambling in every high school in New Jersey, including gambling which is backed by organized crime. One survey of high school juniors and seniors reported that 30 percent gamble once a week at

casinos, race tracks, on sports—including their own school's sports—on the lottery. According to the state's statistics, 91,754 juveniles were arrested or evicted from New Jersey casinos in 1997 alone. Out of this number, 329 were found gambling on slot machines and 114 at tables. There were 38,502 teens escorted from casinos last year, and 52,364 were turned away at the door when they tried to enter illegally.

But there's more. Not only is gambling hurting moms and dads and young people. But it's also hurting grandma and grandpa. According to a recent article in the Las Vegas Review-Journal, the spread of legalized gambling across America has led to financial ruin for many senior citizens. In Iowa, the article said, three years after riverboat gambling was introduced, bingo and casino gambling became the number-one pastime of choice for people over 65 years of age in the Omaha area.

Is that what each of us envisions for ourselves when we think about retiring? Spending our Golden Years addicted to gambling? I don't think so. But that's what's happening, all over America. The gambling industry says it's concerned about problem gambling among the elderly. But when you read their trade publications, ad after ad features grey-haired men and women beckoning seniors to "join in the fun."

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is, many American people are starting to wise up to what's really going on here. As they are watching friends, neighbors and their own family members sinking in gambling's quicksand, they are speaking up and standing up against this blight on our nation. In state after state, voters are making their voices heard, loud and clear. They don't want it in their communities. Take casino gambling, for instance. Out of the last 21 efforts to bring in casinos nationwide, all have failed but one, and that one, in Detroit, Michigan, won only by a very slim margin. Even now, the citizens there are seeking to overturn that decision.

What is needed in our country is for our community leaders and elected officials to hear the voice of the American people on this issue, for they have indeed spoken. They have seen that gambling is bad for their families, bad for their communities, bad for their kids. It is destructive. It is dangerous.

I could go on and on for hours citing cases and studies. We have reports piled high in my office. But I think what I've shared with you today is enough of a taste—a bitter taste—of what gambling really means for a lot of people.

This is a problem that is national in scope. That's why we had to pass legislation which the President signed into law to establish the National Gambling Impact Study Commission. The commission is over half way through its two-year comprehensive evaluation of gambling's impact in America, including open meetings all across the country, and is expected to report its findings by next summer.

We need to wake up. It is wrong to allow government to become the predator of the people. Think about this the next time gambling's high-priced lobbyists show up at your door with a campaign contribution or an offer to put on a "high-dollar" fundraiser.

JOSE AND KATHY VILLEGAS RECEIVE THE APPLE PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION AWARD

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 1998

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring to your attention an honor given to Jose and Kathy Villegas, residents of the great state of New Mexico. Jose and Kathy Villegas have received the 1998 Apple Parent Involvement in Education (PIE) Award.

Jose and Kathy Villegas received this award because their children Candace Marie, age 13 and Joseph, Jr. age 11 took the initiative to write a letter of nomination to Apple PIE Awards. Our most important job as parents is providing our children with values, teaching the difference between right and wrong and setting examples of respect for ourselves, others and our community. Jose and Kathy Villegas obviously have done this with their children. The nomination letter included a description of how their parents were instrumental in getting a classroom addition at their elementary school and a stop light at a busy intersection used by school children. Jose and Kathy Villegas are involved in many task forces working on issues important to children's education. The Villagas' story provides an excellent example of how parent involvement can make a positive difference in their children's lives, the local school and their community.

Jose and Kathy Villegas' story is part of a feature story in the November 1998 issue of Working Mother titled, "Classroom Champions". As the only individuals to receive this award in the United States, they stand as an example to all of us. Join me today in recognizing recipients of the 1998 Apple Parent Involvement in Education Award, Jose and Kathy Villegas.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4194, DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. ROGER F. WICKER

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 1998

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the VA-HUD-Independent Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1999 makes available significant funding for economic development grant assistance as part of the Community Development Block Grant program.

The Conference Report to accompany this legislation, House Report 105-769, on page 248, provides \$750,000 to the City of Sardis, Mississippi, for the City's planned Water Resources Infrastructure Program, a portion of which includes construction of wastewater treatment facilities, as noted in the Conference Report.

I would like to take this opportunity to describe in specific detail how the City will use