

the Debtor's complete payment of child support (3) provides that the automatic stay DOES NOT apply to a state child support collection agency trying to recover child support payments.

I will be working with Chairman GEKAS and Representative CLAY SHAW to further refine and improve the language that will eventually be included in the final bill.

It is important to remember that failure to pay child support is not a victimless crime. The children are the first and most important victims. We must ensure that these children are taken care of and I will continue my relentless effort in this pursuit.

Remember, All issues are women's issues", nevertheless, women and children are sometimes victims because of indifference or lack of sensitivity. We pledge here today to give them the sensitivity they need.

Ms. SANCHEZ. What a century this has been for the advancement of women's rights in America. Women vote, we own businesses, we explore outer space. We fight in our nation's armed services, we represent our fellow citizens in our legislature, courts and state houses, and we have a greater role in U.S. public policy than ever before. But first and foremost among these accomplishments is the ability to control our own economic destinies.

I am here tonight to salute women business owners who have helped this remarkable change grow. And in particular, I praise the Women's Economic Summit, one of the first gatherings of its kind. It is planting the seeds for even greater future successes, and I am proud to be a part of that progress.

Women everywhere build their success on that of the women who have gone before them. Tonight I salute women business owners for their work in making the American dream available to our friends and daughters.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. GRAMM, Mr. GORTON, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. CONRAD, Mrs. BOXER, and Mrs. MURRAY, be the conferees on the part of the Senate to the bill (H. Con. Res. 68) "A concurrent resolution establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2000 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for each of fiscal years 2001 through 2009."

OVERWHELMING NEGLECT: THE ARITHMETIC OF FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SWEENEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to clearly label my discussion this evening with a topic. I want to call it "Overwhelming Neglect: The Arithmetic of Federal Aid to Education."

Overwhelming Neglect: The Arithmetic of Federal Aid to Education, and I am pleased that this special order has fallen in a period when there may be

large numbers of school-going youngsters, students in high school and elementary school and junior high school, awake, and maybe a few will be listening.

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I want to address a large part of my remarks to those students, and I assure them that what I have to say will not be complicated. I am not going to talk in terms of complex and abstract ideas. I am going to talk about the simple arithmetic of Federal aid to education, no higher mathematics, no logarithms, no differential equations and calculus, nothing complicated, just simple arithmetic.

I want the students of America out there attending school to join me in trying to educate my colleagues here in the House of Representatives and in the whole Washington decision-making arena. There is something wrong with decision-making in Washington at this point about education, something radically wrong.

I think we need the children, the students, younger minds, to come to the aid of the decision-making circles here. We have some decision-making circles with closed minds. We are hemmed in and smothered by some conventional thinking and we need a breakthrough, and I am going to call on the children of America to help us make this breakthrough.

There is some simple arithmetic we should start with. The arithmetic begins with an allocation of priorities here in terms of time and attention and money based on the priorities that are established by the American people. In other words, we live and die by opinion polls here in Washington. Public opinion polls are very important to the Republicans, they are important to the Democrats, they are important to the White House. Everybody is concerned about what the public thinks and we spend a lot of time and energy discussing public opinion polls.

There are a large amount of resources committed to finding out what is it that the public thinks. The impact of public opinion polls, of course, can be tremendous on public policy. We saw the impact of public opinion on the impeachment proceedings which the Republican Party insisted on going ahead with despite the fact that common sense, as reflected by public opinion, the common sense of the American people dictated that it was a wasteful venture, kind of a silly venture and that is what it turned out to be. So public opinion can sometimes be ignored by powerful forces here that refuse to listen.

Right now we have a war in Kosovo which public opinion, I think, will play a great role in determining what else do we do, where do we go in terms of United States policy.

For good or ill, sometimes public opinion is not so desirable in terms of the results that I think we need. I did not agree with public opinion when we

had a dictator, self-imposed Army dictator, in Haiti for 3 years. They got rid of the lawful government and they sat there and they would not move, and negotiations went on and on and on.

I wanted to go in and restore the rightful president of Haiti, elected leader of Haiti, and if it took troops to do that, armed intervention, then I was in favor of that. Two-thirds of the American people said no. Two-thirds of the Congress said no. I am glad that the President did not listen to public opinion in that case. I am glad that he went ahead and took some decisive action and it all worked out in the interest of not only the people of Haiti but in the interest of democracy in this hemisphere.

I am glad that Abraham Lincoln did not listen to the opinion of his cabinet when he signed the Emancipation Proclamation. All the votes were against the Emancipation Proclamation which set the slaves free, but he went ahead and signed it anyhow.

So there are times when public opinion, I admit, I may not agree with it but we do listen to it. We do listen to it.

I want to call upon the decision-makers in this Congress and in the whole Washington arena to listen to public opinion on the issue of education. Public opinion has been speaking not sporadically but consistently over a long period of time about the priority it assigns to education.

The great majority of the American people say that government assistance to education ranks highest on their list of priorities, and it has been among the top priorities in the last 5 years.

Education consistently, the American people say, needs help. We need government at every level to do more for education and certainly we need the Federal Government to do more because the Federal Government really does very little in terms of dollar value. The Federal Government is responsible for less than 8 percent of the total budget for education in general. That includes college education, where most of the money goes. So the Federal Government should do more. The public keeps saying that.

Just to refresh everyone's memory, let me cite the polls generally. Whether taken by Republicans or Democrats, they are saying that education ranks number one. Seventy-four percent of the American people consider education as a number one priority. We might think it is Social Security because we hear more talk about saving Social Security. Among the elected officials and political leaders of both parties, Social Security is on everybody's lips. So Social Security is important. However, it is the second highest concern. Seventy-one percent rank Social Security as the highest priority.

Crime reduction is the third. Health care reform is the fourth. Eliminating poverty is the fifth. Tax cuts are the sixth. Jobs, number seven; getting rid of the national debt, number eight;