

more than 25 miles away from their workplace are allowed to take up to three hours of leave. Enforcement of these provisions is tied into the Family Medical Leave Act. By and large, Americans who do not vote cite employment as the top reason for not voting. The VOTE Act allows them to work and vote without the fear of losing their jobs in the process.

My legislation, Mr. Speaker, is not the silver bullet to improving our election system. However, it draws upon the best practices in the country in an effort to maximize voter turnout and participation in the democratic process. Congress cannot and will not drive up participation in elections without the progressive minded approach that is embedded in the VOTE Act.

If we do not make it easier for people to vote, then they just won't. Congress must provide voters with more opportunities to vote. If it does not, then national turnout percentages will rarely exceed 50 percent, and we will never be able to call ourselves a true democracy.

I urge my colleagues to support the VOTE Act and call on the Leadership to bring it to the floor for its immediate consideration.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ALBANY
STATE!

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate one of our country's truly great institutions of higher learning, Albany State University—which this year is celebrating its 100th birthday.

Albany State, located in Albany, Georgia in the heart of our state's Second Congressional District, opened its doors in 1903 as a privately funded institution as the Albany Bible and Manual Training Institute, serving young African American men and women in an area where few educational opportunities were then available.

Today, the university, now a part of the state system, serves an increasingly diverse student body while continuing to fulfill its historic mission in reaching out to our region's underserved populations.

Albany State's first job is to provide an excellent education to its students, offering a wide range of undergraduate and graduate degrees and a variety of non-degree educational programs.

But Albany State also does much more.

This highly committed, creative, vibrant educational complex has made, and is making, a major contribution to the growth of the whole community and region through its research, outreach and public service activities.

The history of Albany State is one of steady growth and success.

In the early years, the school provided much needed teacher and vocational training. In 1917, the school became a two-year state-supported college with a new name, the Georgia Normal and Agricultural College, with programs in teaching and agriculture. In 1943, the growing institution again acquired a new name, Albany State College. Over the ensuing years, Albany State added more and more undergraduate and eventually graduate degrees, and university status was granted in 1996.

Albany State has been blessed with outstanding leadership. Dr. Joseph Winthrop Holley was the first President, and he served in that capacity for 40 years. He was succeeded by Dr. Aaron Brown; Dr. William H. Dennis; Dr. Thomas Miller Jenkins; Dr. Charles L. Hayes, and Dr. Billy C. Black. Albany State's current president is among the country's leading educational figures, Dr. Portia Holmes Shields, whose sister is our own Eleanor Holmes Norton.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place in the Record part of Albany State's Centennial Resolution, which says:

Whereas, Albany State University's tradition of excellence has been the result of dedicated service by faculty, staff, students and community;

Whereas, Albany State University is a progressive institution fostering the growth and development of the region, state and nation through teaching, research, creative expression and public service;

Whereas, Albany State University embraces the concept of 'students first' as a core institutional value, promotes global learning, and is committed to educational excellence with special emphasis on the underserved while continuing to serve the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population;

Whereas, Albany State University celebrates throughout the year of our Lord two thousand and three the centennial theme, "A Glorious Past to Cherish, An Infinite Future to Fulfill";

Whereas, Albany State University is recognized for its unwavering commitment to graduating empowered leaders, building better communities and making the difference.

Now therefore be it *resolved* That April 4, 2003 is recognized as Albany State University Day in the City of Albany in recognition of the Centennial Founders Day celebration of Albany State University.

Happy Birthday, Albany State!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 87 on H.R. 1104, Feeney of Florida amendment, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, the great issues of war and peace have rightfully dominated the news and the focus of our attention as a people and as a legislative body during the month of March. Nevertheless, other events must continue on.

March, of course, is Women's History Month. It is not designated Women's History Month because we may ignore the role and history of women for the other eleven months of the year. Quite the opposite. We have designated March as Women's History Month to highlight, for on-going consideration, the status, condition and progress of women.

The Congress established Women's History Week in 1981 and expanded it to Women's History Month in 1987. In that short period Women's History Month has become a time when men and women learn about the history of more than half of our population, much of which is not recorded in standard history books. The rediscovery of our "missing" history has been a beneficent thing for America.

As for the status of women, this year we note with satisfaction that women have made progress toward equality. At the same time, we remain deeply concerned about how far women need to go before they achieve what simple fairness and justice would demand: full equality.

Mr. Speaker, just a few numbers to highlight the current status of women:

The median earnings of women age 15 and older who worked full time, year around, after adjustment for inflation, increased 3.5 percent in 2001, the fifth consecutive increase. Women in this group earn \$0.76 for every dollar their male counterparts earn. This ratio represents an all-time high according to the census bureau.

The gap between men and women with college degrees has not closed completely, but the percentages are close: 25 percent of women age 25 and over now have a bachelor's degree or higher compared with 29 percent of men. For younger women, age 25 to 34, 33 percent hold a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 29 percent of their male counterparts of the same age. Young women also have a higher high school completion rate than young men: 89 percent v. 85 percent.

The percentage of women who cast a ballot in the last Presidential election was 61 percent compared with 58 percent of men. Women have voted at higher rates than men in every Presidential election since 1984.

There are now 10 million single mothers up from 3 million in 1970. Overall about 26 percent of all parent-child situations consist of a single mother and her own children up from 12 percent in 1970.

Women are far more likely than men to live in poverty, especially seniors. According to the census bureau 12 percent of women age 65 and older lived in poverty compared with 7 percent of men.

Nearly 16 percent of men age 15 and older who worked full time in 2001 earned \$75,000 per year compared with 6 percent of women. About 20 percent of men earned \$50,000 to \$75,000 compared to 12 percent of women.

Mr. Speaker, there are especially troubling increases in the number of women who are in prison and there remain significant disparities between men and women in health care and other vital social indices.

Mr. Speaker, women may not have had their history fully recorded, but they have always assumed their full share and more in the building of our nation, in creating and protecting America's families, in developing art, culture and science, public policy, health care, education and any other field one can name. However, it has required constant struggle on the part of women.

Thus, women have always played an important part in shaping public opinion but it was not until 1916 that Jeanette Rankin of Montana became the first woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and not until 1992 that Carol Moseley Braun became the first African American woman elected to the U.S. Senate.