

limiting choice, and I am pleased that more children will be able to participate.

While H.R. 3873 does not damage the very successful National School Lunch & Breakfast Program, WIC, the Summer Food Service Program, and the Child and Adult Food Program, I believe we missed an important opportunity to help our schools expand their efforts to fight child obesity, which leads to adult diabetes and heart disease. We call on our schools to provide a model of healthy eating habits, but often do not give them the full resources necessary to meet this challenge. Right now, the federal government reimburses schools \$2.14 per free lunch served, \$1.17 per reduced priced lunch, and \$.20 per paid lunch. Our schools struggle to create any meal for only \$2.14, let alone a nutritious one with more expensive fruits and vegetables. If we are to ask our schools to provide healthier lunches, we must provide them with the money to match such a request.

We also missed an opportunity to reduce paperwork and administrative burdens for schools already laden with burdens from No Child Left Behind, by eliminating the reduced price lunch category, and providing all children 185 percent of the poverty line with a free lunch. We should listen to school administrators when they describe the cost of this extra category in staff hours, and children not fed because they can't afford even the low cost of a reduced lunch.

Again, I commend the members of the Committee for protecting the successful child nutrition programs, and I am hopeful that in the future we can listen to our schools needs as they implement these important programs.

INTRODUCTION OF "FINANCIAL LITERACY MONTH"

HON. JUDY BIGGERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 2004

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution to designate April as "Financial Literacy Month". It is important that we raise public awareness about the importance of financial education in the United States and the serious consequences that may be associated with a lack of understanding about personal finances and economics.

The financial world has dramatically changed over the last 20 years. The passage of complex laws—like Gramm-Leach-Bliley—has created a new world of integrated financial service products and possibilities.

Mr. Speaker, with all these new choices, there is a new responsibility on our part to educate our youth. Why? Because teaching them about personal finance and economics is the best way to prepare them for a financially rewarding adulthood as contributing members of society.

They need to know how to manage money, credit, and debt, and become responsible workers, heads of households, investors, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and citizens. It is through financial education that these young consumers will learn to capitalize on the

choices and flexibility that this new world has created.

The most effective time to impart basic financial and economic knowledge is during students' formative years, through the K–12 education system. In introducing this resolution it is my hope that public officials and educators will focus on this critical learning area.

A survey released in 2003 by the National Council on Economic Education (NCEE) illustrates accomplishments and challenges in the areas of economics and personal finance education. NCEE's 2002 "Survey of the States" found that 48 states and the District of Columbia had economic education standards in place, up from 38 states in NCEE's first "Survey" in 1998. Testing for economics increased from 25 states in 1998 to 27 states in 2002.

However, in the area of personal finance, less progress has been evident. While 40 states had set standards for personal finance education in 2000, only 31 states renewed such standards in 2002. Of those 31 states, only 14 require the standards to be implemented.

As a Member of both the Financial Services Committee and the Education and Workforce Committee, I have come to recognize the importance of integrating financial literacy and basic economics into the K–12 curricula, and the positive impact this can have on millions of future investors. I believe that April should be used to educate all age levels on the importance of financial literacy but most importantly, our youth.

More than 42,000,000 people in the United States currently participate in qualified cash or deferred arrangements known as 401(k) plans. A Retirement Confidence Survey conducted in 2002 found that only 32 percent of workers surveyed have calculated how much money they will need to save for retirement, and 25 percent of workers have done no specific planning for retirement.

Make no mistake—personal finance and economics are the key to helping our youth avoid in later years, as adults, the pitfalls of foreclosure, predatory lending and credit counseling and better prepare them for retirement.

Mr. Speaker, the state of financial illiteracy among our children may not garner much in the way of headlines, but it nonetheless is an issue that should command our attention. It is a problem that is serious and urgent, but it is one that can be solved through education. I would like to call special attention to that need during the month of April. It is our duty to help our youth succeed in today's increasingly sophisticated world of finance.

I want to thank my distinguished colleague and friend from Texas, Mr. HINOJOSA, for his strong support and cosponsorship of this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this bill.

RECOGNIZING SERGEANT DONALD WALTERS

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 2004

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an American hero.

One year ago today, Sergeant Donald Walters bravely offered the ultimate sacrifice in hand-to-hand combat during the now famous ambush of the 507th Army Ordnance Maintenance Company, the same attack in which Pvt. Jessica Lynch was captured.

Sgt. Walters served our nation courageously and honorably long before September 11. He served during the first Gulf War, and returned to raise a family. So if, after the Gulf War, Sgt. Walters decided to never again leave his home and family to defend freedom in a far-away place, he could rest easy because he had already given more than most.

However, after September 11, Sgt. Walters volunteered to rejoin the U.S. Army in order to serve America yet again. He was selfless. He was courageous. He knew what every soldier knows: that great sacrifices would be required in order to serve our nation in its time of need, and he made those sacrifices. I am deeply saddened that, one year ago today, he made the ultimate sacrifice.

Yet his sacrifice, his courage, and his heroism has not and will not be forgotten. Sgt. Donald Walters fought bravely in the ambush on the 507th, and his courage in the face of fire both inflicted damage on the enemy and helped others in his unit to escape the ambush. His gallantry in action has earned him a Silver Star from the Army, a reward much deserved.

The exact chain of events on that fateful day may never be fully revealed. But the family of Sgt. Donald Walters should be assured that the Army, this Congress, and this Nation consider him a hero, and he will never be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO THE HUNTSVILLE ALUMNAE CHAPTER OF DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY

HON. ROBERT E. (BUD) CRAMER, JR.

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 2004

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. for fifty years of service in the North Alabama community.

Since its founding on April 24, 1954, the sisters of the Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. have been an inspiration for young women in our area providing college scholarships and volunteering numerous hours helping others throughout North Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, the Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc. is most well known for its annual reception that recognizes and honors outstanding high school teachers and students. In addition, the chapter sponsors an educational and motivational program for young girls called "Girls Empowered to Maximize Self-esteem," or GEMS.

On March 28th, the Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will hold its annual Founders' Day program. This year's celebration will be especially memorable and I rise today to join them in their fiftieth commemoration.