

I ask God to please, please, save America. We are in trouble.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. EMANUEL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SOUDER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PRESIDENT BUSH'S RECORD ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I am joined tonight by several of my colleagues to do a short series of 5-minute talks to help shed light on President Bush's record on women. We are very grateful to the National Women's Law Center that produced a report called "Slip-sliding Away: The Erosion of Hard-won Gains For Women Under the Bush Administration," and the National Center For Research on Women that wrote a report called "Missing: Information About Women's Lives." They compiled reports on the actions taken by the Bush administration that have eroded hard-won gains for women. These are rights and guarantees for equality that my colleagues and I, and those who came before us, have worked for years to gain in order that our daughters and our granddaughters would not have to endure inequality, violence, or lack of opportunity.

During the last 3½ years, so many of those gains have been rolled back, chipped away and, in some cases, obliterated all together. My colleagues will elaborate on some of these actions, but let me at least provide my colleagues with a list of the administration's actions. I have only 5 minutes, so this list will be a sample rather than an exhaustive list.

Despite a persistent wage gap and barriers to equal opportunity like sexual harassment and pregnancy discrimination, the Bush administration has advocated policies that make the situation worse for women at work.

The Bush administration has completely eliminated the Equal Pay Matters initiative.

The Department of Justice has weakened enforcement of the laws against job discrimination and abandoned pending sex discrimination suits without notice or explanation.

The Department of Labor repealed regulations that allowed paid family leave to be made available through State unemployment compensation funds.

The Bush administration has proposed new regulations that would deprive millions of women the right to overtime pay.

The Bush administration has been proactive in undermining title IX, a program that promotes equality for girls in education and sports, a landmark piece of legislation that our late dear colleague, Patsy Mink, had so much to do with passing.

The Department of Education "archived" a guidance on sexual harassment in violation of title IX, making this guidance unavailable to victims of harassment, parents, schools, and the public.

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The administration has tried to eliminate funding for the Women's Education Equity Act, which provides curricula and materials to help schools comply with Title IX and research on model programs to promote gender equity.

The Justice Department urged the Supreme Court to strike down the use of affirmative action to achieve diversity in higher education, while the Department of Education encouraged colleges and universities to avoid using affirmative action instead of guiding them on ways they can permissibly do so.

The Department of Education has proposed removing existing safeguards that ensure all girl and all boy classes and schools do not perpetuate stereotypes and second-class status for girls.

President Bush's most recent budget proposal would result in 300,000 children losing child care assistance by 2009.

The Bush administration has proposed modifications to the welfare law that would impose harsh new work requirements on mothers in poverty while opposing increases in their child care assistance.

The Bush administration has proposed privatizing Social Security which would hit older women especially hard by siphoning money out of the system, thus reducing benefits for poor women.

The administration has proposed eliminating the savers credit that gives additional tax credits to low and moderate income individuals and families who contribute to retirement accounts. At the same time, the President has proposed weakening the protections for low and moderate income individuals in employer pension plans.

President Bush signed a Medicare bill that prohibits the government from using its bargaining power to get lower costs on prescription drugs hurting the 80 percent of older women who use prescription drugs every day.

The Bush administration has proposed changes in Medicaid that would result in the denial of health care coverage to many poor women who are now eligible for Medicaid.

President Bush, for the first time since Roe versus Wade, was decided in

1973 signed into law a bill that unconstitutionally restricts a women's right to choose and that blatantly disregards any consideration for possible threats to a woman's health.

President Bush has cut millions of dollars in funding for international women's family planning which is used to promote maternal and infant health and reduce unwanted pregnancies and infant death.

Too bad I could not get through the long list which was just a summary in itself of the ways that women's rights have been eroded under this administration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GERLACH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

"W" IS FOR WAR ON WOMEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, along with my Democrat women colleagues, I want to express my outrage at the Bush administration's way to wage devastating war on women from the first day he took office.

The women in America knew from the past 4 years that "W" is for War on Women, and the two reports that my colleague the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) discussed highlight this fact.

I would also like to mention another report issued earlier this year by the Union of Concerned Scientists entitled "Scientific Integrity in Policy Making and Investigation Into the Bush Administration's Misuse of Science." This report documents the unprecedented manipulation, suppression, and misrepresentation of science across disciplines ranking from the environment and climate change to military intelligence and public health as well as attacks on issues that specifically affect women.

As a microbiologist, I am particularly concerned with Mr. Bush's blatant disregard for science. As these three reports demonstrate, the President is clearly engaged in a war on women with particularly vicious attacks on women's reproductive rights.

Let me give you a few examples. President Bush is doing everything in his power to restrict and eventually eliminate a women's constitutionally protected right to abortion. The Bush administration supports and is vigorously defending the first Federal law that bans medically necessary abortion procedures since Roe v. Wade, a law that contains no exception to protect a woman's health. It is plainly unconstitutional.

President Bush and his administration have taken multiple actions to imbue embryos and fetuses with the status of personhood in an effort to undermine *Roe v. Wade*, even at the expense of potentially life-saving medical research and has distorted scientific information to further its anti-abortion and anti-family planning agenda.

President Bush also endorsed unnecessary legislation that establishes a fetus, embryo, and even a fertilized egg as an independent victim of a crime and, thus, a legal person with the same legal rights as live and born individuals, and, particularly, as its mother.

Ironically, at the same time he is attacking a woman's right to choose, he is making every, every effort to inhibit the ability to prevent unintended pregnancies. The Bush administration has consistently proposed inadequate and often even reduced funding for Title X, the family planning programs which provide women with family planning and other health care across the country.

The administration tried to end the requirement that health insurance plans offered to Federal employees which includes the coverage of prescription contraceptives if the plan covers other prescription drugs and devices such as Viagra.

President Bush named to the Reproductive Health Drugs Advisory Committee of the FDA Dr. David Hager, who reportedly has refused to prescribe birth control to unmarried women and has suggested prayer to women who suffer from premenstrual syndrome.

The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention under President Bush replaced a comprehensive online fact sheet about condoms with one lacking crucial information on their use.

On his first day in office President Bush reinstated the global gag rule and extended it to the entire State Department.

For 3 consecutive years, George Bush has withheld funding for the life saving reproductive health services offered through the United Nations Population Fund in over 150 poor countries around the world.

President Bush promotes the unproven abstinence only sex education programs, denying our Nation's young people critical information on ways to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, even though we know that over 60 percent of 12th graders report having had sexual intercourse.

In fact, recent analysis of abstinence only programs found that such programs can actually reduce the use of condoms when program participants become sexually active, increasing their risk of pregnancy.

In my opinion, the President's "abstinence only" programs should be more accurately labeled "ignorance only," and we are placing the very lives of our youth in danger. This is unconscionable.

When the Nation is in such a severe budget crunch and running sky-

rocketing deficits, George Bush's decisions to spend millions upon millions of dollars on a program that is not only unproven but potentially harmful is dumbfounding. Moreover, he is also exporting this dangerous ignorance policy to other countries around the world.

Another example is the administration posting information on the National Cancer Institute Web site which misleadingly suggested a link between abortion and breast cancer despite objections from the Centers of Disease Control staff who said that scientific study has long refuted that connection.

Mr. Speaker, at this point I will insert the remainder of my statement into the RECORD.

In fact, the Bush Administration had to pull the false information off the Web site after significant outcry from the scientific community and the American public.

The most recent transgression is a decision by the Bush Administration's Food and Drug Administration to reject Barr Laboratories' application to make its emergency contraception, Plan B, available to women over-the-counter.

In doing so, the Bush Administration once again demonstrated its blatant disregard for the health and well-being of American women.

According to press reports, George Bush's political appointees based this decision on politics instead of science, going against an overwhelming vote by an independent expert advisory committee and his own staff at the FDA. Such an action is unprecedented.

The FDA's scientific advisory panel and staff overwhelmingly recommended that this drug be made available to American women over-the-counter, because they know what we all know: The scientific facts irrefutably show that this drug is a safe, effective way for women to prevent unintended pregnancy. The scientific data show beyond a shadow of a doubt that Plan B could cut our Nation's unintended pregnancy rate in half and reduce the number of abortions performed in our Nation by hundreds of thousands.

But in an outrageous move, the FDA ignored the expertise of its own scientists and staff—and the will of American women and hundreds of women's, health and doctors' groups—and instead denied this safe contraceptive over-the-counter status.

The FDA threw the facts out the window and instead caved to pressure from right-wing ideologues.

Even FDA officials admitted that this decision was unusual. And last April, two FDA scientists wrote an article in which they openly speculated that political pressure was influencing the FDA's decision on emergency contraception.

We must get to the bottom of how this decision was allowed to happen. We cannot jeopardize future FDA decisions with partisan pandering.

American women trust the FDA to make the best decisions possible with respect to their health.

We absolutely must be able to trust that the federal agency responsible for allowing us access to miraculous drugs will leave politics out of decisions that can so profoundly affect our health.

In my mind, the FDA's decision on Plan B has completely shattered this trust, especially in the leadership of the FDA.

Therefore, my colleague HENRY WAXMAN and I spearheaded a letter along with 28 of our colleagues asking the General Accounting Office to conduct an investigation into the influence of partisan politics upon the FDA, eviscerating its ability to make decisions based upon sound science.

I also believe that FDA Acting Commissioner Lester Crawford and Dr. Steve Galson, acting director of the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, need to be held accountable for this outrageous decision that so clearly goes against the scientific data.

Therefore, I have called upon President Bush to request their resignations. Only when partisan politics are no longer allowed to take precedence over science will our trust in the FDA be restored.

There are so many other examples of President Bush and his cronies riding roughshod over science that I do not have time to discuss them all this evening.

However, I would encourage the American public to take a look at all of these reports to find out what the Bush Administration doesn't want you to know.

As I noted a few minutes ago, the President's moniker that "W is for Women" is a joke.

Mr. President, no one is laughing, because the actions you have taken against women are having devastating consequences.

Indeed, you have proven time and again that "W is for WAR on Women."

Mr. President, the women of America know what you are doing, and we will not stand for it!

BUSH'S RECORD ON WOMEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. SOLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise to also share with my colleagues two incredibly important studies that greatly impact women all around this country. These reports published by the National Women's Law Center and the National Council of Research on Women clearly demonstrate that women's fundamental rights in this country are under attack by this administration's politics and policies.

Since 2000, the Bush administration has been slowly chipping away at many of the hard won gains for women. This new data demonstrates that since his first few months in office, President Bush has used the power of his Presidency to manipulate, obstruct, and censor information that directly affects women's lives.

Priorities have been changed, funding has been cut, research findings have been distorted and social differences and inequalities have been masked. American women have a fundamental right to seek public information that is clear, easily accessible, and not contaminated by ideology.

And I am particularly concerned about the lack of information regarding violence against women. Violence against women is a serious problem that affects women and families nationwide. An estimated 1.5 million