

by this Congress. It is the Congress who in effect has virtually instructed the sentencing commission to enhance sentences and to enhance sentences as much as possible and particularly for these drug offenses which are far from where the harm is being done.

The essential effect is to destroy the African American family. Young women, well educated, who are out in the world working in disproportionate numbers to the young men who are there; young men as boys siphoned off into the drug economy, the gun economy, the underground economy which is the economy left in the inner cities of our country; a huge disparity between marriageable young men and marriageable young women, all traces back to the criminal justice system.

These cases have a lot to teach our country. They are going to make their own changes. These cases are an instruction to us to look closely at the Federal sentencing guidelines so that we can do our part to get rid of this injustice in the criminal justice system.

INTRODUCTION OF CENTER FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT ACT OF 2005

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

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Center For Scientific and Technical Assessment Act of 2005. I have introduced the creating legislation with the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN), the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON), the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT), the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER), the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD), the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE), the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST), the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN), the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RUPPERSBERGER), and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS). The Center For Scientific and Technical Assessment would be a bicameral and bipartisan resource providing Congress with highly respected, impartial analysis and assessment of scientific and technical issues. The center would provide Congress with early warnings on technology's impacts both here and abroad. The center would assess the issues that impact current and future legislation encompassing medicine, telecommunications, computer sciences, agriculture, materials, transportation, defense, indeed every discipline and sector important to the United States and to our work here in Congress.

It would undertake controversial subjects, examining them objectively and comprehensively for the Nation's

benefit. The center would offer much needed sound principles to reap the benefits of technological change in industry, in the Federal Government, in the workplace, in our schools and look at the estimated economic and social impacts of rapid technological change. The center would enable Congress better to oversee Federal science and technology programs which now amount to over \$130 billion. Finally, the center would help Congress better to understand complex technological issues by tailoring reports for legislative users.

Today's legislative environment involves highly complex issues of science, engineering and technology. High-wage, advanced technology workforce growth is a prerequisite to a strong economy whose future is predicated on our continuing global dominance in science and technology.

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If the United States is to maintain and continue its leading role into the 21st Century, then Congress needs to recognize that the future is being shaped by new science and technology discoveries arising from our past investments in basic and applied research and their deployment into present and new industrial sectors. A well-informed Congress with the foresight to pass the right legislation must understand the effects of that technology on all sectors of our society and must understand the scientific aspects of all the legislation under our consideration.

Our Nation must exploit these new advances or prepare to be exploited ourselves by others. Given how technology underlies many aspects of our constituents' lives, concerns, and jobs, unbiased technical assessment is not a luxury but a necessity.

Today Congress is deluged with facts, figures, opinions, and arguments from thousands of interested citizens. Congress does not need more facts and data on these issues of science and technology; it needs balanced analysis and synthesis that conclude with a framing of issues and extraction of knowledge and insight, a process beyond most Members of Congress and our immediate staffs. The Congressional Science Fellows program is a help in some respects. For example, Dr. Marti Sokolowski in my own office provides some of this, and there are some Fellows scattered around other offices around Capitol Hill, but it is not enough.

For 2 decades, Congress could call upon the Office of Technology Assessment for nonpartisan scientific and technical advice. OTA published dozens of reports a year. Its work ran the gamut of subject matter. OTA brought science into the center of many congressional discussions. And at times OTA was a major factor in major pieces of legislation.

Unfortunately, OTA closed its doors in September, 1995. However, many of

its reports are still relevant and useful, but no more such reports are being produced. The loss of that technology assessment is great. Now we have no advice or sometimes haphazard review panels whose composition may tempt some to politicize science. Therefore, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON) and I have introduced a bill to establish the Center for Scientific and Technology Assessment.

We have done much research on the advantages and disadvantages of the former Office of Technology Assessment. We have looked at the recent successful technical assessment program prepared by the General Accounting Office. We have taken into the account the GAO's document and its recommendations. Finally, we have examined the study "Science and Technology Advice for Congress" and considered the lessons of that publication in constructing this bill.

Our country will move into the 21st Century whether we in Congress are prepared or not. Congress will have at least the possibility of charting the course for our Nation with understanding of the applications of science and technology if we enact this legislation.

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY TO THE UNITED STATES MILITARY

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have had a vigorous legislative week that included a resolution affirming and applauding the Iraqi transitional government. It was a vigorous debate because many of us were pained to go to the floor to acknowledge a war that we had such great concern and opposition to. I voted for that resolution, with qualifications as to some of the language, but no qualifications on the affirmation of the young men and women on the front line. To be able to recognize their service, to thank their families, and to pray for those families who have lost loved ones.

I could not leave this body this week without acknowledging, as this country celebrates its anniversary of independence, the importance of recognizing freedom and how much and how long we fought for it and the way that we should lead our foreign policy to reflect on the principles of that freedom.

I will spend time, Mr. Speaker, this week with returning veterans and their families and families of those who have lost loved ones in Iraq. But most of all, I think it is important that we take this somewhat holiday week to reflect on the freedom that we as Americans have in this country and to never stray away from the rights of freedom, protesting when we believe it is wrong, supporting when we believe it is right, but, most of all, embracing the Constitution that allows us the freedom of