

abuse. For example, they suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) at a rate twice as high as Iraq War veterans. Then, when children emancipate from care they are dependent on public assistance, become incarcerated or homeless, and are unemployed at rates higher than nearly any other group of Americans. The "Foster Children Self Support Act" is especially important since it is safe to assume that those children who have lost their parents or are receiving SSI due to severe mental or physical disabilities are among the most needy.

The "Foster Children Self Support Act" provides a way to help these children. It does so by mandating that states develop a plan for foster children with Social Security benefits. The plan would layout how to best use a child's Social Security benefits as a resource to best meet the current and future needs of that child. The plan must be specific to each child receiving Social Security benefits and made in partnership with the child and the child's advocate. If this bill were law, states would no longer be allowed to simply use children's Social Security money as they see fit. Instead, this money would have to be used as any parent would use it: to provide for the child's particular needs and help plan for the child's future.

The bill will:

Require that states screen all foster children for Social Security eligibility and assist them in application;

Require states to identify other appropriate representative payees for eligible children, such as family members, before becoming the payee themselves;

Prohibit states who are payees from using a child's Social Security benefits to reimburse themselves for the cost of foster care;

Require states to develop a plan, with a child and that child's advocate(s), on how to best use the Social Security benefits to provide for the current and future needs of the child;

Provide for the conservation of Social Security funds in dedicated accounts that a child can access when they leave care to pay for things like housing, education, transportation, and other life expenses;

Increase the Social Security resource limit to \$10,000 (currently it is \$2,000), so that children can conserve up to that amount and still maintain their Social Security eligibility;

Require the GAO to report back to Congress on states' progress in screening all foster children for Social Security eligibility.

Improving our child welfare system has repercussions throughout our society. Foster children who age out of the child welfare system without having developed family supports or skills that can lead to employment create a large societal cost. In the next 15 years 300,000 foster children will age out of care without any transition supports. Congress has a moral obligation to provide foster children with the resources they need to become independent adults. The "Foster Children Self Support Act" is a small part of fulfilling this obligation and a large step toward helping one of the most vulnerable groups of foster children.

Attached are two news articles for the RECORD that illustrate the consequences of our current policy.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RECONSTRUCTION AND STABILIZATION CIVILIAN MANAGEMENT ACT

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 15, 2007

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, today, Mr. SAXTON and I are pleased to introduce the bill, Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act.

In his State of the Union speech, the President called on Congress to support a civilian response corps which "would function much like our military reserve. It would ease the burden on the Armed Forces by allowing us to hire civilians with critical skills to serve on missions abroad when America needs them. It would give people across America who do not wear the uniform a chance to serve in the defining struggle of our time."

The Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act would authorize a civilian response corps. Why is this authorization necessary? Since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. has been engaged in a stabilization or reconstruction operation once every 18–24 months. By default, the services have taken on the task of nation building, and OSD Directive 3000.05 makes stabilization and reconstruction operations a core competency of the military.

While our military personnel have done an excellent job for which they have not been trained, filling the void should be the responsibility of the State Department. In order for our operations to be successful, the State Department must fill this void, and can do so by creating a comparable civilian force to take over once the military has stabilized a war-torn country.

Combating failed states requires a complex combination of political, diplomatic, development assistance and military actions, as well as the ability to respond quickly in the immediate aftermath of crisis. The military plays an extremely important role in stabilizing a country, but civilians play an equally important role and have comparative advantage in helping to develop civil society—judicial systems, law enforcement, health care, economic development, trade promotion and other essential sectors to stabilize a country.

The Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act establishes the legislative framework for authorizing this integral civilian capacity by:

Authorizing the establishment of the State Department Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, S/CRS;

Authorizing the establishment of a 250-person Civilian Response Corps with both Active-Duty and Reserve components. The corps would be rapidly deployed with the military for both initial assessments and operational purposes. They would be the first civilian team on the ground in post-conflict situations, well in advance of the establishment of an embassy.

Establishes personnel exchange programs with other relevant Federal agencies that can help a failed state develop government and civil society infrastructure.

Importantly, the bill promotes a stabilization and reconstruction curriculum and the utilization of already existing programs like the Center for Stabilization and Reconstruction Studies at the Naval Postgraduate School.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this important piece of legislation that would greatly assist in improving the capacity of our Government to respond to some of the most important and pressing security threats of our time.

TRIBUTE TO JONATHAN QUARLES

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 15, 2007

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jonathan Quarles, the keynote speaker at the Flint NAACP's Freedom Fund annual dinner to be held on March 3rd in Flint Michigan.

Jonathan Quarles is currently serving the mayor of Detroit, the Honorable Kwame Kilpatrick, as the executive assistant. Jonathan began his public service career after graduating from Florida A&M University in 2004 with dual degrees in business administration and political science. He worked for People for the American Way Foundation in partnership with Tavis Smiley to increase civic awareness and engagement in the public process by young people in Florida, Michigan, Illinois, Texas and Ohio.

In addition to his current position with the city of Detroit, Jonathan has a lifelong commitment to the NAACP, is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated Beta Nu Chapter. He serves as a precinct delegate for the city of Detroit, as board member of Leadership Transformation, a steering committee member for New Detroit National Leadership Summit on Race, a trainer for the Paul Wellstone Action Network, and an ambassador for Tavis Smiley's Youth 2 Leaders Foundation. Recently Jonathan founded Common Link Consulting Services to better educate the community about public policy and foster links between the public and private sectors.

Recognized for his accomplishments, Jonathan was selected by Black Enterprise as one of America's emerging leaders. He was recognized by Jet Magazine as one of Black America's most promising leaders of the 21st century. The Governor of Michigan named him a "Michiganian of the Year" in 2000 and Florida A&M University has granted the Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Award to Jonathan for two consecutive years. The February 2007 issue of Ebony Magazine listed him as one of the country's top 30 leaders under the age of 30.

Madam Speaker I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating a fellow Flint native, Jonathan Quarles, as he is honored by the Flint Chapter of the NAACP for his work to make our community a better place.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO STEVEN G.

SCHORR

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 15, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend Steven G. Schorr, Vice President of Public and Government Affairs for