

CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE PROTECTION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the rule and underlying bill, the CHAMP Act. I want to thank our leadership for their vision and commitment in bringing this critical legislation before us today.

Mr. Speaker, as one of the primary authors of California's version of children's health insurance, the Healthy Families Act, I know this bill will help reverse the neglect and devastation to our health care system that has been inflicted over the last dozen years.

The CHAMP Act will finally provide much needed care for the 5 million uninsured children across this Nation.

The CHAMP Act will finally allow millions of seniors the access to affordable, quality health care that the Bush administration's Medicare cuts have denied.

Finally, while I remain opposed to scientifically unsound abstinence-only programs I support the CHAMP Act's acknowledgment that these programs in their current form are not serving the needs of our young people who deserve access to medically-accurate, life-saving comprehensive sex education.

Mr. Speaker, as important a step forward as this bill is, our goal must remain providing universal health care to all Americans. The future of our Nation depends on it.

THE CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE AND MEDICARE PROTECTION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman/lady from [STATE] for yielding me this time. I request unanimous consent to revise and extend my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, today's debate is about promises and responsibility. It is about the promise of an American childhood. It is about our responsibility to protect the health and well-being of those who grow up in the world's most prosperous Nation.

It is about the promise of a better world for our children and grandchildren. We have a responsibility to create a healthcare system that is fair, equitable, and affordable for all Americans, regardless of their income.

Mr. Speaker, the Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act delivers on these promises and fulfills these responsibilities. It revitalizes and expands one of the most successful and cost-effective health initiatives we have: the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

SCHIP is a model for how government programs should work. It has saved money for taxpayers by helping children avoid costly hospital and emergency room trips. It has made states equal partners in the program's administration, giving them flexibility and a stake in

the outcome. Most critically, it has provided six million kids with health care that they would not otherwise have.

Because of SCHIP, six million American kids are healthier and more vibrant. Six million young lives are better because of this program. Isn't this what good government is supposed to accomplish?

There is still more for us to do, though. Millions of children in our country cannot go to a doctor when they feel sick. In my hometown of Sacramento, 17,000 kids cannot get the medicines they need until they go to an emergency room. This is unacceptable to me, Madam Speaker. It should be unacceptable to every single Member of Congress.

When I cast my vote for this bill today, it will be a vote for the future of our country. It will be an investment in the children who are the future.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before this House today as a colleague, but also as a proud grandmother. My two beautiful grandchildren are named Anna and Robby, and most of what I do here in Congress is colored by how it will affect them and their generation.

Anna and Robby are fortunate in that they have stable, reliable health insurance. Millions of their peers are not so lucky.

I am confident that if we all do so, we will see that voting "Yes" on the CHAMP Act is not only the right thing to do. It is the most thing to do. It will secure our country's future by providing healthcare for the millions of American kids who literally are our country's future.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EARLY TREATMENT FOR HIV ACT

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2007

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, today is an exciting day as I join with you and Representative ROS-LEHTINEN and over 50 bipartisan cosponsors—27 Democrats and 27 Republicans to re-introduce the Early Treatment for HIV Act.

Today is just one day in a long journey to promoting common sense health care in the Medicaid program. Medicaid coverage for people living with HIV is contingent on two factors; qualifying as low income and meeting the Social Security definition of disability. What this means for uninsured HIV Positive people is that outside of the Ryan White CARE ACT, HIV positive people must wait for their health status to be compromised beyond repair, to deteriorate to full blown AIDS before they can get healthcare coverage under Medicaid. This defies logic as current Federal guidelines call for early access to medical care and treatment including the use of combination antiretroviral therapy.

The Early Treatment for HIV Act, ETHA, gives states the OPTION of amending their Medicaid eligibility requirements to include uninsured, pre-disabled low-income people living with HIV. ETHA is modeled after the successful Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act, BCCA, that allows States to provide early access to Medicaid to women with cancer. As with the BCCA, participating States would receive an enhanced Federal

matching rate, the same that is provided through the breast and cervical cancer Medicaid project and SCHIP.

Earlier access to health care for people with HIV/AIDS is cost effective. It improves both the health and quality of life of many people living with HIV. By keeping people healthy, the government saves money on expensive medical interventions, such as emergency care or hospitalizations. Furthermore, new medications now allow people with HIV to remain in the workforce longer, and reduces the need for support from government income subsidy programs like SSI and SSDI.

Will the cost-savings be immediate? No. But after a number of years, when early, effective treatment will limit the number of people whose health status progresses to full-blown AIDS, health care costs will be minimized, and best of all there will be a 50 percent decrease in lives lost to this terrible disease.

As all of you know, I have been advocating for improving access to quality healthcare for those with HIV/AIDS for my entire career in public service.

I was deeply troubled 2 years ago when the Energy and Commerce Committee "reformed" Medicaid during the Deficit Reduction Act. I offered ETHA as an amendment during that mark up and secured the first ever vote on that bill. As I said to then Chairman JOE BARTON "if our committee is sincere about Medicaid reform outside of this budget driven reconciliation process, than we should seriously consider the huge improvements in health outcomes and long term cost-savings that will be realized over time through the Early Treatment to HIV." Unfortunately, the amendment was not agreed to.

In the past Congress, I was deeply involved in the negotiations of the Ryan White Care Act. Those initially writing the Reauthorization shifted huge numbers in funding away from the epicenters of the AIDS epidemic to other emerging communities and added language that would make it harder for providers to serve those most in need. A common sense approach would have been to just fund the bill at higher levels to keep states from being pit against each other for scarce funding. We righted some of the wrongs in that bill though, and will continue to work to strengthen the Ryan White program.

Madam Speaker, today is a new day though and a new Congress. With an equal number of Democrats and Republicans pushing for Early Treatment for HIV in the Medicaid program today, we have a new opportunity to enact common sense, life-saving treatment.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, during the last set of votes last evening, I unintentionally voted against the conference report on H.R. 1495, the Water Resources Development Act of 2007.

I ask that it be put into the permanent record that I fully support the passage of the conference report and ask that my vote be

changed in the record from a “nay” vote to a “yea” vote.

For the 11th Congressional District that I represent as well as for all of Illinois, passage of this legislation is of the utmost importance. WRDA contains instructions at my request for the Army Corps of Engineers to carry out studies and projects within my district at La-Salle and at Ballard’s Island in the Illinois River. The conference report also contains the critical updating of the lock and dam system on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, vital to Illinois farmers and exports.

In closing, I want to commend Chairman OBERSTAR and Ranking Member MICA for producing a good bipartisan bill again and I am hopeful that this year we can finally get this bill to the President for his signature.

ON THE DEATH OF PATRIARCH
TEOCTIST

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2007

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, on Monday, July 30, Patriarch Teoctist, the head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, died in Bucharest of complications after a surgery. He was 92 years old and had not been in good health for several weeks.

As a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Helsinki Commission, I have been very concerned and active on issues regarding the promotion of human rights and children’s rights in Romania. I have visited Romania five times—both when it was under Communist rule and since 1990—and I know Patriarch Teoctist was respected and beloved by millions of Romanians. He became patriarch in 1986, resigned immediately after the revolution in 1989 that overthrew the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaușescu, but was recalled by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Madam Speaker, after 1990 Teoctist promoted ecumenical dialogue. He invited Pope John Paul II to visit Romania. This visit took place in 1999 in Bucharest, where Teoctist met with Pope John Paul II, embraced him fraternally and prayed with him. What a magnificent gesture! It was the first time the Roman pontiff visited a predominantly Orthodox country since the schism of 1054.

At this time of sorrow, I wish to express my condolences to the Romanian Orthodox believers and confidence and prayers that Teoctist rest in peace.

LILLY LEDBETTER FAIR PAY ACT
OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2007

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2831, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. I want to thank the Chairman and Ranking Member for bringing this important bill to the House floor.

H.R. 2831 is designed to be an important but narrow reversal of the Ledbetter decision,

without upsetting any other current law. As many of us here today know, earlier this year, the Supreme Court decision Ledbetter versus Goodyear made it much harder for workers to pursue pay discrimination claims based on the fact that plaintiffs would need to file their charge of pay discrimination within 180 days of the employer’s decision to pay them less.

What was particularly disturbing about this decision was the fact that it stripped Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of its longstanding position that every paycheck resulting from an earlier discriminatory pay decision is considered a violation of the Civil Rights Act. The importance of this consideration of each and every paycheck is vital to the CRA.

Furthermore, the Supreme Court decision was untenable. Employees often do not know what their co-workers earn, or how and when pay decisions are made. These dynamics in the workplace make it nearly impossible to file a complaint precisely when discrimination first occurs. Many times they find this out far after the fact, and thus need a filing deadline that takes this time delay into account.

The bill before us today maintains the law’s current statute of limitations and limits on back pay recovery. It states that an employee must still file a charge within the statutory filing period after receiving a discriminatory paycheck but would provide a realistic timeline consistent with the Civil Rights Act.

Again, I thank the Chairman for bringing up this bill that calls attention to the fact that we need to make our pay discrimination laws work in a much more realistic and fair way for all parties involved.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2007

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 779, I was unavoidably absent. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 780, I would have voted “yea.” On rollcall No. 781, I would have voted “nay.” On rollcall No. 782, I would have voted “yea.” On rollcall No. 783, I would have voted “nay.” On rollcall No. 784, I would have voted “yea.” On rollcall No. 785, I would have voted “yea.” On rollcall No. 786, I would have voted “nay.” On rollcall No. 787, I would have voted “yea.” On rollcall No. 788, I would have voted “yea.” On rollcall No. 789, I would have voted “yea.” On rollcall No. 790, I would have voted “yea.”

HONORING DR. KAY HILL ON THE
OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2007

Ms. DeLAURO. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to join the family, friends and colleagues who have gathered this evening to celebrate the retirement and the remarkable contributions to our community of Dr. Kay Hill—one of my dearest friends. An educator, mentor, advocate, and friend, Kay

has touched the lives of tens of thousands through her teaching, writing, and constant self-learning, even as she devoted herself to her family, through tough times and good times.

Upon graduation from Yale University, Kay began her career with the New Haven Public Schools system as an English as a Second Language instructor at the Welch School. Just a year later, she became the Supervisor of the World Language Program for 38 elementary, middle and high schools. Through intelligence, a strong work ethic, and compassion, Kay has earned the love and respect of her students and colleagues alike. It has been under her leadership that the program has grown from 24 to 80 teachers and currently has 6,370 foreign language students and 690 dual language students enrolled. Perhaps the most telling examples of the success of this program have been the outstanding achievements of its students who have excelled at the state COLT poetry recitation contest as well as on national and state exams.

Kay has always had a passion for foreign language and education. To understand her enthusiasm and her deep commitment to education, one only has to look to the inspiration she received from her parents. Her mother traveled to Paraguay at a young age on a missionary trip sponsored by her Mennonite church. It was during her time with this program that she learned the Spanish language—a passion which she passed on to Kay. Kay’s father had an illustrious career as a minister with the Church Center for the United Nations and later as a minister for world peace in Tampa, FL. Even in his retirement, he continued to make a difference as writer and editor of a social justice newsletter. Like so many of us, Kay took the lessons she learned as a child and made her own mark on the world.

In her position as supervisor for the World Language Program, she traveled extensively, opening the doors of opportunity for her students. Her first trip was to Russia where she and 30 students spent 3½ weeks touring the country visiting Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Nizhny Novgorod. Kay’s dedication to education—especially foreign language education—has been recognized on many levels. She attended an international conference for compensatory education in Paris where she was the only educator representing the United States and was sent by the Connecticut Department of Education to recruit and interview prospective educators. Just last year, Kay traveled to China with a group sponsored by the Chinese government aimed at learning more about their culture and to promote Chinese language education.

As an educator, Kay’s leadership and vision opened many doors to her students, however, it is through her dedication and love as a parent that one truly sees the difference she can make in the life of a young person. As the mother of an autistic child, Kay has diligently sought out every possible program and opportunity for her son, Peter, to learn and grow—and what a young man he is. She and her husband, Mitch, make each other stronger, as they knock down the barriers that fate has put in front of them. Reflecting their determination and leadership, their daughter, Lily, recently co-chaired the annual State Prejudice Reduction Conference—a leadership conference of more than 1,000 students from across the state.