

would soon become obsolete, retiring to make way for new plants that would be covered by clean air regulations.

Unfortunately, dirty power is often cheap power, and the economic advantage enjoyed by grandfathered plants has allowed them to survive much longer than Congress ever expected. Most of the power plants in the U.S. began operation in the 1960s or before. The operating cost for grandfathered plants are often half that of new clean generators.

With the U.S. moving toward a deregulated electricity market, it is now time to remove the economic advantage of dirty power. If we do not close the grandfather loophole and level the playing field for new clean generation, clean energy will be disadvantaged.

The Clean Power Plant Act of 1999 sets uniform emissions standards for all plants regardless of when they began operation. It addresses the four major pollutants that come from utilities and closes several loopholes that allow the electric generating industry to pollute at higher rates than other industries. This bill, however, also recognizes the importance of fuel diversity for electricity generation and the need to make a smooth transition to cleaner technology.

The bill sets an overall cap of 1.914 billion tons of carbon dioxide emissions from the utility sector. This cap is consistent with the Rio Treaty on global climate change which was signed by the Bush administration and ratified by the Senate. It requires EPA to distribute emissions allowances to power plants based on a generation performance standard.

Because the effects of carbon emissions are global rather than local in nature, the bill allows the trading of extra emissions allowances between utilities. For nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxides, the bill sets both a maximum emissions rate and a per-unit cap on total annual emissions. The emissions rates of 1.5 pounds per megawatt hour for nitrogen oxides and 3 pounds per megawatt hour for sulfur dioxides will ensure that all plants must meet standards similar to those required for new generators.

The bill does not allow dirty plants to purchase emissions credits to meet these requirements. While capping total emissions and allowing plants to trade pollution credits will limit overall pollution, it may not protect upwind States from downwind emissions or protect communities around older plants from the local effects of ozone smog or acid rain.

The bill also sets a total per-unit cap on emissions based on the amount of electricity generate by each unit during the period from 1996 to 1998. This provision ensures that if energy demand increases, older plants will not simply run longer at lower emissions

rate resulting in no net reduction in pollution. Instead, new energy demands will be met with new clean more efficient energy sources that are subject to all new source emissions standards.

My bill also sets strict standards for mercury emissions, which under current law are left unregulated. The bill calls for a 70 percent reduction in the more than 50 tons of mercury that are emitted from power plants each year. This 70 percent level is what EPA in a March 1999 report estimated is the level of reduction that plants could achieve with currently available technology.

This level is a floor, however, so that EPA can require greater reductions as technology improves.

The bill does not simply address emissions of mercury, however. It also closes a loophole in the Solid Waste Disposal Act that allows utilities to dispose of waste that contains mercury without consideration of mercury's severe environmental and health effects. My bill ensures that all mercury waste, including the solid waste created in the combustion process and the mercury that is captured by smoke stack scrubbers, must be disposed of in a way that ensures the mercury will not find its way back into the environment. This makes my bill the most stringent proposal to reducing the amount of mercury released by power plants.

Finally, my bill closes a loophole that allows utilities to escape regulations on hazardous air pollutants. Currently, utilities are not required to use technology that removes heavy metals and volatile organic compounds from their emissions. These pollutants, which include many carcinogens, can cause severe damage to human health and the environment. My bill ends the exemption for utilities and will require them to implement the maximum available technology to limit emissions of hazardous air pollutants.

This bill is not simply crafted to cut emissions, however, without regard for the economic effects of shifting away from fossil fuels. Instead, it recognizes that, to make clean energy economically as well as environmentally successful, we must ease the transition from old technology to new. The bill contains grants for communities and workers who are affected by changes in fuel consumption. It also authorizes grants for property tax relief for towns that derive a large amount of their tax base from older power plants that will be replaced by cleaner technology.

Mr. Speaker, quality of our air is not just an environmental problem. It is an economic and public health issue as well. Whatever the initial costs of switching to new, clean generating technology, it pales compared to the cost of cleaning up mercury pollution, the cost of treating smog related illnesses, or the costs of a rapid rise in global temperature. I hope my colleagues will join me in this effort to level the playing field for clean energy and fulfill the promise of the Clean Air Act.

H.R. 2982, A BILL CALLING FOR THE HIRING OF 100,000 RESOURCE STAFF FOR STUDENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a very important piece of legislation, H.R. 2982.

This bill will provide \$15 billion over a five year period specifically for states to hire resource staff in our public schools to help students cope with the stress and anxieties of adolescence.

Pearl, Mississippi; West Paducah, Kentucky; Jonesboro, Arkansas; Springfield, Oregon; Edinboro, Pennsylvania; Fayetteville, Tennessee; Littleton, Colorado—all of these towns should conjure up images of small-town American life—quiet neighborhoods, friendly faces, and good, safe schools. However, today these towns bring to mind radically different images—children with guns, students fleeing schools in terror, and kids killing their classmates.

It is hard to forget the images of Columbine High School. Not because this shooting spree was more tragic than any of the others—all of these incidents have been undeniably jarring—but because the attackers were so calculated and so ruthless in their killings. Why did this happen? What could make children from seemingly typical upbringings turn so violent? And what can we do to ensure that our children will be safe at school?

I don't know if we will ever find all of the answers, and I am not suggesting that Washington is necessarily the place to look for them—I think that, ultimately, we must look to our culture and within our own families to find the answers—but I do know that this Congress owes it to our children to work on policies that can bring about change.

First, we must look to substantive preventive measures. Security guards, metal detectors, and expelling violent students—all have their place in addressing this problem, but they do nothing to prevent tragedies from occurring. Ultimately, we must work with children to ensure they can handle their anger and emotions without resorting to violence. Many of our children enter school with emotional, physical, and interpersonal barriers to learning. We need more school counselors in our schools, not only to help identify these troubled youth, but to work on developmental skill building.

The fact is today we have no real infrastructure of support for our kids when it comes to mental health services in our schools. We currently have only 90,000 school counselors for approximately 41.4 million students in our public schools. That is, on average, roughly 1 counselor for every 513 students. For many schools the ratio is even worse. In Hawaii, for instance, we have only 1 counselor for every 525 students. In California, there is only 1 counselor for more than 1,000 students. That is simply not enough.

With current school counselors responsible for such large numbers of students, they are unable to address the students' personal needs. Instead, their role is more often administrative, scheduling, and job and college counseling. The child is forfeited for different goals.

My legislation will put 100,000 new resource staff in our schools to focus on the mental health needs of students. Like the President's

100,000 new teacher initiative, this will make it easier for children to get the attention they need.

This resource staff assigned to work for and with students will be hired to address the personal, family, peer level, emotional, and developmental needs of students. By focusing on these personal needs, these staff members will pick up early warning signs of troubled youth. They will improve student interaction and school safety. In short, they can save kids' lives.

These resource staff can also provide consultation with teachers and parents about student learning, behavior and emotional problems. They can develop and implement prevention programs. They can deal with substance abuse. They can set up peer mediation, and they can enhance problem solving in schools. Resource staff will provide important support services to students, and to parents and teachers on behalf of the students.

By no means is this the only thing that needs to be addressed to prevent youth violence. This should be the cornerstone of a much larger proposal. We must also look at the media's impact on violence and the easy accessibility of guns. We must strengthen our programs for families and early childhood development, and we must develop character education programs.

If we are really serious about addressing school violence, we must address prevention. My bill does that, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

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CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS  
INITIATIVES DOMESTICALLY  
AND GLOBALLY REGARDING HIV/  
AIDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLETCHER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to speak about the initiatives of the Congressional Black Caucus in the fight against the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

I first want to thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) and the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) for their leadership in this effort. This epidemic is killing our community in unprecedented, terrifying numbers. Within our own country among African Americans and among Africans on the continent of Africa, the disproportionate infection rates of people of African descent are staggering.

In my district, which includes Oakland, California, the AIDS case rate for African Americans is five times that of whites. While the county has experienced a decline in the number of AIDS cases since 1994, African-American diagnoses have risen by 20 percent.

I wish that I could say that these frightening and disproportionate sta-

tistics are rare in our Nation, but unfortunately they are pervasive. We know that across our country, African Americans have the highest death rate from AIDS and chronic illnesses, higher than all other minority communities combined. African Americans who account for 13 percent of our Nation's population account for 56 percent of all newly reported HIV cases and 68 percent of new cases among adolescents.

What we have seen over the past several years has been the emergence of a crisis, and the failure on the part of our government to target resources where the disease is the greatest void has really compromised our ability to work effectively to decrease the number of HIV infections, to create strong prevention programs and to provide adequate services and care. We are now thankful, though, that the current funding is significantly higher. However, it remains grossly inadequate.

Last year, under the bold leadership of the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), the Congressional Black Caucus mobilized to call upon Secretary Donna Shalala to declare a state of emergency for HIV/AIDS in the African-American community. It is with determination that we as a caucus have taken the lead on this issue. And with pride I can also say that on a local level in my area, Alameda County has declared a public health emergency on HIV and AIDS in the African-American community, the first jurisdiction in the Nation to do so.

This week, the Congressional Black Caucus has taken the next step to put forth a \$340 million emergency public health initiative on HIV and AIDS which will be distributed proportionately among African Americans and other communities of color. The plan is the next, necessary step to allow the continuation of initiatives within HHS and NIH and CDC that were created from fiscal year 1999 funding and to address new emergency needs. The Black Caucus has also been focused to bring to bear the resources so that African Americans also experience a decline in, and eventual end to, the HIV infection.

Furthermore, let me just mention how it is disproportionately devastating countries in the developing world, most drastically on the continent of Africa. UNAIDS reports that of the 33.4 million people living with HIV/AIDS in the world, 22.5 million, or 67 percent, are in sub-Saharan Africa; 7.8 million are children who have been orphaned with their parents who have died of AIDS. It is anticipated that this number will reach 40 million orphans by the year 2010. That is why I, along with 47 cosponsors, have introduced H.R. 2765, a bill to provide assistance for HIV/AIDS research, education, treatment and prevention in Africa.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to recognize the demoralizing reality of

HIV and AIDS, both in this country and throughout the world. We must not falsely and dangerously assume that because new combinations of therapies have improved the quality of life and extended the survival of some with HIV that the HIV/AIDS epidemic is now under control. The battle is far from over. I urge support for the Congressional Black Caucus' emergency public health initiative to combat this epidemic domestically and I urge support for the AIDS Marshall Plan to combat in a substantial way the AIDS epidemic globally.

COMBATTING HIV/AIDS IN THE  
BLACK COMMUNITY

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

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I join with the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) and others who are attempting to work at doing something about the problem of HIV/AIDS in the black community. Mr. Speaker, we have spent over a year working in a very concentrated way on trying to garner the resources and redirect them to communities that are highly at risk but have not had the resources follow the crisis.

Under my leadership as Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus last year, we organized an initiative where we were able to identify tremendous resources to begin to do what needed to be done. We discovered a number of things, Mr. Speaker. We discovered that the resources of government were not following the AIDS crisis because the face of the new AIDS had not been unveiled sufficiently in this Nation. Most people still think of AIDS as a white gay disease. It is not. It is not a white gay disease. If there is anything that I can share with you today, it is that the gay community has done a wonderful job in, number one, doing outreach, education and prevention and getting people involved in the new therapies that are causing them to have a better quality of life and being able to go back into the workplace. We need to follow that example. It certainly can be done.

What do we find when we look at the African-American community? We find, of course, that it is the leading cause of death for African Americans between the ages of 25 and 44. What do we find when we look at African-American women? We find that in the new AIDS cases, we are 30 percent of that population. We also find that we are infected 16 times more than white women. And so we see this increase, we see this crisis, we see this emergency, and we are trying to get everyone to understand that it is indeed an emergency, it is indeed an emergency that