

support enforcement and women's health issues and family safety issues. It wasn't that the men were opposed to these issues—they just didn't get it. They were not sufficiently aware of them.

So I realized, in many important areas—if we women in government don't take action, no one else will.

#### NEED MORE WOMEN

That's why we need more women in Congress.

That's why we need more women State legislators.

That's why we need more women Governors.

That's why we need more women in the County Courthouses, the Township Municipal buildings and the City Halls.

Of course, there are countless issues that have been thrust into the national spotlight due in large part to the efforts of women in Congress—health care, equal pay, family and medical leave, education to name just a few.

I would like to take a moment to examine one issue upon which women lead.

#### Child support enforcement

The first issue stems from the national epidemic of child support neglect. This epidemic of shame affects over 20 million families where parents ignore both the financial and psychological needs of their children.

I have a long history of standing up for child support enforcement, having been a pioneer on child support reforms and having served on the U.S. Commission for Inter-State Child Support Enforcement. It's a national disgrace that our child support enforcement system continues to allow so many parents who can afford to provide for their children's support—both financially and psychologically—to shirk these obligations.

Among those due support, about 50% received the full amount, about a 25% received partial payment and about 25% received NOTHING. In 1991, of the total \$17.7 billion owed for child support, \$5.8 billion was not paid! This figure is unconscionable!!

Through the years, Congress has taken many concrete steps to crack down on child support deadbeats. The most recent major reform was contained in the landmark welfare reform legislation we passed in 1996—because after all, child support enforcement reform is welfare prevention.

Now we have another opportunity to strengthen the child support enforcement network.

One of the major unfinished items of business from the last Congress is bankruptcy reform. Indeed the Leadership has indicated that bankruptcy reform will be considered in the House in the next few weeks.

I am very pleased that the Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1999, H.R. 833, introduced by Representative GEKAS, strengthens child support enforcement in a bankruptcy proceeding. H.R. 833 does the following: (1) Makes child support payments number one when determining which debts are paid first in a bankruptcy case (2) confirmation and discharge of Chapter 13 plans are made conditional upon the Debtor's complete payment of child support (3) provides that the automatic stay DOES NOT apply to a state child support collection agency trying to recover child support payments.

I will be working with Chairman GEKAS and Representative CLAY SHAW to further refine and improve the language that will eventually be included in the final bill.

It is important to remember that failure to pay child support is not a victimless crime. The children are the first and most important victims. We must ensure that these children are taken care of and I will continue my relentless effort in this pursuit.

Remember, All issues are women's issues", nevertheless, women and children are sometimes victims because of indifference or lack of sensitivity. We pledge here today to give them the sensitivity they need.

Ms. SANCHEZ. What a century this has been for the advancement of women's rights in America. Women vote, we own businesses, we explore outer space. We fight in our nation's armed services, we represent our fellow citizens in our legislature, courts and state houses, and we have a greater role in U.S. public policy than ever before. But first and foremost among these accomplishments is the ability to control our own economic destinies.

I am here tonight to salute women business owners who have helped this remarkable change grow. And in particular, I praise the Women's Economic Summit, one of the first gatherings of its kind. It is planting the seeds for even greater future successes, and I am proud to be a part of that progress.

Women everywhere build their success on that of the women who have gone before them. Tonight I salute women business owners for their work in making the American dream available to our friends and daughters.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. GRAMM, Mr. GORTON, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. CONRAD, Mrs. BOXER, and Mrs. MURRAY, be the conferees on the part of the Senate to the bill (H. Con. Res. 68) "A concurrent resolution establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2000 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for each of fiscal years 2001 through 2009."

#### OVERWHELMING NEGLECT: THE ARITHMETIC OF FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SWEENEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to clearly label my discussion this evening with a topic. I want to call it "Overwhelming Neglect: The Arithmetic of Federal Aid to Education."

Overwhelming Neglect: The Arithmetic of Federal Aid to Education, and I am pleased that this special order has fallen in a period when there may be large numbers of school-going youngsters, students in high school and ele-

mentary school and junior high school, awake, and maybe a few will be listening.

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I want to address a large part of my remarks to those students, and I assure them that what I have to say will not be complicated. I am not going to talk in terms of complex and abstract ideas. I am going to talk about the simple arithmetic of Federal aid to education, no higher mathematics, no logarithms, no differential equations and calculus, nothing complicated, just simple arithmetic.

I want the students of America out there attending school to join me in trying to educate my colleagues here in the House of Representatives and in the whole Washington decision-making arena. There is something wrong with decision-making in Washington at this point about education, something radically wrong.

I think we need the children, the students, younger minds, to come to the aid of the decision-making circles here. We have some decision-making circles with closed minds. We are hemmed in and smothered by some conventional thinking and we need a breakthrough, and I am going to call on the children of America to help us make this breakthrough.

There is some simple arithmetic we should start with. The arithmetic begins with an allocation of priorities here in terms of time and attention and money based on the priorities that are established by the American people. In other words, we live and die by opinion polls here in Washington. Public opinion polls are very important to the Republicans, they are important to the Democrats, they are important to the White House. Everybody is concerned about what the public thinks and we spend a lot of time and energy discussing public opinion polls.

There are a large amount of resources committed to finding out what is it that the public thinks. The impact of public opinion polls, of course, can be tremendous on public policy. We saw the impact of public opinion on the impeachment proceedings which the Republican Party insisted on going ahead with despite the fact that common sense, as reflected by public opinion, the common sense of the American people dictated that it was a wasteful venture, kind of a silly venture and that is what it turned out to be. So public opinion can sometimes be ignored by powerful forces here that refuse to listen.

Right now we have a war in Kosovo which public opinion, I think, will play a great role in determining what else we do, where do we go in terms of United States policy.

For good or ill, sometimes public opinion is not so desirable in terms of the results that I think we need. I did