

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION URGING THE CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR THE PELL GRANT AND EXISTING CAMPUS-BASED AID PROGRAMS PRIOR TO FUNDING ANY NEW EDUCATION INITIATIVES

HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 1999

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a House Concurrent Resolution that calls on the Congress and the President to work together to increase funding for the Pell Grant Program and existing campus-based student aid programs before funding new education initiatives.

This resolution establishes two priorities for higher education funding. The first priority is increasing the maximum Pell Grant awarded to students from low-income families to \$3,525. This amount represents an increase of \$400 to the maximum grant award and would be the largest increase since the inception of the program in 1972.

The second priority involves increased funding for the existing campus-based student aid programs. These programs provide financial aid administrators at colleges across the country with considerable flexibility in the packaging of financial aid awards that best meet the needs of their students.

The Pell Grant Program is one of the largest voucher programs in the country and it is considered the foundation program for all Federal student aid. Students eligible for a Pell Grant can use that money to attend one of more than 6,000 postsecondary institutions in the country.

The Pell Grant Program was created in 1972 and the goal of the program was simple. Congress wanted to assist students from low-income families who would not otherwise be financially able to attend a postsecondary institution. In the first year of the program, 176,000 students received Pell Grant awards. For the upcoming academic year, almost 4 million students are expected to receive Pell Grant awards. Of these students, 90% have family incomes under \$30,000 and 54% of those families have incomes under \$10,000. I believe we can all agree that the Pell Grant Program continues to serve the vital purpose for which it was originally created.

Why increase the Pell Grant maximum by \$400 dollars? In real dollars, the appropriated maximum individual grant, adjusted for inflation, has decreased 4.7% between 1980 and 1998. At a time when yearly increases in college costs have greatly exceeded the rate of inflation, as well as family earnings, the Pell Grant has covered less and less of a student's cost of attendance. Although all students and

their families suffer as a result of exorbitant increases in the cost of attending college, students from low-income families suffer the most adverse consequences.

Today, will billions of dollars available in student aid from the Federal government, State governments and institutions of higher education, children from high-income families continue to enroll in college at almost twice the rate of children from low-income families. For many of these families, the cost of college is the overwhelming factor in their decision to forego a college education.

In 1997, we helped the President enact tax credits related to postsecondary education for middle and upper income families. At the same time, we voiced strong concerns about the need to continue making substantial commitments to the Pell Grant Program in order to assist those students from low-income families who would not receive any benefits from the new tax credits. Unfortunately, the President's request to increase the maximum Pell Grant by \$125 dollars is not the substantial commitment I had in mind.

In addition to the Pell Grant Program, this resolution supports increased funding for the campus-based student aid programs. While Pell Grants open the door to postsecondary education for many students from low-income families, it's the campus-based programs that provide these same students some degree of choice in selecting a postsecondary institution. After years of double-digit increases in the cost of a college education, the maximum Pell Grant no longer covers the cost of attendance at most public 4-year institutions in the country. However, a Pell Grant coupled with awards from the campus-based programs goes a long way in reducing the amount a student needs to borrow in student loans in order to pay the bills for tuition and room and board.

The campus-based student aid programs also require institutions to provide matching funds in order to receive funds from the Federal Government. The \$1.5 billion dollars devoted to the campus-based programs last year leveraged almost \$400 million dollars in additional aid to college students across the country. These are fundamentally sound programs that have served our nation's college students well for the past three decades and we should consider them a higher education funding priority.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and the higher education funding priorities it establishes for the Congress and the President.

TRIBUTE TO MARTHA JEAN "JILL" WIELAND

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 1999

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to congratulate a constituent of mine, Martha Jean "Jill" Wieland, for being named the "1999 Illinois Mother of the Year."

Often today our Nation measures success by the level of the Dow Jones Industrial Average or the value of the dollar. While these are certainly significant, nothing is more important to the success and future of our Nation than our children.

As a father of two young boys, I am aware of the many responsibilities and challenges that face parents today. Jill Wieland went above and beyond those expectations by acting as an excellent mother to her own children while also providing leadership for other children through Sunday School and Girl Scouts. Furthermore, since 1962, Jill has been a foster parent for the Children's Home and Aid Society of Illinois where she has cared for over 100 children.

Again, I would like to congratulate Jill on being named "1999 Illinois Mother of the Year." She has not only had a positive impact in the lives of many children, but has also made a significant contribution to society.

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF ROBERT J. PIZZUTI

HON. BILL PASCHELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 20, 1999

Mr. PASCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Chief Robert J. Pizzuti of Montclair, New Jersey, an outstanding individual who has dedicated his life to public service. He will be honored this Friday, April 9, 1999, by parents, family, friends, and professionals for his 43 years of outstanding contribution to the community through his outstanding leadership of the Montclair Fire Department. Chief Robert Pizzuti personifies public service through his true commitment to fire-fighting and the people of Montclair, New Jersey.

Robert J. Pizzuti was born on Willow Street in Montclair, New Jersey on the first day of January, nineteen hundred thirty five. He attended Immaculate Conception School in Montclair from first grade until eighth, where he then attended Montclair High School, where he graduated in 1952. After graduating from high school Chief Pizzuti fought in the Golden Gloves as a Welter Weight, weighing in at 147 pounds, where he was very successful winning a numerous amount of awards. In

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