

the public and has accountability for the quality of the decision.

The current education reform movement has compelled states' Boards of Education to revamp and improve teacher licensure programs. This right should be left to the states to best determine how they license state teachers.

Congress should oppose any movement toward federalizing educator licensure, teacher appraisal, and employment contracts.

The undersigned representatives of the Coalition of Independent Education Associations strongly urge our members of the Congress and the Senate to vigorously defend the rights of states to control their educational destiny.

Arizona Professional Educators, Association of American Educators, Association of Professional Educators of Louisiana, Association of Professional Oklahoma Educators, Association of Texas Professional Educators, Kentucky Association of Professional Educators, Keystone Teachers Association, West Virginia Professional Educators, Mississippi Professional Educators, National Association of Professional Educators, Palmetto State Teachers Association, Professional Educators Network of Florida, Professional Educators of Iowa, Professional Educators of North Carolina, Professional Educators of Tennessee.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent on Tuesday, May 4, 1999, and early today, Wednesday, May 5, 1999, and as a result, missed rollcall votes 105 through 109. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote 105, "yes" on rollcall vote 106, "yes" on rollcall vote 107, "present" on rollcall vote 108, and "no" on rollcall vote 109.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE IN SUPPORT OF AMERICA'S TEACHERS

SPEECH OF

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 4, 1999

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, as the co-chair of the House Education Caucus and as a parent, I rise today to honor the outstanding work our teachers do every day. Their dedication and expertise form the cornerstone of our nation's education system. They are there for our children, often under trying circumstances and with less than adequate resources and support. They perform daily miracles in their classrooms.

Few other professionals touch as many in as many different ways as teachers do. Teaching children math, English, science and history is only the beginning of what teachers do. They are listeners, advocates, support people, role models, mentors and motivators.

They encourage children to reach farther than they ever thought possible and they are there to catch their students if they should slip.

Teachers often put countless extra hours outside of the classroom preparing lessons, reading and correcting papers, and working with students who need just a little extra help. They do this because they love their job, care about their students and are committed to ensuring that our children have the best chance at success.

I believe that we can go a long way in improving our country's education system by exhibiting respect for our teachers and by letting them know how much we value their contributions. I urge my colleagues to recognize teachers for the significant role they play in our lives and in the well-being of our nation. As a Member of this House, as the co-chair of the Education Caucus and as a parent of two high school daughters, I thank the thousands of teachers who have dedicated themselves to educating and believing in our children.

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE FOURTH ANNUAL BLUE MASS

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in order to recognize the celebration of the Fourth Annual Blue Mass in Worcester County. The Diocese of Worcester will host this event on Sunday, May 2, 1999, in tribute to all law enforcement personnel who honorably serve our local communities.

A special memorial service will be held prior to the Mass to honor those who have died since last year's Blue Mass. Those being remembered are Lieutenant Joseph R. Ripel of the Massachusetts State Police, Sergeant John J. Lesczynski of Worcester Police Department, and Patrolman Mark McEachern of the Boylston Police Department. They served with pride and are true role models for our youth.

Four new awards are being instituted this year in dedication to law enforcement.

The Distinguished Law Enforcement Award will be presented jointly to Sergeant Vincent Gorgoglione, Supervisor of the Worcester Police Department Domestic Violence Unit and Christine Kelly, Program Coordinator for the Worcester Intervention Network.

The Award for Excellence in Law Enforcement Education will be bestowed upon former Attorney General Robert Quinn in recognition of the establishment of the Quinn Law.

The Outstanding Community Service Award is being presented to the entire Holden Police Department. The Holden police officers have committed themselves to serving the students of Holden, MA. Through such programs as the Adopt-A-School Officer for every grade school, Thursday night basketball, and public safety days, these officers have made outstanding contributions to their town, paying special attention to the needs of the student population.

Finally, the Interfaith Award is being awarded to Lieutenant Paul Bozicas of the Fitchburg Police Department, who is active in a variety

of civic and charitable activities, including the Charity Five Road Race, Citizen's Police Academy, and the Department's Employee Assistance Unit.

Mr. Speaker, it is with pride that I rise today to acknowledge the Fourth Annual Blue Mass and the law officials being honored. It is a befitting celebration to remember and acknowledge those who do so much.

DEMOCRACY AS A UNIVERSAL VALUE

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I wish to call to the attention of my colleagues a piece by Stephen Rosenfeld from the Washington Post of March 12, 1999. It highlights the eloquent words spoken by India's Nobel laureate economist Amartya Sen at the "World Movement for Democracy" conference recently held in New Delhi, India.

I attended the conference and served on an opening panel with my colleagues Representative GARY ACKERMAN, Representative JIM MCDERMOTT, and Representative LLOYD DOGGETT. The international event was cosponsored by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), as well as two Indian partner organizations. I was impressed by the extraordinary commitment of the participants, representing over 80 countries from all parts of the world, to the shared values of freedom, rule of law, and human rights. The conference adopted a founding document establishing a "Worldwide Movement for Democracy," the purpose of which is to develop new forms of cooperation to promote and strengthen democracy.

NED deserves commendation for organizing this conference. NED grants have supported nongovernmental, pro-democratic programs in dozens of countries around the world. The "World Movement for Democracy" is yet another example of NED's outstanding work to advance the cause of democracy worldwide.

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 12, 1999]

THE ECONOMIC USES OF DEMOCRACY

(By Stephen S. Rosenfeld)

The political blessings of democracy are manifest, but that leaves many poor countries still worrying whether democracy is a burden or a benefit to their economic development. This nagging question was tackled in New Delhi last month by a leading student of the affairs of the poor, India's Nobel economist Amartya Sen. There for the founding of a "World Movement for Democracy" by the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy, he took up the congenial theme of "democracy as a universal value."

Sen acknowledged the high growth delivered in Singapore by the authoritarian approach identified with former president Lee Kuan Yew. But a view of "all the comparative studies together," he said, suggests there may be no relation between economic growth and democracy in either direction. Still, none of the policies proven helpful to development—openness to competition, use

of international markets and so on—is inconsistent with greater democracy. “Overwhelming evidence” indicates that what generates growth is a friendlier economic climate, not a harsher political system.

Democracy has further economic uses. Sen noted “the remarkable fact” that in the terrible history of famines in the world, no substantial famine has ever occurred in any independent and democratic country with a relatively free press. Immense famines have afflicted countries with dictatorial or alien regimes. Dictorial: the Soviet Union in the 1930s, China in 1958–61 (30 million dead) and the two current cases of North Korea and Sudan. Alien: British-ruled Ireland and India.

Meanwhile, even the poorest democratic countries have avoided threatened famine. The difference is that the democratic places have a responsive government able to intervene to alleviate hunger. India had famines under British rule right up to independence. With the establishment of a multiparty democracy and a free press, they disappeared. What Sen calls the “protective power of democracy” has spared many countries a “penalty of undemocratic governance.”

The pattern extends to Asia’s current travails. Sen believes that financial crisis in South Korea, Thailand and Indonesia is closely linked to a lack of transparency, to the lack of public participation in reviewing financial arrangements. And once the crisis degenerated into recession, “the protective power of democracy” was simply not available to ensure spreading the burden of a cruel economic contraction.

Such a protective power, Sen argues, is of particular importance for the poor, for potential famine victims, for the destitute thrown off the economic ladder in a financial earthquake: “People in economic need also need a political voice.” With evident pride he notes that in the mid-1970s, the Indian electorate—“one of the poorest of the world”—affirmed its democratic disposition by voting out a government that had proclaimed emergency rule and abridged the people’s rights.

As for cultural differences, a common claim is that Asians traditionally value discipline over political freedom. Sen finds that hard to accept. He is in a position, as few of us are, to range over the texts of diverse Asian cultures and to contend with assorted practitioners and scholars in the field.

His conclusion: “The monolithic interpretation of Asian values as hostile to democracy and political rights does not bear critical scrutiny.” Such an interpretation comes from politicians, not scholars: “to dismiss the plausibility of democracy as a universal value on the ground of the presence of some Asian writings on discipline and order would be similar to rejecting the plausibility of democracy . . . on the basis of the writings of Aquinas or Plato.”

The many merits of democracy, Sen concludes, “are not regional in character. Nor is the advocacy of discipline or order in contrast with freedom and democracy. Heterogeneity of values seems to characterize most, perhaps all, major cultures. The cultural argument does not foreclose, nor indeed deeply constrain, the choices we can make today.”

It was a felicitous stroke for the National Endowment for Democracy to recruit Amartya Sen as the herald of its attempt to put achieved and aspiring democrats in closer touch with one another. The Internet makes the mechanics of it easy. The wisdom of the man illuminates the core idea: Democracy is universal.

IMPROVING MEDICARE QUALITY THROUGH PURCHASING: THE OHIO EXPERIENCE

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, three weeks ago, I introduced H.R. 1392, the “Centers of Excellence” bill. H.R. 1392 would allow Medicare to provide incentives for beneficiaries to use certain high-volume, high-quality facilities. This initiative would both save lives, and save money for Medicare.

It is a widely acknowledged fact that facilities that perform large numbers of complex procedures have lower mortality rates and fewer adverse outcomes. These facilities, known as “Centers of Excellence,” have become an important private sector tool for quality improvement and cost containment.

An April 22 article in the Wall Street Journal highlighted an Ohio HMO with a Centers of Excellence program for heart procedures. After automatically removing facilities that performed fewer than 250 heart procedures per year from their list of preferred providers, the HMO conducted an extensive quality survey to determine the rating of the remaining facilities. This resulted in several more facilities being removed from the list, including some very reputable hospitals in the area. The Ohio experience showed that facilities with the best reputations for excellence did not necessarily have the best outcomes.

Being removed from the Ohio HMO’s preferred provider list was a strong competitive incentive for lower-quality facilities to improve their procedures. For one facility, the rate of heart attack following bypass surgery dropped from 2.8 percent in 1993 to 0.9 percent in 1997. A national “Centers of Excellence” program would likely have the same result, spurring facilities with a lower quality rating to improve their services and raising quality standards overall.

Not only will H.R. 1392 improve quality, it will also lower costs for Medicare. Fewer complications after surgery mean less follow up care and fewer medical expenses. Targeting patient volume to certain facilities can also result in discounted prices.

Although “Centers of Excellence” passed the House in 1997, political motivations have kept it from becoming law. quality health care should not be a pawn in the political chess game. We have a second chance to implement this important change for Medicare. I strongly urge my colleagues’ support for H.R. 1392.

CAN PARENTS UTTER HARDEST WORD OF ALL?

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, the recent shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, CO, have shocked the entire Nation.

As a legislator and as a parent of three young children, I am concerned about the overall environment in which today’s kids are being raised. Today’s fast-paced world of the Internet, video games, and increasingly violent pop culture bears little resemblance to the America in which so many parents from my generation were raised. The increase of the incidences and ferocity of school violence are a cause for deep concern—and a call to action.

During the coming weeks and months, here in the Halls of Congress—and in school board meeting rooms, city council chambers, and in state legislatures around the country—our Nation will discuss what we can do to prevent another tragedy like Littleton. Some of the ideas we will discuss will be helpful and should be adopted. Other proposals will make us feel as though we’re doing something, but will do nothing to prevent the root causes of school violence.

Throughout this national dialog, I hope we do not overlook the one obvious and essential ingredient to preventing these senseless acts of violence. There is nothing more powerful than an active, concerned, and caring parent. I’ve seen it personally in my work on the problem of reducing teenage substance abuse and have read it in countless studies on reshaping adolescent behavior.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter a thoughtful and insightful piece by author and columnist Laura Pulfer from yesterday’s Cincinnati Enquirer into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD which addresses the urgent need for new parenting.

[From the Cincinnati Enquirer, May 4, 1999]

CAN PARENTS UTTER HARDEST WORD OF ALL?

(By Laura Pulfer)

Some hard things must be said if we are to be honest about this thing that happened in Littleton. If we are to learn anything, if we are to let it be important.

The first thing is that the young men who killed the children at the high school do not belong among the victims’ names—even if the in-crowd made their lives a living hell. At the memorial site near Columbine High School, an Illinois carpenter erected a set of 8-foot-high wooden crosses, 15 of them, including two memorializing the killers.

FEELING GUILTY?

An angry father of one of the victims took down the crosses for Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris, saying it wasn’t appropriate to honor the shooters in the same spot. Well, of course not. What the killers did at this high school is monstrous. We might forgive them, surely we will not award them martyrdom.

And however, nervous—however guilty—we suburban people of means are prepared to be about our skills as parents, about our two-paycheck homes, we can say so aloud. Monstrous. The murderers took guns of incredible destruction—weapons built to perform exactly as they did—and moved from classmate to classmate, blowing them away, surely with bits of bone and brain and blood clinging to their celebrated black trench coats.

This is something evil. And we need to say so. This is not the time to be our famously flexible selves with our flexible time, flexible mortgages, flexible morals.

Right and wrong. Good and bad. Yes and no.

We can say these words, especially to our children. In fact, it is our duty. There is a