

be headed toward school violence or other tragedies can be helped if we identify their early symptoms. Just today, David Satcher, Assistant Secretary for Health and Surgeon General, released a National Action Agenda for Children's Mental Health, in which it was found that the Nation is facing a public crisis in mental health for children and adolescents. According to the report, while 1 in 10 children and adolescents suffer from mental illness severe enough to cause some level of impairment, fewer than 1 in 5 of these children received needed treatment. Dr. Satcher urged that "we must educate all persons who are involved in the care of children on how to identify early indicators for potential mental health problems." In fact, a tragedy of contemporary youth is the significant rise we have seen in suicide rates.

According to Dr. Satcher, "the burden of suffering by children with mental health needs and their families has created a health crisis in this country. Growing numbers of children are suffering needlessly because their emotional, behavioral, and developmental needs are not being met by the very institutions and systems that were created to take care of them." This bill provides an important step in ensuring that children with mental health needs are identified early and provided with the services they so desperately need to help them succeed in school and become healthy and contributing members of society.

This bill provides resources for after-school programs, to ensure that youth have access to positive activities that promote their development. I was a member of the Bipartisan Working Group on Youth Violence in the 106th Congress. The findings of this group, and numerous studies, have indicated that charitable and community initiatives should promote access to after-school programs during the peak hours for youth crime of 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. Too often, children return after school to an empty home or to the streets. An estimated 5 to 7 million "latchkey" children go home alone after school. Children who are unsupervised during the after-school hours are more likely to engage in delinquent and other high-risk behaviors, such as alcohol and drug use. After school programs can provide safe, drug-free, supervised and cost-effective havens for children. Quality after-school programs can provide adult supervision of children during after-school hours, and they can provide children with healthy alternatives to and insulation from risk-taking and delinquent behavior. Students should be encouraged to participate in extra-curricular school activities. Studies have shown that a student in one after school activity is almost 50 times less likely to commit crime.

One important aspect of the bill is the collaboration of public and private local organizations. I am pleased that faith based organizations have been included in the bill as collaborators in youth development activities. These organizations have proven effective in addressing the needs of youth and it is important that we have the benefit of their expertise when creating youth development programs.

Finally, let me say that there is no "one size fits all" way to helping our children become productive members of our society. We must allow for an array of programs to address the

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variety of youth in a variety of communities. This bill provides the flexibility necessary to allow each community to tailor their youth development efforts to their specific needs.

Investing wisely in children and youth by engaging them in positive activities is more effective and much less costly than waiting until young lives have taken a bad turn. The Younger American's Act is a common sense approach to what should be a high national priority. Young people are 23 percent of our population, but 100 percent of our future. This bill will help them achieve their full potential and their rightful place as valued—and valuable—members of their communities.

Let's make sure that "we leave no child behind." General Powell has promised to use his new role as Secretary of State to spread the America's Promise message on the value of youth around the world. Let's be certain that his message is heard and taken to heart in the U.S. Congress.

MOVE SWIFTLY ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, as the 107th Congress convenes today to begin work on the nation's business, one of our first priorities must be reform of our campaign finance laws. In each of the past two Congresses, the House passed comprehensive legislation in this area by substantial bipartisan majorities. In this Congress, we can and must move swiftly to pass campaign finance legislation and assure that comprehensive reforms become the law of the land.

Later this month, I will be joining with many of my colleagues in cosponsoring bipartisan legislation offered by Mr. SHAYS of Connecticut and Mr. MEEHAN of Massachusetts. The Shays-Meehan bill is genuine, meaningful reform to prohibit the use of so-called "soft" money that pollutes our campaign system with unregulated, unlimited and unconscionable sums of money from special interests. Both major parties have become addicted to this flood of money. By adopting the Shays-Meehan bill, we all can just say "No" to soft money.

Another bill that I am cosponsoring is more limited, but no less important. This is the "Stand by Your Ad" bill offered by our colleague DAVID PRICE of North Carolina to require that advertisements put out by campaigns carry a clear and prominent statement identifying which candidate is responsible for the ad. This simple step toward accountability could do wonders for improving the tone of our campaigns. I commend Mr. PRICE for his work on this bill and I am proud to join him.

January 3, 2001

INTRODUCTION OF THE NOTCH BABY ACT OF 2001

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Notch Baby Act of 2001, which would create a new alternative transition computation formula for Social Security benefits for those seniors born between 1917 and 1926. These seniors, who are generally referred to as "Notch Babies," have been receiving lower monthly Social Security benefits than seniors born the years just prior to or after this ten year period.

There are those who dispute the existence of a Notch problem. However, take into consideration the following example presented in a 1994 report by the Commission on Social Security Notch issue. There are two workers who retired at the same age with the same average career earnings. One was born on December 31, 1916 and the other was born on January 2, 1917. Both retired in 1982 at the age of 65. The retiree born 1917 received \$110 a month less in Social Security benefits than did the retiree born just two weeks before in 1916. Also take into consideration that there are currently more than 6 million seniors in our Nation who are faced with this painfully obvious inequity in the Social Security benefit computation formula.

By phasing in an improved benefit formula over five years, the Notch Baby Act of 2001 will restore fairness and equity in the Social Security benefit computation formula for the Notch Babies. For once and for all this legislation would put to rest the Notch issue, and it would put an end to the constant barrage of mailings and fundraising attempts, which target our Nation's seniors in the name of Notch reform. Our seniors deserve fairness and equality in the Social Security system. They deserve an end to the repeated Congressional stalling on this issue. I urge my colleagues in the House to discuss this issue with the seniors in their districts, and to join me in ensuring that the Notch issue is addressed in the 107th Congress.

RE-INTRODUCTION OF THE SMALL COMMUNITIES ASSISTANCE ACT

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, my colleague Representative SHERWOOD BOEHLERT and I are proud to reintroduce the Small Communities Assistance Act.

For years, small towns and villages have labored to satisfy environmental regulations tailored to the needs and resources of major cities. This bipartisan legislation would direct the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide more help for small communities in meeting their environmental obligations.

Larger urban areas can have an entire environmental services department that employs