EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

September 10, 2001

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY
OF OHIO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, September 10, 2001

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from the House floor during Thursday's roll call vote on H.R. 2833. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of this bill to promote freedom and democracy in Vietnam.

BROWN VERSUS BOARD OF EDUCATION

HON. J.C. WATTS, JR.
OF OKLAHOMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, September 10, 2001

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, the United States Constitution guarantees liberty and equal opportunity to the people of the United States. Historically, however, these fundamental rights have not always been provided.

In the early beginnings of U.S. history, education was withheld from people of African descent. In some states it was against the law for African Americans to learn to read and write. Later, throughout America's history, the educational system mandated separate schools for children based solely on race. In many instances, the schools for African American children were substandard facilities with out-of-date textbooks and insufficient supplies.

However, on May 17, 1954, in the landmark case aimed at ending segregation in public schools—Brown versus the Board of Education—the United States Supreme Court issued a unanimous decision that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." and as such, violate the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which guarantees all citizens, "equal protection of the laws." The Brown decision effectively denied the legal basis for segregation in states with segregated classrooms and initiated educational reform throughout the United States. This decision brought all Americans one step closer to attaining equal opportunities in education.

In remembrance of the Brown decision, we must remain steadfast in our efforts to make sure that all children receive the very best education imaginable. Therefore, I urge all of my colleagues to join with me today in supporting the establishment of a commission to encourage and provide for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Brown versus Board of Education Supreme Court decision.

PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES AMENDMENTS OF 2001

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN
OF MARYLAND
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, September 10, 2001

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I am joining my colleague, Representative WALLY HERGER, the Chairman of Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources, in introducing legislation today to reauthorize and fund the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. This legislation would raise the funding level for this important child welfare program from $305 million to $505 million per year. In addition, the measure would provide new educational assistance for children who have aged out of foster care, and establish a new mentoring program for the children of prisoners. I commend Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson for providing us with detailed legislative language on the President's proposals in this area, although, I was disappointed to see that the Administration's recent mid-session review of its budget proposal backtrack on the President's prior commitment to fully implementing these much-needed policies.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates the bill would have outlays of $38 million in FY 2002, meaning that it would not dip into the Social Security Trust Funds (CBO projects a $2 billion non-Social Security budget surplus in FY 2002). However, we do need to carefully evaluate the impact of this new legislation on Social Security funds in future years. We must maintain a responsible budget framework that does not use Social Security funding to finance spending or tax policies. I am prepared to make sufficient budgetary changes to ensure this new legislation meets that test.

As a Nation, we rightfully provide temporary foster homes to children when they are victims of abuse and neglect. However, we do not currently do enough to prevent abuse from occurring in the first place, or to avert it from reoccurring once a problem is identified. This is exactly the purpose of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program, which serves families in, or at-risk of becoming involved in, the child welfare system. States have broad discretion in spending funds from this program for services designed to support at-risk families or to reunify families in an environment safe for children, and to promote adoption when children cannot safely return home. More specifically, States can provide counseling, parenting skills classes, respite services, mental health care, comprehensive caseworker oversight, referral services to other programs, post-adoption assistance and substance abuse treatment. On this last issue, I believe we should establish a separate program with