These policy disagreements—at the core of many resignations—have included the Department's decisions to approve redistricting plans in Mississippi and Texas, as well as the controversial decision to approve a new Georgia statute that would require voters to present government-issued photo identification cards at the polls.

In October, Judge Harold Murphy of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia granted an injunction last month to lawyers for Common Cause of Georgia, the ACLU, the NAACP and other groups who have challenged the Georgia photo identification statute under the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Judge Murphy ruled that the petitioners have shown a substantial likelihood that they will ultimately prevail in establishing that it ''unduly burdens the right to vote'' and ''constitutes a poll tax.'' Recently, a three-judge appellate panel, made up of one Democratic and two Republican appointees, confirmed this reasoning by upholding the lower court's injunction.

Why, we must ask, does the policy leadership of our Department of Justice not agree?

Consider, also, this revealing fact. The Department of Justice's own statistics confirm that prosecutions for the racial and gender discrimination crimes traditionally handled by the Civil Rights Division have declined by 40 percent over the past 5 years.

The Department has vigorously disputed both the significance of the policy disagreements within its Civil Rights Division and the exodus of so many career attorneys.

However, the facts indicate that Attorney General Gonzales faces some very real obstacles to his promise about renewed civil rights priority.

Mr. Speaker, we know from history that the legitimacy of any government rests upon the fairness of its laws and willingness to vigorously uphold the rule of law.

We cannot overlook patterns of systematic neglect within the agency entrusted to enforce our laws.

These failures threaten our most fundamental legal guarantees.

That is why we must not be hesitant to seek the answers to the hard questions, the questions that the people we represent are asking.

Why have civil rights cases declined so precipitously in recent years?

Why have career attorneys in the Civil Rights Division been reassigned to other duties?

Why are so many career lawyers leaving the Department of Justice?

What must Congress do to better support America's chief law enforcement officer in fulfilling his commitment to make enforcement of our civil rights laws a priority?

Mr. Speaker, let the discord within the Department of Justice serve as a bellwether to all Americans who believe in the principles of civil rights.

A renewed vigor and more certain direction are desperately needed in the enforcement of civil rights.

We must remain vigilant. We must move forward with a sense of urgency.

If America is to serve as the beacon of democracy for the rest of the world, it is the imperative that we enforce justice, equality and the rule of law within our own country.

HONORING PROFESSOR LAWRENCE F. ROBERGE

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Professor Lawrence F. Roberge for being awarded the 2005 U.S. Professor of the Year for the State of Connecticut by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, CASE.

Professor Roberge earned this award for his work as the associate professor and chair of the Science Department at Goodwin College located in East Hartford, CT in my district. As a dedicated educator for nearly 20 years, Professor Roberge has taught a variety of college science and technology courses. Professor Roberge's expertise and skills aided him in also designing and teaching online educational courses.

During his tenure as chair of the Science Department at Goodwin College, Professor Roberge developed multi-media and computer-based teaching tools to aid in the development and training of the Science Department teaching staff. In addition, Professor Roberge was responsible for designing the science curriculum and labs for the nursing program. Professor Roberge was an inspiration in the classroom while he taught courses in chemistry, anatomy and physiology, and microbiology.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching award four university and college professors as national winners and also recognize a State Professor of the Year in 40 States, the District of Columbia and Guam. These professors are recognized for their outstanding commitment to teaching undergraduate students and their influence on fellow colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in congratulating Professor Lawrence F. Roberge for receiving this prestigious award. As a former educator, I am honored to recognize Professor Roberge for his exceptional commitment and service to teaching undergraduate students in the State of Connecticut.

DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2005

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose the Republican budget bill.

Unfortunately, this bill is just another example of the disdain that this administration and this Congress has shown for the most vulnerable in our society. While the wealthy are lavished with tax cuts, critical social services are being reduced.

Under the guise of offsetting the costs of Katrina and deficit reduction, House Republicans are severely cutting important programs that millions of Americans rely on for education, health care, and poverty alleviation. The $50 billion in Republican cuts will have a devastating impact on families across America and in my home State of Massachusetts.

At the same time, Republicans are pushing a $70 billion tax package that will overwhelmingly benefit the most wealthy Americans and actually increases the deficit by $16 billion.

Now, I support the idea of shared sacrifice but the only sacrifice in this bill is by those that need our government's support the most: $14.3 billion, cut from student loans; $11.4 billion, cut from Medicaid; $4.9 billion, cut from child support; $844 million, cut from food stamps.

Republicans will cut student loan funding by $14.3 billion. This represents the largest single cut in the history of the student aid program at a time when the cost of tuition has risen 28 percent at public colleges and 17 percent at private colleges in the last five years.

In my home State of Massachusetts there are 172,640 student loan borrowers. Under the Republican plan, the average student borrower in Massachusetts, with $17,500 in loans will be forced to pay an additional $5,800.

The Republican budget bill cuts of $11.4 billion from Medicaid. This $11.4 billion cut includes $6.5 billion in cuts that are borne directly by Medicaid enrollees—who include low-income children and seniors, as well as individuals with disabilities.

Massachusetts ranks 12th in the country for Medicaid enrollment with over 1.2 million enrollees. The cuts would harm millions of low-income people across the U.S. and thousands in Massachusetts who rely on Medicaid for health coverage.

Child support enforcement will be cut by $4.9 billion. The Congressional Budget Office, CBO, estimates that this will result in reducing child support collections by $24.1 billion over the next 10 years.

Experts agree that child support is a cost effective way of reducing poverty. In 2002, 1 million Americans were lifted out of poverty through child support payments. For every $1 spent on child support enforcement programs, $4.38 in child support is collected.

Massachusetts would lose $88 million in Federal support over 5 years, rising to $282 million over 10 years. The estimated loss in child support collections would be $140 million over 5 years, rising to $428 million over 10 years.

Nearly 250,000 Massachusetts children currently receive child support enforcement services. This will have a devastating effect on the Commonwealth's children who live in single-parent families.

Finally, this bill as originally drafted would cut food stamps by $844 million and will result in over 200,000 people losing assistance.

Where are our priorities when we put tax cuts for the wealthy above the elderly, low income families, students, and children?

Vote ''no'' on the Republican budget bill.

GJERGJ KASTRIOTI ''SKENDERBEG''

HON. DANA ROHRABACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I wish to place in today's CONGRESSIONAL RECORD