What is exciting about our bill is that for the first time we begin spending money on welfare in a way that reinforces family and work and personal responsibility, and that will make a difference for the people caught up in the system.

We take a step for the first time toward ending cash benefits at least for teen moms. We are going to give that money to the States and localities so they can take care of those moms in a way that reinforces family and work instead of destroying it.

And not only are we going to stop punishing people for working, which is what the current system does, we are going to start requiring work so that by the end of the decade about 50 percent of the people on the welfare caseload, and that is an honest number, will have to work in order to get their welfare benefits.

I am going to close, Mr. Speaker, with an observation that my friend Mr. WATTS, our distinguished colleague from Oklahoma, often makes. Under the current system we have always measured the success of welfare by how many people we could get on food stamps and AFDC and medicaid and the 70-odd other Federal welfare programs. We measured success by how many people we could get on welfare; by how much money we could spend on welfare. We need to stop doing that because welfare is not a life of dignity and hope for anybody.

We need to start measuring success, and we are going to start measuring success, by how many people we get off of welfare, off the AFDC, off of food stamps, off of medicaid, and into a life of dignity and hope and self-sufficiency which is the American dream. That is what we are offering to people.

Mr. Speaker, that is what we are going to be debating next week.

WE OWE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE REAL WELFARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. BRYANT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BRYANT of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, the 104th Congress has been keeping its promises. From real crime legislation to giving much-needed reform to Federal regulations, we are indeed keeping our promises.

One of our promises to America has been to reform the welfare system. We are going to have the opportunity to change the welfare system within the next few weeks. I would like to share my thoughts with you on where welfare has been and where I would like to see it go.

For over two years, the current administration has promised to end welfare as we know it. For over two years, hard-working taxpayers have been waiting and waiting and waiting. Now, this Congress is going to begin that much-needed reform.

The current welfare system has been a tragic failure. It has encouraged dependency upon government, discouraged responsibility, and cost taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars.

Part of the welfare reform process involves the food stamp reform. That the food stamp delivery system must be reformed, there can be no question. Currently there is an estimated $2 billion of fraud and abuse involved in the food stamp program annually.

The people of the 7th district of Tennessee who I represent are sick and tired of hearing about such widespread misuse of the food stamp program. They are demanding change and they deserve it.

The Food Stamp Program and Commodity Distribution Act will fight this abuse. It contains stricter penalties for food stamp trafficking, tough fines and forfeiture of ill-gotten gains. It is time we crack down harder on those who abuse food stamps and H.R. 1135 will do just that.

I have always believed that the States are better able to operate the food stamp program. After all, the States are on the frontline, much more so than we here in Washington. Pending legislation will give the States the option and the opportunity to take their food stamp funding in the form of a block grant. It is my hope that the States choose this option. It is the most effective and efficient way of reform.

Another important part of this legislation involves work requirements. It is neither right nor fair for those of us who choose to be responsible, taxpaying citizens to pay the way for someone who chooses to make no effort to be productive. So I don't think it is unreasonable to require someone to work for their benefits. H.R. 1135 does that.

Mr. Speaker, we owe the American people real welfare reform. The pending legislation will begin to provide that reform. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1135 as we begin considering it in the near future.

THE EMPLOYEE COMMUTE OPTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. MANZULLO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, the issue I want to speak about tonight involves a mandate imposed by Congress which must be enforced by the EPA. It is a plan that affects many of my constituents in the 16th congressional district of Illinois and many businesses in several cities across the country.

Many governors have called this the most unreasonable, least thought-out, least effective but very, very costly program ever proposed by the U.S. Congress. The plan, employer trip reduction, was mandated under the Clean Air Act amendments of 1990.

Let me explain what this mandate is all about. Section 182(d)(1)(B) of the Clean Air Act requires employers of 100 or more employees in severe and extreme ozone nonattainment areas to increase passenger occupancy per vehicle in commuting trips between home and the workplace during peak travel periods by not less than 25 percent. The idea is to have people find some other mode of transportation to and from work other than using their car.

The misnomer applied to this mandate is the Employee Commute Option. Some option. If the State elects not to implement this mandate, it stands to lose some of its transportation funds. In Illinois that is $700 million. In Pennsylvania, it is $900 million. In some States, fines levied against businesses that do not participate may range into the thousands of dollars.

Areas across the country that face this mandate include Baltimore, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Houston, Milwaukee, Los Angeles, San Diego, Ventura County and Orange County in California. Other affected States include Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, and Indiana.

The EPA, in implementing guidelines for this Employee Commute Option, suggests other options for getting to work including mass transit, jogging, bicycle riding, car pooling, and walking.

Well, in the 16th congressional district of Illinois there is a rural county, McHenry County, which is included in the Chicago consolidated statistical metropolitan area. That means residents in and around McHenry County who work in this rural area without sidewalks or mass transit system must car pool. This is a federally mandated car pooling and it is an outrage.

When the amendments of the Clean Air Act were passed in 1990, I was not a Member of this body, and to the best of my knowledge there was never any formal debate on this issue in the House; never any specific hearings on the issue before it was simply slipped in to the Clean Air Act amendments.

This past Sunday, Illinois Governor Edgar and I took the bold and courageous step of announcing a moratorium on the federally mandated employee commute option. He has directed the Illinois Department of Transportation not to enforce this measure. Why? An assistant administrator for the EPA admitted that air emissions reductions are, quote, ''minuscule,'' and her agency has stated it simply does not intend to enforce the mandate.

This moratorium now puts Illinois in the same situation as Pennsylvania and Texas which have announced that they will not participate in enforcing the mandate. There is only one catch, Mr. Speaker: the employee trip reduction mandate is the law. The EPA may choose to not enforce it. The States may not enforce it. However, there is nothing to keep a Federal judge from enforcing it.

No, the mandate is clear. It is law. It says that businesses with over 100 employees shall participate and decrease

the number of cars going to and from work. This will cost up to $210 million per year to enforce this unfunded mandate and that applies not only to the private business business but to the public sector.

This law is so ridiculous that it says to a high school that has more than 100 teachers and administrators, that those teachers have to car pool. But the students do not have to car pool, so we would have the incredible result of teachers walking to work, having to hitchhike there to be picked up by their students. And students would rather go to school without their teachers so that they will not have to be taught the subject for the first hour. It is crazy. It is insane. But that is how ridiculous this mandate is.

Data from Southern California indicates that forced car pooling costs companies over $100 per employee and $3,000 per vehicle taken off the road. And the EPA itself has estimated the tremendous cost into the billions of dollars annually to address a solution which itself calls minuscule.

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I have introduced H.R. 325 to return the true meaning to the word ''option.'' It makes the employer trip reduction mandate optional to the affected states. H.R. 325 is dedicated solely to correcting this single provision in the Clean Air Act. Nothing else. It does not decrease the quality of the air. This bill simply makes car pooling an option to reach the goal of clean air. This is not an environmental or anti-environmental bill. It simply makes car pooling voluntary in the menu of options available to achieve clean air standards.

This is why this bill has such wide support. It is bipartisan, has more than 152 cosponsors, and I would encourage my colleagues to become cosponsors with us.

SCHOOL NUTRITION AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues on the other side insist upon trying to tell the country that a cut is not a cut. But the problem with their calculations are as we talk to more and more local school districts, they clearly realize that these are cuts. The School districts and school nutrition programs will have less money over the next 5 years to feed children than they have under the current services budget by CBO that will allow them to continue to serve the number of children that they are serving now.

Monroe County schools up near Rochester, NY, they are talking about serving 7,800 fewer children than they would otherwise be able to serve in the coming year. The point is this, that when you look at the cuts in school lunch programs, you see that the Republican proposal is off by some $2.3 billion. They can say this is not a cut, but the fact is it is a cut, because those children who would otherwise be served in this program over the next 5 years, many of them simply are not going to be able to be served.

If they choose to serve every child, they have to decide to cut back on the meal and nutrition component of that meal, and as we know from many of these children, this is where they get a good portion of their nutrition in the entire day. They can decide to raise the price to those who are now paying a reduced price meal. The fact is when we have seen that, a good portion of the reduced price young people are forced to drop out of the program because they simply do not have in their family income sufficient money to increase that price. They can choose to throw all of the paying children out of the program who pay full price for the meal, but as we know, when you do that, you start to lose the economics of the program and programs close down as a result of that.

So what we have here is a mismatch of about $7 billion in nutrition programs over what we should be spending to serve this population as opposed to what the Republicans are offering in the welfare reform bill under the child nutrition components. They say that they are offering $4.5 billion every year, and that is supposed to make everybody here believe that that in fact takes care of the problem. But the problem is that the 4.5 percent they are offering every year is not based upon the total cost of what it costs to deliver school lunches and pay for them under the current program, because it does not include the cost of the commodities, so that is excluded from the 4.5 percent. The cost of education is excluded from the 4.5 percent, and in fact they omit almost 20 percent of the funds currently used to provide nutrition programs for our young people, and that is why the 4.5 percent then, even though they add it every year, falls further and further behind, until by the 5th year, we see there is a gap in the nutrition component of my Republican colleagues of a little over $7 billion. That is roughly in the school lunch component because of 2 million children over the next 5 years that otherwise would be served under the current services budget as opposed to those who will not be served.

Now, the Republicans also want to convince everybody in America that they are not cutting meals, they are only cutting the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy at the Federal level for all nutrition programs is $140 million a year. $140 million a year. If you do it over the 5 years, it is roughly $700 million. They are cutting $7 billion out of the program. So obviously it is not just the bureaucracy.

The cuts go far beyond the bureaucracy at the Federal level. Where do the cuts go? They go right to the school lunches, to the participation in the WIC program, to the school breakfast programs, to the nutrition education programs that are sponsored by this program.

What does that mean? That means a good many of our poor and our near-poor, the working poor in this country who rely on this program for nutrition, simply will no longer be able to do so to the same extent that they are today.

They are not talking about waste, fraud, and abuse. We had those problems many years ago when the private sector thought it was open season on the school lunch program and they could deliver substandard meals and poorly packaged meals and stale meals and charge us. We are not talking about that in the WIC program, when we had the problems of being ripped off by some of the largest food companies in this country that thought they could sell us substandard formula or sell it to us at rates that far exceed the going rate.

Unfortunately, in the Republicans' proposal, they no longer include the competitive bid process, which would save us a billion dollars, and we were using that money to plow back into providing the services for pregnant women and newborn infants. So the bottom line is that a cut is a cut. There is a $7 billion gap between this and whatever.

I ask my colleagues, and Mr. CUNNINGHAM is on the Armed Services Committee, if someone said they were only reducing the growth of the defense budget, I suspect they would call it a cut. That is what they have been calling it over the last several years whenever it is suggested is that a cut take place or a reduction in the growth. But if you are a hungry child, the $7 billion gap that you create means that lunches will not be delivered, and that is the simple fact. The numbers cannot be denied. I assume that is why they are so frantically trying to convince people all is well in the school lunch program. It is not, and it is not well for the children.

FAMILY AND SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOX of Pennylvania. Mr. Speaker, my Republican colleagues and I are here tonight to set the record straight about family and school nutrition programs. We care about women, infants and children, and are committed to compassionate solutions to assist our children.

I believe that the whole debate on this issue was best summarized in an editorial which appeared recently in the Cincinnati Enquirer. The author poses the following question to us: If you had a dollar to spend on lunch, would you rather, A, give it to Uncle