Goodlatte amendment to H.R. 988, the Attorney Accountability Act (rollcall 200)—''No.''

Berman amendment to McHale amendment to H.R. 988 (rollcall 201)—''Aye.''

McHale amendment to H.R. 988 (rollcall 202)—''No.''

Hoke amendment to H.R. 988 (rollcall 203)—''No.''

On final passage of H.R. 531, Great Western Scenic Trail Designation (rollcall 230)—''Aye.''

On final passage of H.R. 694, Minor Boundary Adjustments and Miscellaneous Park Amendments Act (rollcall 231)—''Aye.''

On final passage of H.R. 562, Walnut Canyon National Monument Modification Act (rollcall 232)—''Aye.''

On final passage of H.R. 536, Delaware Water Gap Recreation Area Vehicle Operation Fees (rollcall 233)—''Aye.''

On final passage of H.R. 517, Chacoan Outliers Protection Act (rollcall 234)—''Aye.''

KEEP THE SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 1995

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, today the House approved over $17 billion dollars in rescissions, the largest package that has ever come to the floor which unfairly targets senior citizens, low-income families and our children. Many of my colleagues have risen today to argue against the bill and the arbitrary, across-the-board cuts it makes to some of our most vital programs. I would like to draw our attention specifically to the Labor Department's Summer Youth Program, because under the package, Summer Youth would be totally eliminated. Mr. Speaker, many of us on both sides of the aisle would have fought against the rescission affecting our Nation's youth, but we never had the chance during consideration of amendments. Make no mistake—enactment of H.R. 1158 would mean the elimination of summer jobs for over 500,000 youths and fewer job opportunities in the future as our children enter the job market.

Many mayors and local officials throughout the country have voiced their strong support for maintaining the Summer Youth Program. Mayor William Johnson of Rochester, New York, the heart of my Congressional district, offered an eloquent defense of the Summer Youth Program in a recent testimony before the Economic and Educational Subcommittee on Post-Secondary Education, Training and Life-Long Learning. At this point, I would like to insert Mayor Johnson's statement into the RECORD. I invite my colleagues to read it carefully to see what a wise investment we once made for young Americans across the country.

STATEMENT OF MAYOR WILLIAM A. JOHNSON, JR., MAYOR, CITY OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

Chairman McKeon and other members of the subcommittee, on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Mayors and my counterparts from hundreds of cities across the country, I want to express my sincere appreciation for the opportunity to testify at these subcommittee hearings on youth training programs.

This is a subject that I feel especially competent to address, given my long years of professional involvement in this area. Before being elected Mayor of Rochester, I spent 21 years as the CEO of a large human services organization that provided job training programs to youths and adults.

I understand that the primary purpose of the hearings is to review which programs are most effective and determine whether these programs can and should be consolidated.

If you will permit me, I will address the latter question first. I fully support the consolidation of the various grant programs, to reduce the administrative costs of local governments and to provide them with the flexibility to design local programs based not upon what type of funds are available from Washington but upon what types of needs exist in the community.

As a group, the Conference of Mayors also supports consolidation. Indeed, for the past three years, it has formally adopted a policy statement endorsing it.

However, if consolidation takes the form of block grants to states, to permit the benefits of efficiency and flexibility to be achieved, there must be some mechanism to ensure that the funds are directed towards local governments. There must be a mandate within the legislation for the funds to be passed through the states to municipalities, the actual providers of training services.

Municipalities have convincingly demonstrated their ability to prudently utilize block grants. The success of the Community Development Block Grant program, with its extensive level of citizen participation, and the Job Training Partnership Act program with its committees of business, labor and educational representatives, illustrate the responsiveness of municipalities to community needs.

The future form of the grant programs should not be the foremost concern, though. The continue existence of the these programs should be our primary objective.

In a period in which Americans are confronted with increasing economic competition from other nations, it would seem shortsighted to reduce, through major decreases in job training programs, the ability of American workers to successfully meet this competition. In a period in which Americans are being asked to become less dependent on government, it would seem counterproductive to reduce their ability to become independent.

To be effective an efficient job training must begin at an early age. Youth must be exposed to the opportunities, expectations and realities of the job marketplace.

For most youth, their initial training and experience begins with summer jobs. While, at one time, businesses may have been able to provide an adequate number of such jobs, in more recent times, the private sector has been unable to meet the increasing demand and need.

This is most particularly due to the restructuring and transformation that many businesses have experienced in the past decade. Job opportunities that many private sector employees reserved for youth during after-school and summer periods have been ''downsized'' out of existence.

For example, in Rochester, over the last four years nearly 4,000 youths had to rely upon the summer jobs provided through federally funded programs, as each summer the number of non-federal jobs dramatically declined. This year, an additional 900 youth are—hopefully—expected to participate in such programs.

I say hopefully, because I urge you and the other members of the House to reject the the appropriation recision for the summer youth program that was recently approved by the Appropriations Subcommittee. Nationwide, this recision would result in the elimination of summer job opportunities for 615,000 youth, a move that was totally unexpected.

As Seattle Mayor Norm Rice recently said, ''these cuts are reversals of commitments the federal government has already made to communities across the country. It is difficult enough to adapt to future cuts, and absolutely devastating to absorb retroactive ones.''

The reduction would mean that 615,000 youth will be not be given a chance to contribute constructively to their communities this summer. The reduction would mean that 615,000 youth will be less prepared to successfully enter the job market in the future.

For New York State youth, the proposed reduction in federal funding comes at a particularly inopportune time. Governor George Pataki has proposed a similar reduction in state funding for youth training programs.

The need to maintain government funding for summer jobs is readily recognized by the private sector, which realizes that the need for such jobs continues to exist and that businesses, by themselves, will continue to be unable to adequately address this need. Both the Greater Rochester Metro Chamber of Commerce and the Industrial Management Council, as association of large manufacturing and serve companies, have expressed their serious concern over the proposed elimination of federal funding.

They realistically know that the private sector will be unable to fill the ''job gap'' that would ensue if funding is not maintained. They realistically know that there will be a ''tax switch'' if this gap has to be filled through funding by local governments. In cities across this country, our financial base—largely derived form the property tax—will not support the level of demand that is being pushed down upon us by federal, state and county governments.

It is imperative that the summer youth job program be preserved. At the annual convention of the Conference of Mayors in Portland, Oregon last year, the program received overwhelming support.

The assumption was that funding for the program would be maintained at least at the current level of appropriations. The hope was that funding would be increased.

Because of the obvious need for the program and because of its demonstrated effectiveness, no one expected that there soon would be a proposal to totally eliminate funding for the program. Certainly, I personally did not anticipate the need to testify today before you to oppose such elimination.

All Americans understand the need to reduce the federal budget deficit. They understand the need to limit the burden that we impose upon future generations.

They support your efforts to reduce the deficit, to eliminate waste and inefficiencies and to eradicate fraud. These goals can be achieved in my opinion, without crippling or destroying programs that lead to skills training and self-sufficiency.

However, the concern over the future of our youth must be balanced by a concern over this present needs. Unless we address these needs today, unless we prepare youth for meaningful employment tomorrow in an increasingly demanding marketplace, our youth will have no future at all. And with a poorly trained workforce—and an increasing underclass population—our country will have no future at all.