

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

LEGISLATION AMENDING THE SPOUSAL PROTECTION ACT

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 4, 1996

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to amend the Spousal Protection Act so a former spouse's right to a Federal worker's pension is relinquished if the former spouse remarries before the age of 55.

Current law allows a former spouse to receive a portion of the Federal worker's pension even if the former spouse remarries. On the other hand, a survivor annuity stops permanently if the former spouse remarries before age 55. It cannot be restored, even if the new marriage fails.

A Federal worker whose spouse remarries could have a meager pension to live on. This occurs because the former spouse does not have to relinquish his/her right to the Federal worker's pension even if he/she remarries. The law should not be structured so one individual enjoys his/her golden years at the expense of another.

This legislation will not take money from a former spouse who needs and deserves it; it will provide equity to Federal workers who may find themselves in a desperate financial situation in retirement because they are still paying a portion of their pension to a remarried former spouse. Current law leaves the retired Federal employee—and any new spouse they may have—with their pension diminished to protect someone who no longer requires such protection. In 1986, the Congress recognized the survivor annuity inequity caused by the 1984 Spousal Protection Act and voted to rescind the rights of a former spouse in regards to the survivor annuity in the event that the former spouse remarries before age 55. Nothing has been done to protect the employee's pension in the same circumstances.

There is a precedent for this legislation. Former spouses of Foreign Service employees are not entitled to an annuity under 22 U.S.C. 4054 if before the commencement of that annuity the former spouse remarries before becoming 60 years of age.

In this period of Federal downsizing, this legislation would also affect the number of Federal workers taking early-outs or regular optional retirements. These Federal workers are more likely to continue working to receive their higher salaries and increase their pensions. Because of these workers staying in the Federal workforce, younger workers with lower salaries may find themselves more likely to be RIF'd.

I have a constituent who is a Federal employee approaching retirement age. Although his former spouse has remarried a retired business executive with a generous pension, he will be forced to pay his former spouse a portion of his pension. As a result, this employee and his new spouse will need to extend their careers to make up the difference.

Mr. Speaker, I support the Spousal Protection Act, but we need to rethink what the results are for retirees whose former spouses remarry, and that is what this legislation does.

STATEMENTS REGARDING OVERCROWDING PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 4, 1996

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of my colleagues I would like to have printed in the RECORD this statement by Jackie Frazier, Kate Greanon, Kay Gerson, Drew McNaughton, Kate McQuillen, Jennifer Arner, Lucas D'Amico, and Charley Hart, high school students from Vermont, who were speaking at my recent town meeting on issues facing young people.

For the record, my name is Jackie Frazier, this is Kay Gerson, Kate McQuillen, and Drew McNaughton. Our discussion is actually, "Overcrowding, or Budget [Problems] and Education."

(Alternating speakers): We've been asked to directly discuss problems that arise within our school, and our students participating in school for seven years—being in a high school—and the problem that most prominently arises for us was the overcrowding problem in our school. What all of you may not know, is that we have 5 districts that come to our school, and we also have people that are paying tuition to come here. As most schools are having a problem with budget now, unless they live—earlier, someone was discussing how in . . . a resort town, they have more money to put into a school system. We have 5 towns, and this school was actually built at one time to support around 750 students; at this point in time, we have close to 910 people, which is not that much over, but each year we are increasing. Two years ago, we had a class of about 80 students, my class is about 130, the upcoming class of 7th grade next year will have around 170; I think it's a substantial increase each year.

If you were to look at a town in your report, you'll see that each year we are increasing drastically in the number of students, but we don't have the budget to increase either space or more teachers. Sometimes we have to actually hold classes in this auditorium, over on the side here, and in the small media room upstairs, which is normally held for just movies. Each year as the budget stays the same, and the capacity stays the same, the students go up; and what we'd like to discuss, and we have a movie to show you, is that each year when the amount of students do go up, the actual grade of the school goes down in standard; in the way we survive, in the air we breathe, and in the rooms that populate. Sometimes the student ratio is 30 students to one teacher, when ideally it's 20:1. So, each time that we do this, we want to show you how it looks, in reality.

Can everyone hear me? (narrating as video is shown): Due to the reduced janitorial staff

over the past few years, and increased student population we see an overall depreciation of the physical condition of the school. There is no classroom space available; this American History class uses a corner of the auditorium as a makeshift classroom for one period each day. One of our stairwells . . . This was . . . one of the Junior High classrooms, and . . . you can see, there are many classrooms in the school which have a severe overcrowding problem. A high school classroom, with a ratio of about 30:1.

All right, so that was a video to show visually what's the matter with it. Now, I want to talk about what the funds are directed towards, instead of building maintenance. By 1997, the future budget is planning on increasing itself by \$617,000, and \$409,940 of which is going to Special Ed. programs. I think if Special Ed. is increasing itself by 85%, and while all of this is going on, U-32 High School is going rapidly down. We already mentioned the American History class, and how it's held over there; but there's also a Spanish class upstairs that has 30 students in it, and the rooms about as big as about a third of this stage. We're all cramped together in it—it decreases individualized . . . one-on-one help with a teacher, so they fall behind, and they can't catch up. The ventilation problem in the school, you've probably already noticed; so when one student gets sick, the whole student body gets sick. So I think on a national scale, U-32 is the representation of the problem, in that . . . we're supposed to be a world power, and I don't think our schools should be run this way. It's a bad way to represent our country.

HONORING THE U.C. DAVIS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

HON. VIC FAZIO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 4, 1996

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the University of California, Davis, School of Medicine, which is celebrating its 25th year of graduating students with the doctor of medicine degree. The U.C. Davis School of Medicine has a national reputation as a leader in the training of primary care medical residents, particularly in family practice with a rural orientation.

Because of its excellent curriculum and rigorous academic standards, the U.C. Davis School of Medicine was ranked second in the nation by U.S. News and World Report among all comprehensive medical schools in 1995. In addition, the school's academic medical center, with its outstanding patient care, superb medical faculty, and state-of-the art medical technology, is consistently ranked among the best academic medical centers in the nation.

Since its inception, the School of Medicine has created an extensive network of affiliated community hospitals, clinics, and physician group practices throughout the Sacramento region. The medical staff consists of over 1,000 primary care and specialty physicians, many of whom have gained national reputations for excellence. In addition the medical center

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