EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

FIGHTING THE SCOURGE OF DRUGS

HON. NEWT GINGRICH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage my colleagues to read the following speech by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. Mayor Giuliani's statement is an excellent example of how our country's leaders need to be bold and aggressive in fighting the scourge of drugs. We have lost too many battles due to the apathy of leaders loaded with excuses. It is time to engage the enemy. It is time to win the war:

REMOVING DRUGS FROM OUR NEIGHBORHOODS AND SCHOOLS

(By Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani)

As we move toward the new millennium, we as New Yorkers can take pride in the fact that our great City has regained its true stature as the Capital of the World. Our crime rate is at levels not witnessed since the 1960s, tourism in the City is at historic levels and our streets and parks are the cleanest in recent memory.

Four years ago, few would have dreamed, much less believed that these strides were possible. In fact, New York City, like other American cities, was essentially written off as a symbol of urban decay. Yet we have proven the cynics wrong and shown what is possible. We did it by refusing to accept the notion that had pervaded City government for far too long—one of resignation and acceptance of the social and political problems that faced them. We saw these same problems as a challenge to our creativity, our courage and our intelligence—challenges to do better and improve the situation for all New Yorkers.

We recognized that the role of government is to allow its citizens to live productive, accountable lives so that they can realize the promise of independence and the satisfaction of living in a democratic society. Just a few days ago I spoke at the John F. Kennedy School of Government and explained how the use of principles of accountability have made it possible for us to reduce crime, reform welfare, restore jobs and improve schools.

We must now use that same philosophy, creativity and commitment to confront our biggest problem today, namely, drug abuse.

Removing drugs from our neighborhoods and our schools may sound like an unreachable and perhaps unrealistic goal—but many said the same thing about the goals we set for ourselves four years ago in the areas of crime, welfare, jobs and education to name a few—and we proved them wrong.

The fact is that we cannot turn our back on this ever growing problem and we must resolve to challenge ourselves to address it. Without such a resolve we will only continue to bear the burdens of drugs, their attendant violence, their enormous cost to society and the lost and wasted lives.

FACTS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Substance abuse affects literally every aspect of our lives—it detracts from our quality of life, our economy, our children's education, our very well being.

70% to 80% of those arrested in New York City each year test positive for drug use.

60% of the cocaine and heroin consumed by the entire nation each year is consumed by individuals arrested in that same year.

Substance abuse and addiction costs New York City more than $20 billion every year, with $21 out of every $100 in taxes paid to New York City subsidizing the consequences of substance abuse and addiction problems.

Over 70% of our nation's prison population are substance abusers.

60% to 70% of substance abusing parolees who do not receive treatment while on parole return to drugs and criminal conduct within three months of their release.

At least 30,000 or 71% of children in foster care in our City alone have at least one parent who was a substance abuser.

FIVE POINT NATIONAL DRUG PROGRAM

Our drug problem requires the commitment of every level of government and needs to be approached with the recognition it is a global matter. Some of our drug program originates abroad. Production of cocaine and heroin occurs beyond our borders, but the international criminal industry which organizes and markets it thrives, as with any business, on the simple economic principles of supply and demand.

For nearly twenty years, I have advocated for a five point national program aimed at our drug problem—five points which now serve as the essential elements of the 1997 National Drug Control Strategy.

First, the drug problem must be an integral part of our nation's foreign policy. In dealing with countries which are the origin for heroin and cocaine—primarily Peru, Columbia and Bolivia—we must use our persuasive abilities, power and foreign aid to convince those governments to cooperate with us fully in stopping these disastrous crops and trade.

Second, we must exercise more control over our nation's borders. The Drug Enforcement Administration estimates that 70% of the illegal drugs reaching the United States travel through Mexico with the majority of the remainder passing through the Caribbean. In recent years, significant reinforcements have been committed to the southwest border and significant efforts have been undertaken to disrupt the flow of drugs from the Caribbean. And I am heartened by the significant resource commitment in the Federal Fiscal Year 1998 Appropriations Bill to continue and augment these efforts.

Third, domestically the general rule must be established and it must be quickly learned in the streets that if you sell drugs and are convicted you will go to prison. We must make those who traffic in the destruction of human life realize that in exchange for big profits, they are taking a big risk.

Fourth, we must put emphasis on enhancing present drug treatment programs and improving those programs. Even if the success rate is no better than 30 or 40%, that is better than no success at all.

Fifth, and most importantly, we must educate our young people and our society about the dangers of drug abuse. In my view, we educated our present generation of drug abusers. We did it in the schools and on television, we did it in our music and our movies, we did it in the role models we presented to our young people, five, ten, fifteen and twenty years ago, we did it by allowing families, community groups and neighborhoods to deteriorate. If we in fact educated the present generation of drug abusers, we can re-educate them and educate the future generations to the realistic and powerful dangers of drug use.

NEW YORK CITY INITIATIVE: ''ACCOUNTABILITY''

Understanding that the drug problem is one of international dimensions, we in New York City are going to do what we can to address our local problem with the expectation that by removing drugs from our neighborhoods and our schools, we will become a model for other cities, states and the entire nation. Only then will we have fair claim to ask foreign countries who supply drugs to the United States to limit production of these disastrous crops.

The underpinning of any comprehensive drug strategy is one of accountability for government at all levels and for all individuals. Law enforcement, treatment and prevention/education efforts are primarily the responsibility of local government and it must be held accountable for major improvements in these areas with State and Federal governments assuring the provision of resources to support these efforts. In addition, the Federal government must be held accountable for its anti-drug efforts in the areas of foreign policy and border interdiction.

As government becomes more accountable in these areas, it can demand that individuals become more accountable. Those who choose to take drugs and burden their friends, families and society with their addiction must be held responsible to seek available treatment services. And those who choose to live off the misery of others by selling drugs must be punished.

With this underlying philosophy, our drug strategy has at its core three essential elements: Law Enforcement/Criminal Justice; Treatment; and Prevention/Education.

1. Law Enforcement/Criminal Justice

Over the last several years, the New York City Police Department has made dramatic strides in fighting drug activity in all of our City's neighborhoods. Particular emphasis has been placed on the two areas in our City which are responsible for much of the City's drug related crime; namely Brooklyn North and Northern Manhattan. In April 1996, over 500 uniformed personnel were assigned to the Strategic and Tactical Command (SATCOM) in Brooklyn North and one year later we undertook a similar initiative in three precincts in Northern Manhattan with the assignment of over 350 uniformed officers to that area.

In addition to murders being reduced by 60% in the first six months of this year compared to the same period in 1993 and shootings and shooting incidents down by over 60% in that same period, the Police Department's combined drug strategies have had a tremendous impact on drug activity. Reversing the previous Administration's policy of deterring uniformed police officers from making drug arrests, the Police Department in 1996 made an all-time high number of drug arrests [101,051 arrests]—exceeding the previous record year of 1989, the height of the Department's TNT program [94,887].

In addition, the Police Department recorded a 51% increase in drug seizures in 1996 when compared to 1993 [17,377 lbs vs. 11,475

lbs] and a 116% increase in drug currency seizures in that same period [$68,927,762 vs. $31,970,963].

Building on these successes, our enhanced anti-drug law enforcement efforts will focus on drug activity in our neighborhoods and in and around our schools.

Neighborhoods

Anti-drug initiatives in the South Bronx and Southeast Queens.—The first law enforcement component will be the implementation of two additional drug enforcement initiatives modeled after the two already in operation. The new initiatives will target neighborhoods in the South Bronx and include 40th Precinct [Mott Haven], the 41st Precinct [Hunts Point] and the 43rd Precinct [Soundview]; and neighborhoods in Southeast Queens and include the 103rd Precinct [Jamaica] and the 113th and 105th Precincts [South Jamaica]. These initiatives will involve the assignment of over 1,000 uniformed personnel and, following training of half the assigned personnel, will begin phased-in operation in the first week of November. Full operation of both initiatives is scheduled for the last week in December.

As with its two current drug initiatives, the Department anticipates that targeted drug enforcement in theses areas will not only reduce crime in these precincts over the reductions experienced to date, but also have a similar impact throughout the City since these precincts are hubs of drug activity for other areas in the City and the adjacent suburbs.

Accelerate hiring of 1,000 of the 1,600 police recruits scheduled for the July 1998 class to December 1997.—In order for these new drug initiatives to be fully staffed without draining our current precinct resources, I have directed that 1,000 of the 1,600 police recruits currently scheduled for the July 1998 class be hired and commence Police Academy training in December 1997 following the graduation later this Fall of over 1,300 recruits currently in the Academy. These new officers and recruits will ensure that the Police Department has the resources needed to maintain the historic declines in crime we have enjoyed over the last three and a half years.

Implement Drug Free Zone in Washington Square Park by targeting drug sellers on probation for dealing drugs in the Park.—As part of this strategy, we will immediately make Washington Square Park a drug free zone. Washington Square Park should not be a symbol of freedom from accountability. The Park has been plagued with repeat misdemeanor drug sellers—one of these offenders had been arrested no less than 75 times for misdemeanor drug selling in the park. Because of lax State laws in dealing with repeat misdemeanor drug sellers—laws I have sought to strengthen—these repeat offenders face short jail terms and/or probationary sentences. The Department of Probation and the District Attorney's Office will urge judges who sentence these offenders to probation to also place conditions on the offender's probation requiring him or her to stay out of the Park. If found in the park, the offender's probation will be revoked and he or she will immediately be placed in jail.

Implement Operation Night Light with NYPD and Department of Probation targeting Substance Abusing Adult Probationers.—A new initiative called Operation Night Light will also be implemented by the Police and Probation Departments. This initiative, modeled after a successful program in Boston targeting juvenile probationers, involves the assignment of 21 probation officers to teams in police precincts which target adult probationers with court imposed curfews to ensure compliance, as well as probationers who have violated conditions of their probation and/or have outstanding warrants against them.

Activate 1–888–374–DRUG hotline.—And, City residents will be encouraged to help in our anti-drug efforts by reporting drug activity in their neighborhoods to the Department's new 24 hours, seven day a week hotline, 1–888–374–DRUG.

SCHOOLS

Critical to our anti-drug efforts is the need to focus on our schools to ensure that our children are educated in a drug-free environment so that they can learn, develop and participate in all that New York City has to offer. To do this, we must make our government, our schools and our parents accountable for keeping our children off drugs. We have already made significant strides in reducing drug activity in our neighborhoods and our schools and we now are in a position to expand our successful initiatives to arrest and prosecute those who sell drugs to our children.

Substantial Increase in Drug Free School Zones and Safe Corridor Program.—Understanding the need to reinforce the message that those who sell drugs to our City's youth will be severely punished, the Department will increase by two and a half times its current drug free schools zone program from 40 to 100 schools. Anyone caught selling drugs within 1,000 feet of school grounds will be faced with enhanced felony penalties.

The Department will also double its Safe Corridor program to involve 240 schools to provide youth with extra police protection upon their arrival and release from school as they walk from and to nearby bus and subway stops.

Establish a curfew program for 1,000 drug offending juvenile probationers using beeper and voice tracking technology.—The Department of Probation will similarly begin a program designed to target 1,000 juvenile probationers with court-imposed curfews as a result of a drug offense. Using state-of-the-art tracking and beeper technology, probation officers will monitor the juveniles' activities and curfew compliance on a 24 hour basis.

Place Board of Education drug specialists in each Family Court.—The Board of Education will also be given resources to assign substance abuse specialists in each of the City's Family Courts. These specialists will act as a liaison between the juvenile justice system and the school system to ensure that drug offending juveniles are appropriately placed in services within the school-based program and/or referred to appropriate community based services.

2. Treatment

Given the fact that overwhelming numbers of persons arrested and imprisoned each year have some form of substance abuse problems and that those same individuals consumed over 60% of the nation's cocaine and heroin, it makes all the sense in the world that we provide appropriate treatment services in the criminal justice system. In fact, treatment models already in place in the criminal justice system here in New York City and in other jurisdictions have shown promising results in reducing both drug dependency and recidivism.

50% increase in DOC substance abuse treatment beds and implement pilot project to create linkages to community-based programs for substance abusing inmates released from Rikers Island.—To this end, the Department of Correction will be given resources to increase by 50% the number of drug treatment beds available in the Department's Substance Abuse Intervention Division—from 1058 to 1558 beds. And, the Department will implement a pilot program to contract with community based residential treatment services to provide services for substance abusing inmates released from Rikers Island after successfully completing treatment in jail. Studies have documented that post-release services to substance abusing inmates are critical to avoiding recidivist behavior.

Expand Probation residential and out-patient drug treatment programs for substance abusing probationers.—The Department of Probation will double its current residential drug treatment capacity to serve 360 probationers annually—up from 180. And its outpatient drug treatment capacity will be increased from 890 to 965. These programs have impressive success rates with participating probationers successfully completing the terms of their probation sentence at a 35% higher rate than probationers who did not take part in drug treatment programs.

Implement Manhattan Drug Court for 300 drug abusing defendants.—Later this Fall, the City, working in cooperation with the court system and the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, will be opening a Drug Court in Manhattan to complement the Drug Court currently operating in Brooklyn. Participating defendants agree to take part in an intensive 18 month drug treatment program in exchange for reduced criminal charges, and are monitored daily by case management court staff who provide regular reports to the judge. The court is expected to target 300 non-violent drug abusing defendants annually. An independent study of the Dade County Drug Court reported that only 3% of the participating defendants were re-arrested within one year of their completion of the program—an impressive record when one considers that over 30% of similarly situated defendants were re-arrested in that same period.

The City will pursue additional Federal funds to allow for Drug Courts to be opened in the Bronx, Queens and Staten Island. And, I applaud Chief Judge Judith Kaye's commitment to open a Drug Court in Manhattan Family Court next month and encourage the opening of similarly programs in the City's other four Family Courts.

Establish Drug Treatment Coordinator Unit—a citywide database on treatment programs and an 800 number for information on available services.—The prevailing wisdom among the drug policy experts in that less than 25% of substance abusers ever seek treatment—in fact, contrary to popular opinion the State and City funded drug treatment slots in the City do not have waiting lists of persons seeking treatment. As a January 1997 snapshot of these residential and outpatient programs drug treatment programs in the City demonstrated, less than 95% of the available treatment resources were being utilized. Substance abusers must and will be held accountable for seeking treatment or face the consequences of their actions. Unless abusers seek treatment, they will run the risk of being arrested. Regardless of who you are, where you live, and there you work, if you're a substance abuser, seek treatment now or run the risk of going to jail. The choice is yours.

In order to ensure that those seeking treatment have the information regarding available programs in or near their communities. I am creating a Drug Treatment Coordinator unit within the Mayor's office with the responsibility of developing an on-line database of all available drug treatment services in the City. The system will be designed to track on a daily basis the capacity of the programs and allow the unit to make referrals to appropriate programs. A 1–800 number will also be established to this unit so that substance abusers can access this information at any time.

Implement a Joint Program with ACS and HHC to provide Drug Treatment Services for

Mothers with Children in Foster Care.—Recognizing that 71% of the children in foster care have at least one biological parent who is a substance abuser, the Administration for Children Services (ACS) will team up with the Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) to implement a program designed to offer substance abuse treatment services to mothers whose children have been placed in foster care. ACS expects to motivate them to participate in treatment services which will be provided by HHC. The progress which these mothers make in treatment will be made known to the Family Court on a regular basis.

Report of Recommendations for Expansion of Existing and/or Creation of new Treatment Programs.—I have also directed my Special Health Advisor, Dr. Rosa Gil, and my Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services, Dr. Neil Cohen, to undertake an extensive review of the various drug treatment programs throughout the City, whether funded with City, State or private dollars, and to report back to me within 45 days with recommendations for expansion of exiting programs and the development of new and creative approaches to substance abuse. I am particularly interested in treatment models which have proven results in ending drug and substance dependency. Viable treatment programs should instill in its participants the principle of personal accountability and give them the skills and tools they need to become productive and self-reliant individuals, rather than continuing them on a dependency.

3. Prevention/Education

The most important aspect of a successful anti-drug strategy is prevention and education efforts aimed primarily at our youth.

A recent study indicated that if a young person is successful in avoiding drug use by the time they reach the age of sixteen, he or she will more than likely avoid the dangers of substance abuse in the rest of his or her life. We must seize upon this promising data and resolve to continually reinforce for our children, in school, at home, in society as a whole that drug use is dangerous and deadly.

DARE Program.—Last year, the New York City Policy Department and the Board of Education launched the nationally acclaimed DARE program in our city's public school system. Over 100 specially trained police officers teach kindergarten through 6th graders about the dangers of drugs use as well as build the students' self esteem so they are capable of resisting peer pressure to engage in drug use. We will be providing extra resources to the DARE program to augment the program activities.

Expand DARE and GREAT program to after-school hours.—The Department will also be given the resources necessary to expand the DARE program to after-school hours and couple it with the Gang Resistance Education Assistance Treatment or GREAT Program. Both these programs foster greater understanding among youth as to the dangers of drugs and gang activity while at the same time providing structured activities between young and police officers.

Expand BEACON schools by 24% from 41 to 51 schools and provide funding to expand mentoring programs.—I have also directed that the number of BEACON schools operating throughout the City to provide after-school and evening activities for youth and community residents be expanded by 10 from 41 to 51 schools—a 24% increase. Statistics demonstrate that youth who participate in BEACON school programs have higher reading and math scores than their peers.

And funds will be allocated to expand successful mentoring programs for our City's youth so as to expose them to positive role models and encourage their development in successful careers. Mentoring programs, such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters, have positive results—one study reporting that mentored youth are 46% less likely to become involved in drug use than other youth.

Implement Drug Prevention Youth Initiative in Public Housing and Establish an Anti-Drug Parent Network Program.—Modeled after its new Partner in Reading program, the Housing Authority, working with my office, will implement an after-school drug prevention program aimed at youth in our City's public housing developments. The program will work in conjunction with the Authority's current youth mentoring programs and will be designed to engage the youth in structured activities and events on bi-weekly basis to make them aware of the dangers of drugs and how to avoid drug use.

Working with the Board of Education and the Parent Associations in each of the public schools, we will also undertake an effort to implement an Anti-Drug Parent Network Program. The program will be designed to make parents aware of the dangers of drugs, available drug counseling services in their neighborhoods and the tell-tale signs of drug use in their children. The program will facilitate the distribution of drug information pamphlets to parents of school aged children, sponsor anti-drug forums and fairs, and improve the coordination of drug counseling and treatment services available through the public schools.

Sponsor a Citywide Clergy Anti-Drug Forum in the next three months.—Within the next three months, my office will sponsor a Clergy Anti-Drug Abuse Forum. The forum will bring together leading members of our City's diverse religious communities to focus on and discuss the City's drug problem. A strategic action plan will be developed of initiatives which the City's clergy can implement to enhance and expand on the City's anti-drug agenda.

Pro Bono Multi-Media Anti-Drug Campaign.—I am proud to announce that McCann Erickson, one of our major advertising agencies, has agreed to provide pro bono services to develop and implement a multi-level anti-drug media campaign with the goal of deterring drug use.

Engage businesses in anti-drug program.—I challenge all of the City's small, medium, and large businesses to similarly pledge their resources to this effort and, to this end, we will reach out to our business community to encourage it to develop programs and provide resources to encourage our City's youth to avoid drugs—whether it be in the form of free movie passes to youth who participate in after drug prevention school programs, or the sponsoring of little league baseball, basketball or soccer leagues—all intended to engage our City's youth in productive and safe activities.

Develop Standards for Measuring the Drug Program's Impact.—These are a few of the many initiatives which I am committed to implement in the coming months, with the full understanding that as with our crime-fighting strategies it will require continuous monitoring and relentless follow-up so that we can be sure that what we are doing is working and to determine what more needs to be done. We need to apply the same management strategy in place in the Police Department for assessing, tracking and monitoring our City's crime rate, to our drug program. To this end, a monitoring/research unit will be created in my office and charged with the responsibility of developing appropriate measurements for how best to measure our success and to apply those measurements against our progress.

State Anti-Drug Agenda

Pursue State legislation to increase punishment for repeat drug misdemeanors; to toughen driving requirements for young adults; to create a rebutable presumption of neglect when infants are born with a ''positive tox''; and to provide for civil commitment of repeat violent substance abusers.—On the State level, I will continue to pursue tougher laws dealing with repeat misdemeanor drug offenders—requiring those who engage in their third or more misdemeanor drug sale to automatically face felony charges. And I will continue to support legislation to prevent teenagers who are found to have operated a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs from obtaining a driver's license until the age of 18—as well as long needed legislation for a rebutable presumption of parental neglect in cases in which babies are born with a ''positive tox''; and authorization for long term civil commitment of persons with known substance abuse problems that result in violent behavior.

Expand drug treatment in State prisons and for parolees and provide increased resources for drug treatment programs in New York City.—I have also consulted with Governor Pataki and expect to work with him to expand drug treatment services in the State prison system and those provided to parolees—an investment in drug treatment is a wise one. I will also seek additional State funding for drug treatment programs in our City understanding that our increased law enforcement efforts will undoubtedly increase the call on existing resources.

Federal Anti-Drug Agenda

Amend Crime Bill to allow monies for jail drug treatment and to assistance for NYPD anti-drug initiatives.—On the Federal level, I will continue to call for a foreign policy which provides priority focus on our nation's drug problem and for enhanced resources for border interdiction efforts. In addition, I will seek Federal assistance for our successful anti-drug law enforcement initiatives as was provided in the Department's Northern Manhattan initiative, and I will seek changes in the Federal Crime Bill to allow local jail systems, not just State prison systems, to directly receive funds to expand substance abuse services to inmates and as well as pursue increased resources for Drug Courts.

Similarly, increased resources will be sought from the Federal government to fund additional treatment services for substance abusers in New York City. And, finally, I will continue my efforts in urging Congress to appropriate Crime Bill funds for prevention programs authorized under the Crime Bill, including after-school sports activities, community anti-drug programs and youth mentoring programs.

CONCLUSION

Drug use is one of the nation's most difficult and complex problems, but I refuse to accept the notion that somehow it is beyond our reach and we must resign ourselves to it. We must also refrain from the notion that unless we win unconditionally, we have failed. This is not a problem that developed overnight and we will not solve it overnight, but we can begin to put in place a strategy such as the one I outlined today with realistic steps to reduce its toll on our neighborhoods and our schools. First steps always lead the way to major breakthroughts. By applying the principles of accountability, as we did in our successful strategies to reduce crime, reform welfare, restore jobs and improve schools, I am confident that we will succeed.

EMERGENCY STUDENT LOAN CONSOLIDATION ACT OF 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL LUTHER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 21, 1997

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 2535 because I am very concerned that our higher education graduates are in need of greater assistance as they consolidate their student loan debts after graduation and begin the process of repayment.

Currently there is a backlog of between 80,000 to 86,000 student loan consolidation applications at the U.S. Department of Education. Graduates need this tool to effectively manage school debt, while at the same time embarking on their careers and often starting families. The consolidation program was enacted originally in 1993 as an initiative of the Clinton administration. The concept was good then, and it's good now, and with H.R. 2535, borrowers will be able to consolidate their loans with guarantee agencies and private lenders.

I want to thank subcommittee Chairman MCKEON and ranking member KILDEE for bringing this legislation to the floor in a timely fashion. I'm also pleased with the bipartisan approach to this issue. Helping people attain a higher education, and providing support for the repayment of the debt accumulated in the pursuit of that education, is a shared goal. Again, thanks to all involved in this effort, and I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

DEMOCRACY IN COLOMBIA

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, on October 26, 1997, Colombia attempted to conduct nationwide municipal elections despite the deadly impact of guerrilla scare tactics on voter turnout and candidate participation. The municipal elections in Columbia were marred by a brutal campaign of violence, kidnaping, and extortion carried out by the guerrilla movements of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC] and the National Liberation Army [ELN]. While the electoral process may have succeeded in the urban areas, the lack of participation in the rural sectors reflects the serious threat to the democratic process posed by the guerrilla war.

Through the deadly efforts of the FARC and ELN, 40 political candidates were murdered; over 1,900 candidates were forced to abandon their campaigns; nearly 120 municipalities had candidates reluctantly running; and 11 municipalities had no candidates at all. The situation continued to deteriorate during the week before the elections when FARC and ELN terrorist activities escalated into a national crisis with the kidnaping of international election observers from the OAS and a declaration of an armed strike in order to impede public transportation during the crucial time of the elections.

Largely responsible for the escalation of FARC and the ELN activities over the last couple of years is the increase in funding from narcotics trafficking. This has enabled both guerrilla elements to effectively quadruple their power base over the past 7 years so that it is now estimated that they control up to 40 percent of the territory of Colombia.

It is clear that the leaders of the FARC and ELN have resisted all overtures by the Government of Colombia to end the violence and establish peace. With nearly 70,000 people dead as a direct result of the guerrilla war in the last decade, it is past time to find a solution to this crisis. As reflected in the recent municipal elections, the campaign of the FARC and ELN now present a direct threat to the very democracy of Colombia and stability to the region.

In response to the critical situation in Colombia, I am introducing legislation that would:

First, recognize the importance of the threat of the guerrilla movement to Colombia's democracy and that the acts of violence to disrupt the electoral process in the municipal elections could spill over to the congressional and presidential elections to be held in 1998;

Second, urge the guerrilla leaders of the FARC and ELN to end the violence and sever their relationship with narcotics traffickers; negotiate a peace accord with the Government of Colombia and to take their agenda into the political arena for debate;

Third, call upon the international community, particularly the Organization of American States, to continue to play a more pro-active role in resolving the conflict; and

Fourth, urge the administration to reevaluate United States policies toward Colombia taking into account the threat of the guerrilla movement to Colombia's democracy, and to encourage a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Mr. Speaker, Colombia's democracy is one of the oldest and most important democracies in the hemisphere. It is critical for the stability of the hemisphere that this guerrilla movement, like all the others in the region, come to an end. Peace, political stability, and economic prosperity must be given the highest priority for all nations.

HONORING THE CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

HON. RONALD V. DELLUMS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Mr. DELLUMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Center for Independent Living's 25th anniversary. It is appropriate at this time to highlight its many achievements and to underscore the positive impact that it has made in the local community.

The Center for Independent Living, the first of it's kind, was established in 1972 for the purpose of allowing people with disabilities to live independently, to attain their productive potential, and to participate fully in all aspects of society. Throughout it's history, the Center for Independent Living has played a pioneering role in advocating architectural changes to make the community more physically accessible, instructing in techniques of independent living, and offering a core of essential services. This comprehensive package of services to help people with disabilities is offered in the belief that it is the most effective way to serve clients who have complex and interconnected needs.

Currently there are 30 Centers for Independent Living throughout California, and over 300 throughout the country, which are modeled after the Center for Independent Living in Berkeley. The services that it offers include advocacy, attendant referral, blind services, deaf services, employment services, peer support services, youth services, services for people with mental disabilities, independent living skills information and referral, a client enhancement and empowerment project, and housing. Berkeley's Center for Independent Living has increased the quality of life for thousands of people with disabilities, independent living has increased the quality of life for thousands of people with disabilities locally, nationally, and internationally, and was involved in the passage of the 504 Act of 1973, State title XXIV, and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990.

The Center for Independent Living has brought national and international attention to the state of California and the Nation as a leader in assuring access to people with disabilities, I commend the Center for Independent Living for all its hard work, dedication, and commitment to our community as well as to the Nation.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO ENCOURAGE THE SALE OF LARGE PLEASURE BOATS

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill that would greatly enhance the international yachting industry in the United States.

Most people are unaware how the sale or even the mere presence of large foreign-owned pleasure boats docked at a domestic port contributes to the local economy. A single large luxury boat can literally pump tens of thousands of dollars into the local economy a month. For example, the cost of supporting a crew, docking fees, boat repairs, supplies, and other related expenditures while the boat is moored at a domestic marina all help the economy and create jobs. Attracting these types of vessels to our shores is therefore beneficial to the economy. In fact, in my congressional district, a significant segment of the local economy is based on the recreational boating trade and its attendant services.

Unfortunately, current law and customs regulations as applied to large yachts have the unintended consequence of discouraging the sale of these vessels domestically. This is primarily for two reasons. First, when the yacht is imported into the United States for sale, the duty must be paid immediately, whether the yacht is eventually sold or not. This requirement is onerous for the yacht seller, because if the yacht is not sold, he or she cannot get a timely or full refund of the duty. This is due to the lengthy procedure—9 months to a year—that the Customs Service administrative process takes. If the value of the yacht exceeds $1 million, the loss of funds to the seller can be quite substantial.

Second, there is an old maxim among boaters that ''every boat is for sale.'' Consider this