ALL SEGMENTS OF COMMUNITY MUST WORK TOGETHER TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

HON. DAVE WELDON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the issue of domestic violence. Mr. Speaker, our homes should be a safe haven where wives, husbands, and children are free from the fear of violence. In most homes in America, this is the case, but for far too many women and children this is not the case. The need to address this issue is something on which we can all agree.

I am pleased that increasing attention has been called to this issue and that there are numerous community organizations that have taken an active role in addressing this issue in their communities. Indeed it is in local communities where law enforcement and community organizations have gotten involved that we have seen the greatest success.

In fact, this weekend in my congressional district the Domestic Violence Coalition of Indian River County, Florida will be hosting a seminar on domestic violence in order to raise awareness and provide training for those who are committed to bringing this travesty to an end. At this seminar a host of community organizations along with law enforcement and local governmental agencies will make presentations directed toward raising public awareness and sharing professional expertise on domestic violence.

This Congress is due to consider the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. This act provides funding for some very valuable programs like domestic violence hotlines, shelters, law enforcement, and related training among other programs. I fully support the reauthorization of these programs and am pleased that many of the organizations participating in this event, like the Sebastian River Junior Woman's Club, support efforts to reauthorize and improve the effectiveness of this law.

Mr. Speaker I would also like to take this opportunity to bring to the members attention, related legislation that I have recently introduced in the House. My bill (H.R. 3088) would address one of the most heinous acts of violence to women in our society, sexual assault. Today, in many states the victims of sexual assault have no right to inquire into the HIV status of their assailant until after conviction of the assailant, and sometimes not even then. My bill would give the victims of this crime the right to know the HIV status of their attacker immediately after bringing charges.

Medical studies indicate that if anti-HIV drugs are begun within 48 hours of exposure to the HIV virus, the infection of the victim can actually be prevented. That is why it is so important that the victims of sexual assault be able to request the HIV status of their assailant as quickly as possible. It is literally a matter of life and death.

As a physician, husband, and father, I am deeply troubled that this is not already law in every state. For too long the rights of victims of sexual crimes have been sacrificed for the rights of criminals. No longer will the victims have to wait weeks, months or years for the crime to be fully adjudicated before they can find out if they have been exposed to HIV.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this bill as we seek to arrest the scourge of violence in our society.

TRIBUTE TO THE O'TUCKS

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, for four decades, the members of an organization known as the O'Tucks have dedicated themselves to serving our community and preserving the unique culture and traditions of Kentucky's Appalachian highlands.

If you're even remotely familiar with the rich and vibrant culture of Appalachian Kentucky, it shouldn't surprise you to learn that groups like the O'Tucks exist. But it might surprise you to find such a group thriving outside of Kentucky—in Butler County, Ohio.

The O'Tucks (as in ''Ohioans from Kentucky'') were founded 40 years ago by Mr. Stanley Dezarn, who was born in 1922 near the Goose Creek River in the Bluegrass State's Clay County. A lifelong educator and community leader, Stanley Dezarn founded the O'Tucks with a set of specific goals, which Ercel Eaton of the Hamilton Journal-News detailed last year: ''to provide a common ground for exchange of ideas and experiences for people with common cultural and environmental backgrounds; to strive to preserve the rich qualities of folklore and music of the Appalachian highlands; [and] to work for the continuous improvement of the community by cooperating with and assisting civic leaders, organizations, and public officials in Butler County.''

For years the O'Tucks have fulfilled these goals repeatedly and successfully in our community. They've enriched the lives of countless Butler County residents through their music and cultural events. But they've also contributed to our community through their service and spirit of volunteerism, which has helped more than a few of their fellow citizens realize the dream of getting a college education or pursuing a career in art, teaching, nursing and other fields.

Mr. Speaker, even after four decades of good times and good service, the O'Tucks have never strayed from the original goals of Stanley Dezarn. Fittingly, the O'Tucks will honor their founder late this month at their 40th anniversary banquet, and give thanks to Stanley Dezarn for his lifetime of dedication and service to the O'Tucks and the Butler County community.

Stanley Dezarn and the O'Tucks are an inspiration for all Americans. They're proof that what makes America a great society is not her strong government, or her time-tested institutions, or her mighty industries; what makes America great is the spirit and enthusiasm of her people. I urge my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Stanley Dezarn and the O'Tucks organization for 40 years of distinguished service to the Butler County community and the United States of America.

TRIBUTE TO THE BLACK CANYON OF THE GUNNISON NATIONAL PARK AND THOSE WHO MADE IT POSSIBLE

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with an overwhelming sense of pride that I now rise to pay tribute to a truly historic event in the proud and distinguished history of the great State of Colorado: the establishment of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.

As the House sponsor of legislation that redesignated the Black Canyon as a national park, it gives me great joy to describe for this esteemed body's record the beauty of this truly majestic place. In addition, I would like to offer my gratitude to a community of individuals instrumental in the long process that ultimately yielded the establishment of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.

Mr. Speaker, anyone who has visited the Black Canyon can attest to its awe-inspiring natural beauty. Named for the dark rock that makes up its sheer walls, the Black Canyon is largely composed of what geologists call basement rocks, the oldest rocks on the earth estimated at 1.7 billion years old. With its narrow openings, sheer walls, and scenic gorges that plunge 2000 feet into the clear blue majesty of the Gunnison River, the Black Canyon is a natural crown jewel second to none in its magnificent splendor. Though other canyons may have greater depth or descend on a steeper course, few combine these attributes as breathtakingly as does the Black Canyon.

If ever there was a place worthy of the prestigious status that only national park status can afford, Mr. Speaker, it is the Black Canyon. But as you know, national parks don't just happen. In this case, it took nearly 15 years, several Congressional Representatives and Senators, innumerable locally elected officials, and a virtual sea of committed citizens in western Colorado.

Included in this group are the good people of Hotchkiss, Colorado. During this long and at times difficult process, Hotchkiss' civic leaders have given tirelessly and beyond measure in the hopes of making the Black Canyon a national park. Again and again these great Americans rose to the challenge, doing everything in their power to fulfill this dream. Without Hotchkiss' leadership and perseverance, none of what we have accomplished would have ever been possible.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I give my thanks to the people of Hotchkiss who played a leading role in making the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park a wonderful reality for Colorado, America, and the world to enjoy.

RECOGNIZING THE ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. PAT DANNER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 21, 1999

Ms. DANNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor seven law enforcement officers from the St. Joseph, Missouri Police Department who