avoid further destabilization of the tenuous calm that exists in Haiti today. Many of these disgruntled and frightened refugees are camped out now in Port-Au-Prince demanding employment from a government that has no means to provide employment.

Likewise the Cuban refugees are still smarting from the abrupt abrogation of the terms of the Cuban Adjustment Act.

All the while the policy is failing in every direction, the bills are mounting. Look for a defense supplemental as early as next week to provide billions of American tax dollars in funds to pay for these extra missions. And we must not forget that there are more than 6,000 American soldiers at risk on the ground in Haiti while there are still more in Panama right now donning riot gear and strapping on rifles in anticipation of rioting, arson, escape attempts, and suicides among the 7,500 Cubans being moved from Panama to Guantanamo now.

What does the administration plan to deal with its Caribbean crises? Where is the focus on national security in our own backyard? It appears from the weekend papers that the Clinton administration has decided that a replacement for Joycelyn Elders in the Surgeon General's Office takes a higher priority than the search for a new CIA director or for attention on our national security. I think that says something. I think maybe it is time we paid attention to the real problems that are affecting this country and leave some of the social thoughts to another day.

GETTING TOUGH ON CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate this opportunity because today a group of bipartisan Congresswomen that have worked for so long and so hard on child support enforcement are once again offering and putting in the RECORD our bill on tough child support enforcement. We have been trying for many years to get this country to focus on this issue.

It seems to us that everybody wants to talk about the mother and how bad the mother is, but let us realize that these children came with two parents, and let us talk about both parents having responsibility. Where is it written that the Federal Government will pick up if one parent decides to skip out? That is exactly what has been happening.

Mr. Speaker, we know that when it comes to car payments, it is unbelievable but less than 3 percent of America's car payments go uncollected. They are going to dig us up and think we worshiped our cars. Yet when we look at child support enforcement payments, let me tell you, we know that that is a devastating record.

The lowest estimate is that $34 billion went uncollected last year. Now, that is a lot of money. The reason we feel so strongly about this is that we think, had we been doing strong child support enforcement, we would not have to be worried about welfare. That is welfare prevention. Let us be perfectly honest about that. Many women are on welfare because they are the only ones supporting that child.

Mr. Speaker, our bill goes at all sorts of things. It says the Federal Government should not allow passports to people who are behind in child support. It mandates that if you are behind in child support, it gets reported to the credit bureau so people know that. It also requires direct withholding by employers immediately, so it is automatic and that is the end of it. It also says that States should not allow licenses to people who are behind in child support orders.

It is amazing how many professional people, such as doctors, are not paying their child support. Why? And States have hesitated to really go collect it because they think they will just make somebody mad and they just pass the bill on to the Federal Government.

I really wish this child support enforcement had been in the Contract With America. I do not know why they did not put it in the Contract With America. To me it is one of the things that most Americans can agree on that it makes such sense. The Congresswoman have been working on this forever and ever and ever, and it is absolutely amazing how difficult it is to move this front and center and get a focus on it.

If we are going to talk about family responsibility and we are going to talk about what families should be doing for young children, then I think we have to say that we have to use the laws of this land to make sure people take parenting very seriously. Very seriously.

I am really pleased that this comprehensive child support bill will be going in. It will be going in today. I hope every American joins with the Congresswomen in saying this is what should be at the front of the session. This is what we should be doing in these first 100 days. In fact, we should have done it 100 years ago. And we ought to get this online. We ought to get the system up where all the States are participating and sharing information.

In this great information era, it is absolutely amazing that people can cross State lines and avoid being picked up. No one else would tolerate that. I think it is long overdue that the children of this country have to tolerate that. Basically, they have had to tolerate it because they cannot vote, they are not that important, and if they are not that important a priority to this Government, then we allow it not to be an important priority to parents.

Either we mean that parents have to be responsible or we do not mean it. I think any child would much prefer having a parent be responsible than having the taint of having to rely on welfare payments, but they may go to welfare payments rather than starve, obviously.

When we look at the average welfare recipient, they are not happy about being a welfare recipient. They would much prefer this. But have you ever figured out what it costs to get a lawyer, what it costs to track people across State lines, what it costs to enforce these orders? That is why they go uncollected, because the States have not wanted to bother to do it, the Federal Government has kind of winked at it, and they have picked up the safety net that everyone fell into.

I hope every American joins with us and says, ''Let's get this out. Let's get this out.'' We came very close to getting it out last year. Everybody talks a good game but somehow we never get it to the out box. If we make a massive effort, this is one way that we start saying parents become responsible for the children they bring into this world rather than the taxpayers become the parents of last resort. That is not a pretty picture for anyone and it just keeps generating the problems that we have seen in the past.

I hope everyone joins us in cosponsoring the bill.

Later on this week, I and a bipartisan group of Congresswomen will renew our efforts to make sure that the responsibility of fathers is not forgotten in the current welfare debate. Last Congress, the Congresswomen decided it was time for us to speak with one voice on child support enforcement. We want to hold children harmless in the economics of divorce.

Thus, the Congresswomen will reintroduce the Child Support Amendments of 1995. This bill is an improved, revised version of the Child Support Responsibility Act of 1994 (H.R. 4570), which I introduced on behalf of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues last June.

That bill, and the one we will be introducing this week, builds upon the 1992 recommendations of the U.S. Commission on Interstate Child Support. Its goal is to reduce the estimated $34 billion that deadbeat parents, mostly fathers, owe in child support. This bill puts teeth into the child support enforcement system so that money can be recovered and paid to the children whose economic well-being depends on these payments.

Child support enforcement is a pressing issue in our Nation. A majority of Members readily agree that immediate action is needed to strengthen our present child support system. I believe that for many families, child support payments are in reality welfare prevention measures.

In spite of a decade of congressional efforts to improve the collection of child support, deadbeat parents still fail to pay $34 billion annually. Our child support system is quickly becoming a national disgrace. Each of us has heard from constituents who face dire consequences when a child support payment

does not come. The primary victims of this system are the millions of children facing lives of poverty.

Further complicating the present collection system is the rising number of parents who relocate to another State after their separation or divorce. Currently, almost one-third of child support cases involve parents who have moved to another State. The bottom line is that American children are being shortchanged by parents who fail to pay the support their children need. Our bill is a comprehensive measure which sends a clear message to deadbeat parents—whereever you are, you will no longer be able to renege on the financial responsibilities owed to your child.

The Child Support Responsibility Act will tighten the child support enforcement program and close loopholes through which noncustodial parents are able to shirk their financial duty to their children.

The central component of the Child Support Responsibility Act of 1995 is the creation of a national databank that expands the Federal Parent Locator Service and establishes a Federal Child Support Registry. This new system will allow States to access the records in other State agencies and will allow for W–4 reporting of child support obligations so that we can get to the problem of parents who cross State lines to avoid paying child support. We do not want noncustodial parents playing economic hide-and-seek from their kids.

Last session, the House passed four provisions of the Child Support Responsibility Act.

We passed a bill that would significantly strengthen the Federal Government's child support enforcement mechanisms and, for the first time, individuals would have been prohibited from receiving Federal benefits or become employed by the Federal Government if their child support obligations are 3 months in arrears and they refuse to enter into a payment plan for the arrearage.

We passed a bill that would restrict the passports of individuals with child support arrears exceeding $10,000. The Interstate Commission found that collecting child support payments internationally is extremely difficult. This provision would require noncustodial parents to pay up before they fly out.

We passed a bill that improved the collection of child support payments owed by military personnel.

And finally, we passed, and it became law, a bill that was incorporated into last year's bankruptcy reform law, that designated child-support payments as priority debts when an individual files for bankruptcy, making it more difficult to escape these obligations.

These provisions, except for the ones signed into law, are in the new bill we will be introducing. Highlights of the new bill include:

Establishes a Federal Child Support Registry for all child support orders issued or modified by any State court. The Federal registry is required to compare information on all W–4 forms with information in child support orders and notify State registries of child support obligations of employees.

Expands the Parent Locator Service to provide for a national network which allows the States to access the records in other State agencies and Federal sources to locate information directly from one computer to another.

Establishes State central registries for all child support orders issued or modified and the collection of obligations.

Requires reconciliation of child support obligations and payments on income tax returns.

Establishes a National Child Support Guidelines Commission to study the desirability of a national guideline for child support orders.

Enhances paternity establishment procedures—requires State agencies responsible for maintaining birth records to offer voluntary paternity establishment services; creates a national paternity acknowledgement affidavit for the use of voluntary acknowledgement of paternity; and establishes that a signed paternity acknowledgement affidavit is conclusively presumed to prove paternity by creating a legal finding that has the effect of a final judgement at law.

Mandates direct wage withholding of child support obligations by employers when child support orders are issued or modified by State courts.

Creates a uniform child support order to be used in all cases in which income is to be withheld for the payment of child support.

Requires States to adopt the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act [UIFSA].

Restricts professional, occupational, and business licenses of noncustodial parents who have failed to pay child support.

Retricts driver's licenses and vehicle registration of noncustodial parents who fail to appear in child support proceedings.

Requires reporting of delinquent child support payments to credit bureaus.

AGAINST THE MEXICAN BAILOUT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Kentucky [Mr. BUNNING] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUNNING of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, the President has proposed that the United States cosign a loan for Mexico to the tune of $40 billion. But is the Government of Mexico a good risk?

The Wall Street Journal pointed out in its editorial on January 23, the problem in Mexico is bad economic policy. The Mexican Government borrowed too much and now it is suffering because it cannot meet its payments.

That inability to pay has caused a crisis of confidence in the Mexican peso which plunged in value. This, of course, had led to a wave of handwringing by the usual handwringers here in Washington, most of whom were pushing us to support NAFTA just a short time ago.

Apparently, the Mexican Government has not yet learned that free financial markets do not reward over-consumption in the form of borrowing in excess of the country's ability to pay.

Unfortunately, Mr. Clinton and his economic advisers have not learned that lesson either.

We went down this sorry road in the early 1980's when we bailed out the big banks that were too big to fail but which had greedily overextended credit to Mexico and other developing countries.

The Clinton administration would have us believe that if we simply pony up the loan guarantee, the Mexican Government will reform its policy of borrowing short term to pay for current consumption.

It is quite a leap of faith that Mr. Clinton is asking us to make. And, the leap looks even longer when you know that the Mexican Government does not even acknowledge that it has made a mistake.

The Wall Street Journal, again in its January 23 3ditorial, quoted the Mexican Foreign Minister as saying that the markets should not be taken too seriously because they are nothing more than ''15 guys in tennis shoes in their 20's.''

That is hardly the type of attitude that inspires my confidence to guarantee an American bailout for Mexico.

It does not seem to this Kentuckian that the working people of the United States should be cosigning a note to save those who made bad investment decisions. The big banks that made those bad decisions and those pension funds that made those bad decisions should bear the losses for their poor judgement, not the taxpayers.

A loan from the Federal Government is great—if you can get it. I am certain that Orange County, CA, could use our help. I am sure that the local governments in eastern Kentucky could do with a little help too.

We need to concentrate on helping our fellow Americans first. If we want to guarantee loans, we do not need to look beyond the city limits of Washington because our National Capital is in financial trouble.

Before we obligate ourselves to a potential $40 billion bailout of Mexico, we must have collateral from them to secure the loan. If the collateral does not cover the full cost of the loan, we should not cosign.

My guess is that short of military intervention Mexico will be no more willing to surrender the collateral today than when they would not pay American investors after nationalizing the oil industry.

As William Seidman pointed out in his companion article to the Wall Street Journal editorial, ''Insuring a debtor who has a real problem is not likely to be cost free.''

We cannot control the policies of the Mexican Government now anymore than we could in the 1980's; and, those are the policies which must change to restore confidence in the peso.

The potential cost of the guarantee is $40 billion regardless of who is ultimately in charge of Mexico's Government. And, I, for one, do not think that it is wise for the United States to underwrite bad decisions by Mexico and big international banks.

We should step back and let Mexico settle its problems the old-fashioned, American way: Let the debtor and creditors settle the problem between themselves, without the United States taxpayers taking a $40 billion hit.