

States like Florida show that this is the approach we should be taking.

I urge my colleagues to take a stand for positive, commonsense welfare reform and support this legislation.

□ 1030

DEMOCRATS WANT WELFARE REFORM, BUT NOT EXTREMISM

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have not heard anyone here on either side of the aisle defend the present welfare system. All of us want change. The difference is, on my side of the aisle, we do not want extremism. We do not want a system that is going to just punish and not find a way out for independence.

I am from Texas, and I can tell the Members that the child nutrition program has been helpful. Every report tells us that once the program started, children are attending school better, their attention span is longer, and they are achieving grades. We cannot, as a nation who cares, send our children through life without some kind of caring.

Mr. Speaker, if we want to create 50 new bureaucracies by sending it to the States, then we will have more government than we ever bargained for. State's rights for poor children in Texas has never worked. One out of every nine children in Texas is now hungry. Almost half of the low-income families are now hungry.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell the Members that most of these families have at least one working person. Are we going to throw our children to the wolves to give a tax break for the rich? I hope not.

WELFARE REFORM: REAL CHANGE VERSUS FALSE HOPE

(Mrs. KELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I do not know what is more disheartening, the vicious cycle of dependency perpetuated by the current system of welfare, or the mindset on the part of some Members of this institution that a national welfare bureaucracy is the only way to help those in need.

The American taxpayer has not lacked in generosity. We have invested well over \$5 trillion on welfare in this country since the mid-1960's, and welfare spending continues to rise.

And yet, despite this commitment, illegitimacy rates have risen, welfare dependence remains constant, and fewer recipients of assistance are working. Five million families received AFDC benefits in May 1993, up from 3.7 million in 1988, and over half of those families will remain dependent on welfare for over 10 years.

As working women and mothers, who among us does not remember earning their first paycheck, meeting that first payroll, or the pride of seeing our own child bring home their first paycheck. It is this sort of restoration of self-esteem that we must achieve.

The Personal Responsibility Act of 1995 fundamentally restructures the way in which we think about welfare. It maintains a system of support for those in need, while restoring the notion that welfare recipients have an obligation to use this assistance to better themselves. We have an opportunity to accomplish real reform, and instill real hope in the lives of those caught in the welfare trap.

SAVINGS FROM REPUBLICANS' PLAN TO CUT CHILDREN'S SCHOOL LUNCHES WILL GO FOR TAX CUTS FOR THE WEALTHY

(Mr. EVANS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, the Republican plan to decimate the school lunch program will penalize millions of America's kids, working families, and women, and the Republicans will use the savings to serve up a free lunch of tax cuts and tax concessions to millionaires and large multinational corporations.

Conservatives often say that the deficit will be passed on to our kids, but their approach to deficit reduction will mean that our kids will pay now and that they will pay with their potential. Their block grant proposal will block the future of 140,000 kids in Illinois alone.

The school lunch program is one of the most successful, one of the most cost-effective, and one of the most important programs that the Federal Government has ever administered.

I urge my colleagues to stop the Republicans from keeping this program and America's kids hostage to the Republican Contract on America.

REPUBLICANS' WELFARE REFORM PLAN OFFERS A HELPING HAND-UP, NOT A HANDOUT

(Mrs. SMITH of Washington asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, according to the Congressional Research Service, welfare spending in 1992 reached an all-time high of \$210 billion. This is nearly three times as much as we need to abolish all poverty in the United States.

What does the American taxpayer get for this? What do we have to show for it? I will tell the Members: a bureaucracy that is wasting our money. Even worse, we have higher crime, higher illegitimacy, family disintegration, low educational achievement, neglect, and moral confusion.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think the devil himself could have come up with a better scheme to destroy America and her children. Yet, the Democrats come here day after day to defend a system that has produced nothing but misery for America's poor, and the poor children. They have done this after controlling Congress for over 40 years, building this system of misery.

We have pledged to change the failed liberal welfare system, not by giving a handout, but by giving a helping hand up.

SCHOOL LUNCHES ARE IMPORTANT FOR OUR CHILDREN

(Mr. BENTSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, the proposal to change the Child Nutrition Program into block grants will hurt the children of the 25th District in Texas. This week the Texas School Food Service Association visited me and explained the consequences of this proposal.

With the new block grant scheme, which in essence will give fixed sums to the States, Texas will lose big—close to a 30-percent reduction in moneys to the children of Texas. It is estimated for instance that the Houston Independent School District [HISD], one of many school districts in the 25th District, would lose \$1.677 million next year to provide nutritious breakfasts and lunches for children.

I do not believe that HISD will fail to serve these children. Instead other educational programs will have to be cut. If we want our kids to learn and grow up to be productive citizens, we cannot expect them to starve in the process. In many cases, school meals are the only nutritious meals that children will receive each day.

This Republican proposal will actually create 50 new bureaucracies in 50 States. In addition, the new program will not have one national nutritional standard. Without a good meal, many children will have trouble learning. We need to invest in our children to ensure our future. The School Lunch Program today successfully feeds an average of 13 million children each day with a well balanced meal.

Mr. Speaker, as we say at home, don't mess with Texas. Mr. Speaker, don't mess with the kids' school lunch.

TRUE COMPASSION AND THE WELFARE SYSTEM

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, the so-called political experts say do not respond to your opponents attacks, just ignore them. But in this case I just