which is not an option, if we are not going to raise payroll taxes, which is not an option, and if we are not going to freeze, standing in the corner, sort of fossilizing it the way the dinosaurs went, that only leaves one other option for saving Social Security. This other option I think ties straight back to what Senator BOB KERREY, over on the Senate side, a Democrat, is talking about. He says, you have got to have a real rate of return, a real return on assets, if we are going to save Social Security over the next 50 years.

We cannot save Social Security by having it offered to young people today at a suboptimal return. If it is only going to return to them a negative rate of return or a 1 percent rate of return over the course of their lives, we can be assured that Social Security as we know it will disappear over the next 150 years because the consensus in America is not going to be for a sustained rate of return of zero or 1 percent. So I think that the only option in saving Social Security is letting one earn more on their Social Security investment.

The trustees have said, if we do nothing, Social Security begins to run shortfalls in 2012, it begins to run, basically run out of money in 2029; that the average rate of return for everybody working and paying into the system is about 1.9 percent; and that for people born after 1940, the rate of return is actually negative. Now, if you earn a negative rate of return, or if you earn a 1 percent rate of return, you do not end up with a whole lot at the end of the one's working lifetime.

This idea of rate of return is very, very powerful in people's lives. If you take two 20,000-per-year workers, in other words, one fellow earns 20,000 and another fellow earns 20,000, they both go to work at exactly the same age, say they begin work at age 25, and they work until they are 65. If one earns 1.9 percent on your rate of return based on present Social Security taxes, you end up with $175,000 in the bank.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this afternoon, I expect to be joined by other women Members of Congress. I have already been joined by my distinguished cochair of the women's caucus here in the Congress, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON). We have come because this is a special month. It is called women's history month. We who are Members of Congress are not historians, however. While we exalt in women's special history in this country and acknowledge the need to use this month to make Americans more aware of the vital role that women have played in the country's history, we have an additional obligation, we who serve in the Congress, and that is to keep people current on what it is that this Congress is doing for women and for families. For now 21 years the women's caucus has taken as its special obligation to secure the rights and needs of women and their families.

I am going to say something about the work of the women's caucus because I believe that much of that work is done behind the scenes and women's history month is a good point to let Members and others know of the history that is being made in this body for women and for families. Before I am through, indeed in just a few minutes, I am going to hand it off to my cochair, the Republican cochair of the caucus, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON), and then I will come back to say something further.

Last year was a landmark year for the women in Congress. We are 50 strong now. We know that that is nothing to write home about if you consider that there are 440 Members of this body, but it does mean that there has been progress in this body since there was hardly a woman to be found among the Members. And that was the case 21 years ago.

Last year in celebrating our 20th anniversary, we had the first dinner we have ever had because we thought when you get to be 20 years old, you ought to do something special, and we had that in a beautiful Federal building downtown, a historic structure. President Clinton, First Lady Hillary Clinton, both attended the dinner and spoke, and the first woman ever to be Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, was the featured speaker, and because women like to have fun, Sweet Honey in the Rock came to sing for the women and men who were gathered there.

What we do most of the time, however, is not to celebrate. What we do most of the time is to fix upon some priorities from among the many that confront the country every year affecting women and families. Mrs. JOHNSON and I thought that on the 20th anniversary of the caucus, we ought to look at the great progress we have made and think about how we should proceed in the future.

We looked at what milestones had been accomplished. I have to tell Members, without detailing all of them during the time we have this afternoon, that they are most impressive, 20 years of concrete achievements.

To give you just a feel, a few examples. Women in Congress are particularly proud of what we have done for women's health. Women's health was a submerged and neglected field when the women's caucus was born. Today, however, women's health is an issue that women and men in this body can take real pride in. Women are now included in clinical trials. Women had the great neglected conditions, but now osteoporosis and breast cancer are among the conditions that the Congress has given a particular time and attention to.

We are beginning to focus on a real sleeper issue in women's health. If I were to ask the average person what kills more women than any other condition, there would probably be some conditions in the cancer category that people would come forward with because there is so much said about this disease. But the fact is that it is heart disease that kills most women. We need to look closely at heart disease in women to see what it has in common and how it is different from heart disease in men.

Beyond health, and there are a dozen conditions and avenues in health that the women's caucus has brought alive in its 20 years, but I would also cite the Family Medical and Leave Act. This opportunity for people to take uncompensated time off for a serious health need has been a godsend to hundreds of thousands of families already, and it was just signed in 1992. It is a landmark piece of legislation. It leaves us behind most industrialized countries because most industrialized countries give some form of compensated leave for family and medical needs, but we are getting there.

There is, of course, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, to name another of the great achievements of the women's caucus. When I was having my children, pregnancy was not even covered by health insurance plans, and if it was covered at all, it was covered in a very small amount compared to other conditions. A woman could be dismissed because of pregnancy. This, of course, was discrimination based on pregnancy, and I was Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission at a time when we believed that pregnancy discrimination was, of course, covered by title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. A decision from the Supreme Court interpreted title VII not to cover pregnancy, however, and it fell to this body to make it clear that title VII should cover pregnancy, and the landmark Pregnancy Discrimination Act was passed. There is no question that women's ability to move as they now must in the workplace would have been severely hindered without the work of this body on the Pregnancy Discrimination Act.

If I could name just one more among many pieces of legislation that are hallmarks of the 20 years of women in the Congress, the Domestic Violence Act, this is another piece of legislation that it took years to enact, but which everyone now embraces as a landmark act. Domestic violence crosses all manner of boundaries in our society, and women have been left without help or assistance, with the focus of the Congress on criminal violence. This body opened itself to understanding that some of the worst violence occurs inside the home, and that more women are murdered by partners and husbands than by strangers. And so the Domestic Violence Act was passed.

Before speaking further about the work that the Congress is doing led by women Members of Congress to make history and not simply celebrate women's history month, I would like to turn to my very good friend, the gentlewoman from Connecticut, Mrs. JOHNSON. I turn to Mrs. JOHNSON, with whom I work side by side, sister to sister, one party or the other notwithstanding. We work together, we believe, as a model of how bipartisanship can and should work in this body. And we believe that the women's caucus is the best example of bipartisanship in the Congress, and we have lots of concrete results to show for what good bipartisanship can do notwithstanding difference in party.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON), Republican cochair of the women's caucus.

□ 1515

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from D.C. (Ms. NORTON) and, indeed, I am proud to serve with my colleague as co-chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues because it has made an enormous difference to restructuring the law over the years to recognize the needs of women and the rights of women to be free and equal participants in our democracy.

We are all blessed to live in a land where individual freedom, individual responsibility, equal opportunity and equal justice are the principles that underlie our government. But those ideals cannot be realized unless they are reflected in the law and, indeed, the law changes and moves and has to be amended and reformed as our understanding of what it means to be free and equal changes.

And so it took almost 100 years, well, I guess it was a good 70 years from the time that women really organized to get the vote at a tea party in Seneca Falls before they actually gained the right to vote in a Nation whose underlying document says we are all free and equal and that we believe in self-government. So it does take time.

And today, as we use this special order to kick off Women's History Month, I would like to just talk a little bit about some of the major changes in the structure of law that governs us, that both reflect women's demand to be free and equal citizens in our great Nation, but also have enabled women to do so.

Many of us remember the days before Title IX when women did not have any right to play intercollegiate sports. There was simply no money in it for it, and all the sports budget went to men and all the scholarships went to male athletes. Today, we have women competing on teams in the Olympics, in a great variety of sports, specifically because the Congress of the United States passed Title IX that guaranteed to women equal access to sports opportunities.

That changed the physical education programs of our grammar schools, of our high schools and, very importantly, of our colleges. And it is for that sole reason alone, that change in Title IX under our education laws, that we as a Nation are competing in the Olympics in many, many sports and winning many gold medals.

The equality that women have achieved, not quite, but we are moving in that direction, in the arena of sports has been reflected also in their opportunity for higher education. And we see an increasing number, in fact a very great explosion in the number of women who are lawyers and doctors and engineers and experts of all kinds, having graduated from college, having had access to the same education that men in our society have had access to many moons before.

So our education statutes, as they were written, and rewritten then, have been a bridge over which women have traveled to gain the real equality that comes from the individual equality that comes from equal access to educational opportunity.

Other areas of great achievement are in the areas of health research, and the Congress Women's Caucus has been a leader in the area of health research and women, not only to focus new research dollars on the areas of women's health, the diseases that were most threatening to women, because they were not getting nearly the research attention that the diseases that threatened men were receiving, but also to change the way we do health research so that research was focused equally on women with heart disease as well as men with heart disease; black women as well as white women; black men as well as white men; ethnic diversity, racial diversity and both genders in all of our research studies, in all of our clinical studies, so that knowledge advanced not just about cardiac disease in men but about cardiac disease in a diverse population in a free society.

So the Congress Women's Caucus led that effort to change the way we do clinical trials, to change the way we do health research, as well as to include at the top of the Nation's health agenda those diseases that were most threatening to the lives of women.

And in the area of retirement security, we simply had to change the law so that as a man earned a right to a pension over the years, he could not sign away his wife's right to a pension after his death without her knowledge or permission. So through the law we enhanced women's opportunity for retirement security as we enhanced women's opportunity to equal educational opportunity and as we have in many areas enhanced women's opportunities in the workplace to equal earning power.

On this issue of retirement security, our first efforts were to make sure that a spouse could not sign away his wife's right to retirement, a small retirement pension; and thereafter to follow that with a homemakers' IRA and other things to equalize the opportunity for women, both women who were married to workers and women who worked, to have the equal opportunity to prepare for a secure and economically adequate retirement.

But we also have had to change the law in many other areas to assure women's equal treatment under the law.

So in the area of family violence, when I first was elected to public office, and now that goes back many years at the State level in the '70s, it was all right for a man to beat his wife. It was not all right for him to beat his neighbor's wife. He could be actually arrested and put in jail if he beat his neighbor's wife but if he beat his own wife, he could not be charged in the same way.

And that is because way, way back, women were men's property. And our free society, in spite of our Constitution, in spite of our beliefs that we were all equal and free, was slow to apply that concept of equality to the concept of violence. So today if a man beats his wife he will be treated just the same as if he beat his neighbor's wife. And wives are equally protected against violence with any other woman not related by marriage to a man.

So in the area of health, in the area of retirement security, in the area of violence, in the area of education, in the area of work force participation, women have made tremendous strides. But there is more to be done. The challenges ahead of us are real and we must achieve them if women in America are to achieve real equality of opportunity, real freedom and real personal responsibility, and in the equal justice under law.

In the future, Federal day care policy must not discriminate between the benefits we provide to women who have to pay for out-of-home care and the benefits we provide to women in the same economic bracket, the same earning bracket who provide that care to their children at home.

We have to better recognize in a society where research has shown that development from zero to 3 is so crucial, we have to provide a day care policy that does not discriminate against the parent caregiver. So we have much work to do in day care.

But the Congress Women's Caucus has led the battle and won the battle for ever more money into the day care component of welfare reform and in the day care support that we provide working parents. But we have a long way to go in developing a nondiscriminatory policy that simply supports women in the very, very important work of raising children, and particularly in those critical years from zero to three.

We have a long way to go in assuring that women have equal economic opportunity. And while we have made a lot of progress in some areas, 47 percent of the work force is female but only 5 percent is senior management. Seventy-five percent of those working women hold low-paying jobs with little

security. Very few, for example, are successful in the skill trades.

In fact, of all the areas, that is perhaps the area of lowest female achievement. Only .8 percent of the Nation's 1.2 million carpenters are women; only 1.3 percent of the Nation's plumbers and steamfitters and pipefitters are women; and only .7 percent of our mechanics are women. And yet those are jobs that are well paying; those are skill jobs that pay $23 to $27 an hour. And these are areas of nontraditional work where women need the right, if their skills and interest lead them, to participate on an equal basis.

Finally, we have enormous challenges in terms of workplace policy. The gentlewoman from D.C. has talked about the leadership of the Congress Women's Caucus and the work of the Congress to provide family and medical leave and more equitable treatment of pregnant women. We also have to go further than that.

I believe we need to provide protection for women who want to change, or men for that matter, who want to take time and a half off instead of time-and-a-half pay.

People need to have the right to choose between time and money when it comes to bringing up their families. They need to be able to better balance the challenges of work and family in the interests of themselves and their own children. The law needs to be structured in such a way as we did in the Family and Medical Leave Act, that that individual employee choice is protected, and that the employee is protected from retribution in the course of employment by the employer.

I am proud to say that, in the comp time bill, the protection is modeled on the protection in the Family and Medical Leave Act, but it is stronger. I think we have to recognize far more forcefully than we have women's need in the workplace for flexibility.

We believe in personal freedom. We believe in personal responsibility. There could be no equal opportunity without women having the freedom and responsibility to better balance their work and family responsibilities.

So there is much work to be done in many, many areas. But as we go forward in Women's History Month, we must make sure that we all understand not only the progress that women have made, but the degree to which that progress has come specifically as a result in changes in the laws that govern us so that we all do enjoy the same access to education, the same access to health research dollars, the same access to retirement security, the same access to job opportunities, and the same access to protection as employees.

So it has been really a pleasure to join the gentlewoman of the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) this afternoon. It has been a great honor to work with my colleague these 2 years as co-chairs of the Women's Caucus.

I am pleased to see that some of our colleagues have joined us.

Ms. NORTON. I would like to thank my co-chair of the Women's Caucus for those very informative remarks and for her work with me on women's issues in the Congress.

Before I yield to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) who has joined us, I want to also thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON) for continuing the theme that we have set during this hour; that we are not simply this month celebrating women's history. We in the Congress are celebrating women making history. As such, we are informing women and families of America about just how that history is being made in this body.

Before I yield to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. MORELLA), I do believe we have an obligation to update women and families on new legislation that has just been passed in 1997, much of it through the work and pressure of the Women's Caucus, that affect women.

There are four or five very important such pieces. One is an expansion in mammography coverage. Breast cancer and mammography coverage have been a priority for the women in Congress, important facts for women on Medicaid, which covers not only elderly women but disabled women. We have reduced the age where mammography is covered from 39 years to 50 years. This is important information that is probably not out in the public as yet because it is so new.

We have expanded Medicare and Medicaid coverage for Pap smears, pelvic exams, clinical breast exams, and bone mass exams; this only in the past year, 1997.

□ 1530

We have barred discrimination in Medicare and Medicaid coverage of domestic violence and discrimination in the use of genetic information. This moves us toward correcting abuses that were reported to the Congress. And, of course, I think that there is more general information, as we approach April 15 when taxes must be paid, that we are beginning in this year to have the possibility for families who are raising children under 17 to get a tax credit for those children of $500.

These are examples of the nuts and bolts of what it means to fight for women in the Congress, to have something to show for it, to listen to what women and families say they need and to fight for it on this floor and to carry that fight over into the other body.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have been joined by the woman who was the Republican cochair of the Women's Caucus during the 104th Congress, the Congress before this Congress, and a woman who has fought hard for women and families ever since coming to Congress. I yield to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA).

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia, the cochair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, for yielding. I want to thank her and the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON), who just spoke earlier, for the leadership that they have shown with the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues. I am the former cochair of it and very dedicated to the issues that we have heard espoused and others that need to be done.

I know as we talk about Women's History Month there is no need really to go back to Margaret Brent from my great State of Maryland who in 1648 asked for the right to vote for women, it did not come about until 1920; or to the fact that Eileen Collins has just been appointed to be one who will command a space mission next year. But right now I wanted to focus my comments on just a couple of issues, the issues of child care and family violence.

One of my top priorities for this Second Session of the 105th Congress is to expand access to, and the quality of, child care. To that end I have introduced the Dependent Care Tax Credit Refundability Act, H.R. 2553. It will help working families obtain quality child care.

Currently the dependent care tax credit is a critical source of child care funding for low-income families. Unfortunately, it does not help the poorest of the working poor because it is not refundable. As a result, those who earn too little to pay Federal income taxes do not receive the amount for which they would otherwise be eligible.

My legislation would both expand the credit to help more families and make it refundable to enable the poorest of working families to qualify. It would also include those who provide respite care for ill or disabled dependents.

Over 5 million children under the age of 3 are in the care of others while their parents are at work. Finding quality care for these toddlers is particularly difficult. Research shows that the first 3 years of life are a critical period of brain development, of intellectual growth, of emotional development. Thus for children in child care during these years, the quality of the child care is inextricably linked to their growth and development.

I am pleased to be a sponsor with the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) of legislation, the Early Learning and Opportunity State Grants Act of 1997, H.R. 2713. This legislation will provide grants to States to expand the availability and improve the quality of care for children from infancy through age 3.

College costs and the burden of child care can make a college education inaccessible for many women. Women are twice as likely to have dependents as men, and 3 times as likely to be single parents. For these reasons, I have introduced the College Access Means Parents in School, known as the CAMPUS Act. This legislation will enable

more low-income women to get a college education by providing campus-based child care centers.

Often finding affordable quality child care can be an insurmountable barrier for students who have children. The CAMPUS Act will tear down this barrier by providing financial incentives for colleges and universities to establish campus-based child care centers. The good news is that students who have access to campus-based child care centers are more likely to stay in school and graduate than the average college student. Peace of mind that their children are being well cared for enables most of these students to achieve a higher grade point average and to complete their college education in less time than the norm.

It is critical that we address the issue of child care at the earliest opportunity. I will continue my efforts along with the rest of the Women's Caucus to make this assistance a reality.

When the Violence Against Women Act became law in 1994, it changed forever the way the Nation addressed the crimes of domestic violence and sexual assault. Today there are more investigations, criminal prosecutions and stiffer penalties for those who cross State lines to commit domestic violence. Millions of dollars have been given to the States to help them reshape the responses of police officers, prosecutors, judges and victims' service providers to violence directed at women. There is increased funding for shelters and there is a national domestic violence hot line.

But the 1994 act could not and did not cover every issue involving violence against women. Working with the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the NOW Legal and Education Defense Fund, the Family Violence Prevention Fund, Ayuda, the Center for Women Policy Studies and many other organizations, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), the gentleman from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) and I have crafted an omnibus bill, dubbed VAWA II, which is Violence Against Women Act II, that will reauthorize programs under the original legislation and also address such issues as child custody, insurance discrimination, battered immigrant women, campus crime, legal services eligibility, medical training, workplace safety, and the problems faced by disabled and by older women.

This shows that much more needs to be done, but the concerted efforts that we hear about here and that we will read about and, I hope, support of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues will note that this Women's History Month will mark the beginning of some significant changes and advances in progress made for all women.

Again I want to thank the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), the cochair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues. I notice that the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY), who is very supportive, is also here to address this body. I urge my colleagues to join us in cosponsoring all the legislation that was mentioned, VAWA, II and ensuring that its critical provisions are approved in the near future.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Maryland for coming forward to participate in this special order, for her work last term as cochair of the Women's Caucus and for her continuing hard work with this caucus. I thank her also for those very valuable remarks.

I am pleased to see that as the gentlewoman from Maryland has said, we have been joined by another good friend in the caucus, another very hard worker in the caucus and a very productive and hard worker for women and families in the Congress, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me. I thank her for her kind words, for her very hard work on behalf of women and for her energy and for her great intelligence. I also thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON), the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) for celebrating Women's History Month, for participating in this special order and for organizing it in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the House this evening to honor the story behind the creation of National Women's History Month. In doing so, I salute the National Women's History Project from the 6th Congressional District of California, the district that I represent. This year, our Nation celebrates the 150th anniversary of the women's rights movement. In my home district, this is of particular interest and a particularly special occasion because Sonoma County is the birthplace of the National Women's History Project, the organization responsible for the establishment of Women's History Month.

The National Women's History Project of Sonoma County is a nonprofit educational organization founded in 1980. The history project is committed to providing education and resources to recognize and celebrate women's diverse lives and historic contributions to our society. Today they are well known by educators, publishers and journalists as the resource for U.S. women's history information and referrals.

As recently as the 1970s, women's history was virtually an unknown subject. In 1978, as chairwoman of the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women, I was astounded, as well as the other members of our commission, by the lack of focus on women.

During this time, with the leadership of Mary Ruthsdotter who followed me as the next chair of the Commission on the Status of Women, the commission designated the week of March 8 for International Women's Remembrance. This celebration throughout county schools was met with enthusiastic response, beyond anything we had anticipated. I am proud to tell Members that this observance marked Sonoma County's first Women's History Week, the first women's history week in the country that we call America.

The key to the celebration was to have communities and schools recognize the importance of women and the mark that women of all cultural backgrounds have made on society and on our history. It soon became a goal to get Congress and the governors nationwide to declare National Women's History Week.

By 1981, with the hard work of the History Project, Congress declared a National Women's History Week. Together, the women of my district and the National Women's History Project succeeded in nationalizing awareness of women's history.

As word of the celebration's success rapidly spread across the country, State departments of education encouraged activities to honor Women's History Week as a way to educate students about the diverse role of women in history. Within a few years, thousands of schools and communities nationwide were celebrating National Women's History Week.

In 1987, the National Women's History Project first petitioned Congress to expand the national celebration to the entire month of March. Due to the project's successful efforts, Congress issued a resolution declaring March Women's History Month. Each year since, nationwide programs and activities on women's history in schools, workplaces and communities have been developed and shared during the month of March.

In honor of Women's History Month, I must also pay a very special tribute to Molly MacGregor, Mary Ruthsdotter, Maria Cuevas, Bonnie Eisenberg, Suanne Otteman, Lisl Christie, Donna Kuhn, Sunny Bristol, Denise Dawe, Kathryn Rankin and Sheree Fisk Williams, the women at the National Women's History Project.

□ 1545

These women from Sonoma County serve as leaders in the effort to educate Americans about the contributions women have made and are making in our society.

The history project works with teachers and leaders of national women's organizations to encourage the development of programs and events that celebrate the diversity of women's lives. The project also works with curriculum specialists in school districts throughout the country to help teachers integrate women's history into the schools.

Under strong and thoughtful leadership, the National Women's History Project has been recognized for outstanding contributions to women's and

girls' education by the National Education Association, for diversity in education by the National Association for Multicultural Education, and for scholarship service and advocacy by the Center for Women Policy Studies.

I am grateful to all the devoted women at the National Women's History Project for developing women's history month, and for coordinating this year's 150th anniversary of the women's rights movement for this country.

Again, I am proud to honor the National Women's History Project, an organization which has brought national visibility to women's accomplishments. They have left an indelible mark on Sonoma County and across the Nation. Their legacy and work serve as a reminder of the barriers women have overcome and the barriers that yet remain.

Congratulations, wonderful women, and thank you for all that you have done.

I thank the gentlewoman for organizing this special order.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY), for those very important remarks and for her work with our caucus.

I want to continue to talk about that work. I spoke earlier about new legislation that the caucus worked to get passed last year. I want to speak about new ground we have broken with new approaches to working for women as a part of the Women's Caucus.

We have initiated three new approaches. One is a team approach, a bipartisan team approach. The other is a Women's Caucus hearing approach, and the third is a women's town meeting approach.

Let me say a word about women's bipartisan teams. We are a bipartisan caucus, and we have often worked together on an omnibus legislative bill so we can bring together every bill that women have introduced, and we have put it all into omnibus legislation and we introduced it.

We decided that the Women's Caucus should continue to work on such legislation, but that we ought to work more closely together in teams of Members who have special interests. I think the women and families of America need to know about this team approach.

Did you know that the women of the Women's Caucus are working as teams? That means we Republicans and Democrats led each team, one from each party, on issues that we read from our constituents as among their primary concerns when it comes to women and families.

Let me call out what these teams are, and let me let you know what women Members are working on these teams.

Expanding the work against violence against women, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. CUBIN) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD).

Preventative health services for women, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) and the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN).

Educational child care and school readiness, a major issue this session, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) and the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TAUSCHER).

Job training and vocational education, the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK), and here may I say I am calling out the team leaders. There is not enough time to call out all the team members for each important area.

Title IX, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. KILPATRICK).

Health care insurance reform, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. SMITH) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER).

Juvenile justice, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. MYRICK) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Women in the military, the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. FOWLER) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN).

Pensions and retirement benefits for women, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DUNN) and the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. KENNELLY).

Teen pregnancy, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON).

Higher education, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ).

Women-owned businesses, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD).

HIV–AIDS, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JOHNSON).

International women's rights, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. MCKINNEY).

You have teams, but what do these teams do? Let me offer a representative sample of what these teams have been doing, because I believe that when you hear some of what in fact happens that may not meet the public eye on the floor of the Congress, that women, men and families in America will have some sense of the very hard work that women insist upon doing for women and families.

The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FOWLER) is a Republican; the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN) is a Democrat. They have worked like two peas in a pod on an issue that reared its head the first day of the 105th Congress, and that was sexual harassment of women in the military.

As I speak, there is an important trial going on of a high level military official who was accused of sexual harassment. At Aberdeen, they broke a terrible story of drill sergeants who were said to be harassing women in their command.

We are concerned about this, but I do not think the country should be surprised. You cannot change what has occurred over the millennia, which has been putting men and women together in the military, without knowing there will be occasions like this.

The real question is, what are you going to do about it? You ought to expect there will be some occasions like this, and we ought to, I think, be very proud of our armed services, that this is very much the exception and not the rule.

Well, Representatives FOWLER and HARMAN, working closely with the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON) and me, simply decided we were going to press this issue to the finish. I am pleased to report that our team leaders, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FOWLER) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN), worked with the chair of their subcommittee, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER), who is the chairman of the Subcommittee on National Security on military personnel, and brought that work into our caucus so that we could coordinate with that committee as they went all around the country to see whether or not sexual harassment of this kind was present in other installations as well.

This issue has been settled in the Army, as far as I am concerned, because they brought it before us, the secretary of the Army Togo West, and what has happened is an extraordinary report that indicates the action that the Army is going to take.

I have to say that if the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. FOWLER) and the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON) and I sat down to write what had occurred, we could not have written a better report ourselves.

We think this is going to take care of the sexual harassment in the Army, and I am proud of the work the women in the caucus have done here. We were far more disappointed at the Kassebaum Commission report, because that commission had been established by Defense Secretary Cohen following reports of sexual harassment in the military, a very distinguished commission, which worked very hard.

But I am here to report that the bipartisan Women's Caucus disagrees that women should be separated in training. We think all you do is to delay the problem. If women are separated in training, you are going to get women and men coming together for the first time when they are in fact in the field. Rather work these problems out in training, than to bring them to the field, where we simply cannot afford that kind of intrusion on the work of our Armed Forces.

This is a bipartisan matter. We are not necessarily speaking for Democratic women or Republican women.

We are not about to turn back on the notion that we want to further integrate women in the Armed Forces, not move back from where we were. As it is, each service can decide how they are going to do this, and the Marines are not integrating training. But we are not going to stand for moving back, for example, integrated training in the Army, where integrated training has occurred.

If there is a problem, there is a problem at one installation. There may be problems at others. You do not deal with problems by turning back the clock; you deal with problems by rooting out the problems.

There is a commission of people who have studied this matter before in the Armed Forces, and they have said they believe, above all, that women should be further integrated, and not taken back. So the Secretary of Defense is going to have to decide which way to go.

We appreciate what the Kassebaum Commission did and we understand why they did it, but I have to tell you, if anybody had looked closely at the integration of blacks and whites in the services after World War II, I can tell you that there were many incidents, and that it was very hard to get southern white men under the command of black men. But in a command structure, you can do it, and we did it successfully in the military with blacks and whites, and the Women's Caucus is going to demand it be done as well with women and men.

The team has done yeoman service and work, and they continue to be vigilant and report to us in their report to the caucus that they will be looking at specifically gender segregation in the military to see whether or not anything emerges on the floor, so that the entire Women's Caucus will come forward to fight, if need be.

Thus far, all is quiet on the home front. I think that those who want to come forward to try to sex segregate training know that they are going to have a fight on their hands, and I think so far, so good. But be forewarned, you are going to meet a phalanx of women on the floor if you try it, and they are going to be Republican women and they are going to be Democratic women.

Let me go on to report on another team, the Preventative Health Services Team, just to give you an idea of the kinds of things Women's Caucus do that do not always make it to the floor as legislation.

That team, of course, is chaired by team leaders the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA), from whom you have just heard, and the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN). I should really say Dr. CHRISTIAN-GREEN, by which I mean MD doctor. Dr. Green has been a MD for more than 20 years, and is now a Member who represents the Virgin Islands.

An example of what that team has in mind for this year is that among the things that that team will be doing this year is a presentation on breast self examination by Doctor-Congresswoman DONNA CHRISTIAN-GREEN.

They reported she is going to discuss proper breast self-examination, and what she is going to do is ask women staff from all over the Congress, the Senate and the House, and she and the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) are going to call them together and have a discussion about this, the progress that has been made, and what we need to do to get breast self-examination more widespread.

You will not see that on the floor of the House. That is the kind of innovative thinking and follow through that is typical of these two Members and of Members of this caucus.

Let me give you another example from the work of the team leaders on Women-owned Businesses. That team has as team leaders the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY).

They have already had a hearing, and I will have a word to say about that later, but they have already had a hearing on women's procurement in the Federal sector. The Federal sector is the granddaddy of all procurement, obviously, because the Federal Government is so large and so many contracts are let, and they found some difficulty as women strive to get more of those contracts.

□ 1600

Let me tell the Members an interesting approach they have taken. Together they have introduced House Resolution 313, which makes recommendations on ways women can gain access to more procurement opportunities for the Federal Government. But being women, who always like to get something done, they have done more than simply introduced the resolution. They have sent copies of their resolution, their follow-up in this session has been to send copies of this resolution to all Federal agencies, encouraging them to implement these recommendations right now, without legislation, as a follow-up to their own women's caucus hearing.

I believe the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) may want to say some more. I will finish with these teams, so if she wants to have something more to say, I will yield more time to her.

The gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) works on the team on HIV/AIDS. This is an issue that plagues our country still. We have made enormous progress on it, but the disease is moving sideways to women and to people of color. We have to find ways to keep the disease from popping up in a new population. We have done well. We need to do much work, but we have done well with gay men. We cannot have this disease move over to minorities and women, and we need more work here.

They will be sponsoring a briefing with HHS and advocacy groups to discuss access to treatment for low-income HIV-infected women and their families, and Medicaid coverage for such patients. This disease is moving to women, but particularly to low-income women, and particularly to women of color. That will be a real service.

Finally, let me say a word about a follow-up to a hearing that my co-chair, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. NANCY JOHNSON) and I had on contraceptive research. We found that the government is not doing contraceptive research anymore. That means more abortions, and that means nobody in the world is doing it, because we pay for most of this research.

We want to encourage more of this research, and we want to encourage more work to cover contraception so that after-the-fact remedies like abortion will become rare, as it is said. The gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON) and I sponsored such a women's caucus hearing and we are sending a letter to insurance companies encouraging health plans to provide adequate coverage for contraception. There are all manner of plans that cover abortion and do not cover the pill, do not cover the IUD.

That is an invitation at a time when we have not done enough contraceptive research, it is usually inadequate and I must say not foolproof methods available to use, and then go to backup remedies which none of us want to encourage. We hope that insurance companies will provide such coverage. I am a cosponsor of the bill, as is the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON) that would require companies to do so. But in advance of that and before that bill passes, we would like voluntary compliance.

We are also drafting language regarding contraceptive research funding to start up again the kind of funding that only the most powerful and richest government can do. We do not have adequate contraceptive research for women in America. We do not have it for women in the world. It is one of the great services we could do for the world.

Would the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) have more time she desires before I go further?

Mrs. MORELLA. No, I do not, thank you.

I want to congratulate the gentlewoman on the fact that in her discussion of Women's History Month and what the caucus has done, that she has stressed the bipartisan nature, and the fact that we do have partnerships, we do have teams that work together on all of the various issues, whether it is pay equity, child care, domestic violence, HIV/AIDS and health issues, small businesses. I think the gentlewoman has articulated it very well. It really is just the beginning of all of the work that we do, so I thank the gentlewoman very much.

Ms. NORTON. I thank the gentlewoman for her efforts to make our caucus truly bipartisan, because it certainly takes hard work. We iron out our differences and go ahead. On things we disagree, those do not become caucus issues.

On choice, for example, there are some Members, Democrat and Republican, that are not with us on choice. Therefore, we do not worry with that in the caucus. Those of who are strongly pro-choice will do it on our own or with other Members.

Mr. Speaker, let me finish by saying that the two other groundbreaking approaches the women's caucus has used this session are town meetings and women's caucus hearings. We had a town meeting on pay equity, because we have found that that is a number one issue for women and families. That was a meeting where we did not do most of the talking. We invited women from around the country to do most of the talking. Most of those women came from operations like the business and professional women's clubs of America. It was an important innovation for the women's caucus.

We have had four women's caucus hearings. I mentioned some of the team members. Those hearings have been on zero to 3, the groundbreaking work that has been done on what we all had better understand about young children and what has to be done. It is to far more adequately stimulate them and get child care for them.

I have mentioned contraceptive research. We have to move ahead on that or else we are inviting more abortion. This last year was the 25th anniversary of Title IX. We had a hearing to commemorate it and to indicate the great unsolved issues under Title IX, and of course I have mentioned the procurement hearing because while there is a 5 percent goal, a voluntary goal, for women for contracts from the Federal Government, we are only at 2 percent. The women's caucus hearing brought that out.

Mr. Speaker I appreciate the time that has been awarded to the 50 Members of Congress for this special order.

HONORING WAYNE FOWLER FOR HIS 32 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, this is a labor of love for me, because it is a privilege for me to rise this afternoon to honor my constituent, Wayne Fowler, for his 32 years of service to the House and the United States Government he has given us. Twenty-two years of that has come right here on our House floor, 6 years as an assistant enrolling clerk and 16 years as an assistant journal clerk.

During his years of service, Mr. Fowler has exhibited a deep appreciation for the value of the legislative process in its purest form, that of the parliamentary actions of the House. Mr. Fowler's devotion to the language of the House Journal, or ''journalese,'' as he calls it, is well known. Wayne never forgot to remind his colleagues that this style of prose has been in use in the House Journal since the second Continental Congress, and that the Constitution mandates the keeping of the House Journal, which is the official record of House proceedings.

Wayne Fowler is a true renaissance man. He is a lover of art, music, and literature. He is an avid bicyclist, which keeps him in such good shape. He is also known to his co-workers as someone who believes in empowering and supporting the work of the young people who also serve this House. He could often be found explaining the procedures of the House to the House pages, something they would never forget, and many of them might go on to become Members of this House and continue to remember that.

Mr. Fowler serves as the verger at St. Columbus Episcopal Church, where he is responsible for the order of the liturgy and for training and supervising the acolytes.

I want to congratulate Wayne. I want to offer my best wishes to him, to his wife, Anona, their two sons, Wayne and Perry, and their wives, Leslie and Amber. We miss you, Wayne, but we wish you the best in your new adventure, and we thank you for your dedicated service to our House of Representatives and to our great country. Come back and visit.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2495

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be deleted as a cosponsor of H.R. 2495.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia?

There was no objection.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET PLAN THREATENS TO BRING BACK HUGE FEDERAL DEFICITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) is recognized for no more than 20 minutes.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, let me just say that this week we heard some remarkable news come out of the Congressional Budget Office. The Congressional Budget Office reported that we will see this year an $8 billion surplus, and I think that is remarkable news for our country, and it is noteworthy to say that a lot of that progress has been made just in the last few years.

I noticed here as I looked back at the 1995 projected deficit, the 1996 projected deficit, and the 1997 projected deficit, that as recently as 1995 the projection was that the deficit this year would be $164 billion, in 1996 it was going to be $107 billion, and in 1997, $22 billion, is what it actually ended up being, and this year we actually have erased the red ink and we are operating in the black.

That is a remarkable achievement, considering from where we have come in these past few years. That is the good news. I think we ought to all reflect on the fact that that is good news. I think, again, it marks the first time in 30 years we have been able to operate in the black, and it is a tribute to the fiscal discipline that has been exercised by the Congress in the last couple of years in trying to get Federal spending under control.

The bad news, of course, is the fact that after years of hard work to eliminate these deficits, President Clinton wants to send the Federal budget back into the red. That is what is shown also in the analysis of the President's budget which was released yesterday by the Congressional Budget Office. The President's plan breaks the budget and breaks the agreement that we just reached this last year. Worst of all, it breaks faith with the American people.

It took us since 1969, when the first man walked on the Moon, to bring the Federal budget into balance. The President's plan will bring back deficits in just 2 short years. We should have expected that, because the President has proposed some 85 new initiatives costing $150 billion over the next 5 years.

In addition, he has proposed increasing taxes to their highest level on our society since 1945. Any budget that returns us to the era of more taxes, more spending, and deficits, even for one year, is unacceptable. I think we treated the President's budget with courtesy when it was received on the Hill but declared it dead on arrival, and I think CBO's findings should certainly slam the coffin lid shut on this ill-conceived plan which threatens to wipe out all the progress we have worked so hard to make in bringing down Federal spending and eliminating Federal deficits.

There is an $8 billion surplus in 1998, a remarkable achievement, and I think that hopefully we can continue down that track to build on surpluses in the future. The other part of the bad news, of course, in all this debate and discussion is the fact that even though we are operating in the black this year on a unified basis, budgetary basis, we still have $5.5 trillion in debt that we have racked up over the last several years. We need, I think, again, to put a plan in place to retire that debt.

One of the things that we have looked very seriously at, and in fact I have cosponsored, is a plan that has been offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. NEUMANN) which would deal with that very issue. If we can assist and in a systematic way get the discipline that is necessary to reduce