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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 19, 1999, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority leader, the minority leader or the minority whip limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) for 5 minutes.

FEDERAL ADOPTION SERVICES ACT OF 1999

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I will soon be introducing an important pro-child bill, the Federal Adoption Service Act of 1999. This bill is offered as a companion bill in the House to the bill offered in the Senate by Senator JESSE HELMS, S. 42.

The Federal Adoption Service Act of 1999 corrects a serious omission from Title X services, adoption. Adoption has been called the ''loving option.'' It offers mothers who are using Title X services the choice of life.

No woman, Mr. Speaker, should be given only partial choices by a clinic, especially a federally funded clinic. Every woman in America should know about the option of adoption. Let me repeat. Every woman in America should know about the option of adoption.

Planned Parenthood clinics have been confronted time and time again on this floor because they seem to be promoting an abortion and contraceptive agenda. The very fact that this federally funded program does not offer adoption as a choice proves the contentiousness of this program, and that is why we need this bill.

Women today are increasingly pro-life. A recent survey found that 53 percent of the females that responded thought abortion should be allowed only in cases of rape, incest, and to save the life of the mother. This figure is up from 45 percent in 1996. We must offer these women the option of sharing life.

My bill would amend Title X of the Public Health Service Act to permit federally funded planning services to provide adoption services based on the needs of the community and the ability of a clinic to offer these services.

Adoption is a wonderful solution for many loving parents unable to have children and for many expectant mothers who feel incapable of providing for their child. The Federal Government should be instrumental in helping make this option available for all mothers.

Congress has repeatedly shown itself to be supportive of adoption. With tax credits and Adoption Opportunity grants, we have taken the stance that adoption is a wonderful option and one that should be made easier for all.

Mr. Speaker, it is unimaginable that there has never been a specific adoption provision for federally funded family planning clinics. Congress has taken an active role in encouraging the adoption of foster children, yet it overlooked the needy Title X clinics.

Recently, my home State of Florida took a bold step by creating a ''Choose Life'' license plate. This plate's proceeds will go to not-for-profit agencies supporting adoption. I am proud that the organization that promoted this plate and gathered the needed petition signatures is based in my home State in Ocala, Florida. I applaud the ''Choose Life'' organization for their hard work and dedication. Thanks to their efforts, adoption agencies in Florida will benefit.

My bill will not force a mother to give up her child. Nor will this bill force family planning clinics to provide adoption services. Rather, it will state that Federal policy is to allow and encourage adoption as a choice for family planning.

The Federal Adoption Service Act of 1999 is a rational solution offering women another option. I hope my colleagues will join me in cosponsoring this sensible proposal.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BALLENGER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, in November of 1996, Linda Stone was fatally shot by her abusive husband in the parking lot of Austin's Oak Hill Motorola plant. Her death was tragic for more than the simple reason that it occurred unnecessarily.

Linda Stone was employed at that Motorola plant; and, on the day of her death, she was en route to make extra security arrangements with her employer because of new threats from her husband. This occurred in a community that has been a leader in domestic violence assistance and prevention for over two decades.

I think Our Safe Place enjoys broader community support than any public service organization in central Texas. But since stories such as Linda are becoming all too commonplace, I am introducing a bill today that will give new options to those unfortunate victims who face danger in the workplace.

The Domestic Violence Economic Security Act will provide that no State shall deny unemployment assistance solely because a victim has left work due to a reasonable fear of domestic violence. This approach to the problem

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