

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE HEARING ON H.R. 1, "NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND"

HON. LAMAR S. SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2001

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I submit my testimony regarding H.R. 1 the No Child Left Behind Act. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on H.R. 1, the "No Child Left Behind" bill.

The President has made this legislation a priority because Americans are concerned about the quality of their children's education. They are also troubled about the decline in our nation's values and its effect on our children. Polls consistently reveal that virtue and ethics are issues of top concern. Parents should be the primary developers of character but educators play an increasingly important role.

Unfortunately, too many of our children are bombarded daily by negative influences. Society pays the price when we mock values. To reap the rewards of a virtuous society, we must sow the seeds of character when we educate children.

Communities across the nation recognize that character education is an integral part of a well-rounded curriculum. Our Nation's teachers are aware that character education helps to establish a set of standards for behavior, provide role models, and create caring environments. For instance, many students in Texas participate in character education programs and the lessons they learn now will serve them well in the future.

President Bush has made character education an important component of his education reform bill. By allocating \$25 million to character education, States, local education agencies, parents and students will have an opportunity to promote character and values.

However, there are additional steps to be taken if we are to be successful. For that reason, I urge the Committee to look at H.R. 613, the Character Learning & Student Success Act (CLASS Act of 2001), which I introduced in February.

This legislation provides a grant to develop initiatives and disseminate up-to-date information about character education and also funds a study that will examine whether or not character education programs are successful and sustainable.

H.R. 1 calls for states to base their character education efforts on the findings of scientific research, yet educational experts have not been given the opportunity to develop those sound scientific conclusions. It is not even known where and how character education has found its greatest success. To support character education in its entirety, we must include research and the dissemination of useful information.

In our changing and challenging world, children need affirmation that society respects men and women of character. It is imperative that we teach our children the values that strengthen their character and make our country strong.

CONDEMNING THE RECENT ATTACKS IN ISRAEL

HON. DAVID VITTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2001

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn the violent terrorist attacks that have wracked Israel and to extend my sympathy to the victims and their families. I would like to especially extend my condolences to Yitzhak Pas, who just two days ago lost his 10-month-old daughter and was himself shot in the legs by a Palestinian sniper.

The next day, Islamic Jihad executed two terrorist bombings that rocked Jerusalem, with the clear intention of taking more innocent Israeli lives. During Jerusalem's morning commute, a booby-trapped car was detonated at the side of a busy road, injuring five Israelis. Later in the afternoon, a suicide bomber boarded a bus loaded with students on their way to Hebrew University and detonated his nail-laden bag of explosives, injuring over thirty passengers.

Only PA Chairman Yasir Arafat can stop the violence, and of this he clearly has no intention. He has organized and instigated the violence since his rejection of peace at Camp David. I urge my colleagues to sign the Hyde/Lantos letter to President Bush, which calls for a reassessment of the U.S. relations with the Palestinian Authority, and reaffirms the United States' enduring support of Israel in this time of crisis.

IDAHO GIRL SCOUT HONOREES

HON. C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2001

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize five outstanding Idaho women who are positive role models for young girls in the Gem State. Maria Berain, Sandra Bruce, Susan Eastlake, Marjorie Findlay, and Sam Sandmire portray a lifestyle to which young girls can look for inspiration. In a time of constant change and difficulties for our youth today, statistical evidence and observations show girls have a lack of everyday role models to look to. These women are leaders that all young people can look to and learn from.

They were recently recognized by the Girl Scouts of Silver Sage Council as Women of Today and Tomorrow. Each of them excels in their individual careers and positively impacts their communities.

Maria Berain is a mentor with the Boise State University College Assistance Migrant Program. She supports Hispanic women to pursue their college education by counseling them on study habits and course selection.

Sandra Bruce is president and CEO of Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center. In addition to guiding the hospital in growth and success she engages in civic organizations including Boise Public Schools Education Foundation and Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce.

Susan Eastlake is the founder of the Southeast Neighborhood Association and an Ada

County highway District commissioner. She also has worked on the Simplot Sports Complex and on behalf of the Les Bois Soccer Tournament.

Marjorie Findlay was chosen to be the first woman senior warden of St. Michael's Cathedral. She is a two-term president of the Idaho Botanical Garden. Her many cultural and educational contributions include fund-raising for the Discovery Center and chairing UNICEF drives.

Sam Sandmire is the head gymnastics coach at Boise State University and part-owner of the Bronco Elite Arts and Athletics Club. She was voted conference Coach of the Year of 2000 and is recognized as an advocate for women in competitive sports.

Mr. Speaker, as you can see, these women have accomplished great things and are examples of hard work, character, and leadership. I congratulate them and am delighted to have them reaching out to share their values with today's youth. They are true assets to Idaho and the nation.

WEEMS GALLERY AND FRAMING

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2001

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring to your attention a woman in my home town of Albuquerque, New Mexico who has contributed much to our community. On March 20, 2001 Mary Ann Weems along with friends and family celebrated the 20th anniversary of Weems Galleries and Framing.

Inspired by her vision of a gallery that would warmly welcome anyone who found joy in art as an expression of life, Mary Ann began this journey toward excellence in the visual arts twenty years ago. Her first gallery was in a little-noticed shopping center, opened with borrowed money and lack of business experience. She won the confidence and trust of New Mexico artists and aficionados who joined in supporting her vision of making more art accessible to more people.

That vision led 10 years ago to the first Weems Artfest, now the nationally ranked annual event which attracts thousands of families and children to see and experience New Mexico art. The Artfest also provides an affordable venue for all kinds of artists to gain exposure for their talents. The Artfest benefits the whole community of artists by increasing awareness of their work, and by expanding the community of admirers who will pay a fair price for art that touches their spirit. Additionally, the Artfest hosts a charity event to raise funds for healthcare needs in our community, particularly for children.

By making art more accessible for children, Mary Ann gives every child who participates the chance to discover something wonderful in themselves. For children who face challenges, it's a discovery gives them powerful hope for their future. Mary Ann serves as my Chairperson for the Congressional Art Competition.

Mary Ann Weems earned her success in the visual arts the hard way, by trial and error and sheer grit. She achieved excellence in the visual arts by setting new standards for what a gallery can be, and what an art show can become, and making her vision real for the whole of New Mexico's art community.