

professors and speakers, especially at very liberal schools like Antioch, Oberlin, the University of Colorado, and some of the Ivy League schools.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that colleges and universities around this Nation will strive for full diversity and true academic freedom by allowing at least a few token conservatives onto their faculties, or at least as graduation speakers.

IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL SECURITY TO LATINO COMMUNITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the importance of Social Security and how it impacts the Latino population throughout this country.

We must remember that the initial intent and purpose of the Social Security retirement system was to help alleviate the poverty among our elderly Americans and to meet the retirement needs of all workers. We must not forget the severe poverty that our seniors suffered prior to Social Security. Social Security has become the single most effective Federal anti-poverty program in our history, lifting more than 11 million seniors out of poverty.

Latinos are critically affected by any proposed changes in the Social Security System. A significant segment of the workforce, Latinos, and especially Latinas, women, represent a disproportionate percentage of those who lack employer pension coverage. We, as Hispanics, tend to work in small companies, small businesses, which do not have pensions. We are underrepresented in government jobs and for that reason do not have a lot of the pensions that others do. More than other segments of the population, Latinos depend heavily on Social Security to live their senior years in dignity.

The Latino population is growing rapidly. Currently, Latinos constitute 8 percent of the total U.S. workforce, and by 2010 Latinos are projected to account for 13.2 percent of all the workers. From 1997 to the year 2020, the number of Latinos that are aged 65 will double.

Unfortunately, despite the gains in education and other areas, Latinos still remain concentrated in low-wage jobs that provide few benefits. While more than 51 percent of Anglos workers have employer pension coverage, the same is true for only one-third of the Latino workers. Accordingly, Latino retirees are more than twice as likely as Anglo retirees to rely solely on Social Security benefits as a means of economic support.

In addition, Latinos are less likely than Anglos to receive incomes from interest on savings and investments. For example, in 1998, of all the persons reporting interest income, only 5.3 percent went to Latinos.

I would like to also applaud the efforts of some groups that are looking at the impact that any changes in Social Security will have on women. While reforming the Social Security System, we have serious implications for women, and especially Latinas. The women in our community, Latinas, may be the most severely impacted of all populations. The Latinas are more likely than other women to work inside the home and are less likely than other women to have retirement savings accounts.

Moreover, Latinas are less likely than other workers to have access to private pension coverage, and they tend to receive the lowest wages of any group in the work force. Relying heavily on Social Security benefits, changes in marital status or the loss of a principal wage earner places Latinas in a particularly vulnerable situations.

Given the paramount importance of Social Security to Hispanic men and women, we must approach so-called reform efforts with caution, weighing the impact on this key, fast-growing population. I am concerned that the plans to privatize Social Security would drain needed resources from the Social Security Trust Fund and jeopardize benefit payments to retirees, the blind, disabled workers and survivors.

The leading plan proposed by the administration's hand-picked Social Security commission would drain \$1.5 trillion from the trust fund in just the next 10 years, money that is already being used for other purposes. Privatization of Social Security would require cuts in guaranteeing Social Security benefits. The President's Social Security commission recommended a privatization plan that cuts benefits for future retirees by up to 46 percent. Everyone would be subject to these cuts, not just workers who choose to have individual accounts, and Latinos would be hit the hardest.

Social Security privatization would expose individual workers and their families to greater financial risks. Under privatization, benefit levels would be determined by the volatile stock market, by the worker's luck in making investments, and by the timing on his or her decisions to retire. In light of the Enron disaster, we know the risks.

Latinos, who are, more than other groups, dependent on Social Security as a guaranteed income stream in retirement, would lose under privatization.

Other proposals, while well-meaning, would not help us reach our goal of ensuring future solvency. I ask that, as we look at Social Security, we make sure we look at its impact on special populations as well as the baby boomers and what we consider the baby echos, those kids of those baby boomers.

PRESIDENT BUSH STANDS TALL FOR DOMESTIC STEEL INDUSTRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGLISH. Mr. Speaker, allow me to take a moment to applaud President Bush for standing tall in favor of our domestic steel industry. He has, at a very critical moment, stood up for steel. If we have a domestic steel industry in coming decades, I believe it will be because of this courageous action and an administration that was willing to listen to steelworkers, listen to steel producers, and also listen to all other interested parties in order to craft a creative policy. He clearly listened to those who were calling for substantial relief for an industry in crisis. It has been running the risk of being hollowed out by unfair trade practices.

It is obvious that the President carefully weighed the issue. His judicious decision will provide breathing space to the domestic steelworkers and the industry. Enacting tariffs of up to 30 percent for most steel products provides help for those hardest hit by unfavorable conditions in the steel market. This administration has stepped up to the plate for the American steel industry and its workers, something that previous administrations, regrettably, had been unwilling to do.

Without the concrete actions taken by this President, the industry was facing a meltdown. The President recognized that the American steel industry and its workers have done their part in recent years. This is something that critics do not really willingly acknowledge, but the fact is our steel producers have taken dramatic steps to reduce inefficient capacity and modernize operations to become among the most productive steel producers in the world, with as few as one-and-a-half man hours needed per ton of steel produced.

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That is an extraordinary transformation of an industry that was very inefficient a few decades ago.

To achieve these advances in productivity, the U.S. steel industry reduced capacity by more than 23 million tons, closed numerous inefficient mills, and significantly cut jobs. The workers have endured their fair share of pain and suffering as the workforce was reduced by hundreds of thousands of workers in an effort to become the most efficient producers of steel. But we all know that when competing with the unfair trading practices of some of our competitors, it was simply not enough.

Let us understand, Mr. Speaker, what the President did was WTO compatible. It was based on remedies approved by the International Trade Commission, and it utilized our 201 process, which the WTO contemplated. While opponents of this 201 action are crying foul, saying the cost will be prohibitive, Mr.