

identify and simplify burdensome regulations that work against college students and personnel, and are non-controversial and technical in nature. They provide for improvements that will reduce red tape for colleges and universities and will improve the financial aid process for students. Enacting these changes now will allow the House Education and Workforce Committee to address larger, more intricate proposals during the reauthorization of the HEA without being bogged down with technical and clerical issues.

This legislation provides for the streamlining and increased effectiveness of many provisions within the HEA. It reinstates two provisions beneficial to both students and institutions that expired on September 30, 2002. Specifically, schools with default rates under 10 percent for three consecutive fiscal years will be permitted to waive a 30-day delay requirement for first-year, first-time borrowers. Schools meeting the same low default rate standard would also be permitted to request one term loans in a single disbursement, rather than the required multiple disbursements. These provisions act as an incentive to schools to keep their default rates low and assist students in getting access to their loan funds on a timelier basis.

The FED UP Higher Education Technical Amendments Act of 2003 also corrects an error in an overly broad implementation of a provision affecting a student's eligibility for Title IV financial aid once convicted of a federal drug offense. Only those students enrolled and receiving Title IV aid when convicted will be affected once this correction is implemented.

A drafting error during the 1998 reauthorization of the HEA inadvertently removed the eligibility of not-for-profit foreign veterinary schools from participation in the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program. This legislation will correct that error and keep hundreds of students from losing their loan eligibility.

This legislation also provides clarification for financial aid officers in the return of Title IV funds. It clarifies how the return of Title IV funds should be implemented for schools utilizing clock hours, and what percentage of funds need to be included in any return. The language also makes clear that Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP) funds may be removed from the return of Title IV funds formula due to the mix of State and Federal funds at the school level. It clarifies that students who have been home schooled, and are treated as such under State law, are eligible for admittance into an institution of higher education as defined in the HEA and are eligible to receive financial aid. It also allows aid professionals to use professional judgment in determining financial need for a student who is declared a ward of the court.

This bill allows for the use of technology wherever possible to enhance and improve communication and the transfer of information. This includes reporting by States in providing information on teacher quality and providing students with voter registration materials.

This legislation allows student loan borrowers to receive more timely assistance from their lenders when they are seeking forbearance of loan payments. It allows a lender to accept a request for assistance over the telephone as long as a confirmation notice of the agreement reached is provided to the bor-

rower and the borrower's file is updated. This eliminates the need for borrowers to sign paper documents requesting help and agreeing in writing to what they already have agreed to verbally.

The FED UP Higher Education Technical Amendments Act of 2003 corrects an administrative issue in the payment of insurance to lenders and reinsurance to guaranty agencies on borrower default claims when the borrower failed to establish eligibility for that loan. This change reinstates long-standing policy of the Department of Education in the payment of these specific claims, which was altered by a new reporting process put in place via a forms change.

This legislation allows Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) to apply for HSI grants without having to wait two years in between applications. It also clarifies allowable uses of grant funds within the Thurgood Marshall Legal Educational Opportunity Program. It also provides clarification within the Federal TRIO programs that institutions with more than one campus may apply for separate grants to serve different populations at different campuses.

This legislation also provides clarification as to what items must be included within the annual report of the Department of Education's Performance Based Organization (PBO). Finally, the bill corrects the names of the authorizing committees throughout the HEA.

The FED UP Higher Education Technical Amendments Act of 2003 will take us one step closer to reducing burdensome rules and allow financial aid administrators and others in the higher education community to do their jobs more efficiently and effectively. Program integrity and service to students remain the priority and this legislation accomplishes both.

This legislation also brings forward, as an addition to FED UP, the provisions passed by the House of Representatives in the previous Congress that deal with the forgiveness of student loans for spouses of victims of the tragedy of September 11th and provides for the additional innovation of the delivery of post-secondary education by eliminating the rule prohibiting institutions of higher education from offering more than 50 percent of their coursework through distance education. This provision provides for a controlled look at increasing the availability of distance education, while protecting the integrity of the student aid programs.

We will be beginning the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act with this Congress and this is a very positive, productive and efficient first step. FED UP has accomplished its goal of streamlining the current regulatory system to the extent possible, while maintaining or improving program integrity, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY GUARANTEE PLUS ACT OF 2003

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, whether we live in prosperous or uncertain times, American families need economic security—the kind of economic security that Social Security provides.

For 68 years, Social Security has protected workers and their families from falling into poverty if a breadwinner retires, suffers disability, or dies. Social Security has endured, unlike many other government programs, because its architects designed it to be owned by workers and to treat all workers fairly.

Social Security has evolved over the decades, strengthening its protections and finances along the way. However, our nation's demographics and economics are fundamentally changing, and Social Security's ability to continue meeting its promises is threatened. The Social Security Guarantee Plus Plan I am introducing today will enable Social Security to continue fulfilling its vital role in the lives of all Americans.

First, the Guarantee Plus Plan keeps intact the Social Security safety net. Promised benefits, including cost of living increases, are guaranteed for people receiving benefits today, tomorrow and for all future generations.

Second, the plan treats all workers fairly. Workers have paid into the system, it's their money, and we must protect and enhance their investment. It's not fair to workers to raise their payroll taxes or lower their benefits. Nor is it fair for the government to tell workers to work longer. That's why my plan does not raise taxes, does not lower benefits, and does not change the retirement age.

Third, Social Security payroll taxes belong to the workers who paid them. My plan gives workers a real ownership stake in Social Security by allowing them to choose to receive a tax cut to invest directly in prudent, individually-selected, market investments. For the first time, a nation of savers, not the government, will own and control the assets backing Social Security. Should an individual die before becoming eligible, the balance of their money will be passed along to their heirs.

Fourth, under my plan, Social Security can be counted on for the next 75 years, and beyond. Real assets guarantee current and future benefits, establishing a sound and sustainable financial footing. No longer will there be a need to periodically increase taxes or lower benefits to keep the program working.

Beyond keeping these promises to all Americans, we must also do more to improve Social Security for the women of our nation. Because of their longer life expectancies and lower earnings, women are more likely to suffer poverty in old age. Social Security is a vital safety net for these women. In addition, because benefits are based on earnings, women are disadvantaged when they choose to stay home to raise their children. The Guarantee Plus Plan protects our daughters, our mothers, our aunts and our grandmothers, not only by securing the future of Social Security and guaranteeing full benefits, but also by enhancing benefits for widows, divorced spouses, and working mothers. These benefits become available immediately in my bill.

Here's how the Social Security Guarantee Plus Plan works. The plan guarantees full, promised, current law benefits for all workers, whether you are 6 or 65. Just as companies must back your pension plan with real assets, the Guarantee Plus Plan saves Social Security by setting aside real assets, not IOUs, to pre-fund benefits. These assets are saved in each worker's own account, thereby providing workers the opportunity to create real wealth for themselves and their families.

Workers who choose to participate will receive a refundable credit of up to 4 percent of

their earnings to establish their own Social Security Guarantee Account. Workers, not the government, would select where to invest their Guarantee Account funds. The assets in these accounts would grow tax-free. No withdrawals would be permitted until a worker starts receiving benefits to ensure that the money is preserved for retirement.

At retirement or when the worker becomes disabled, a portion of the Guarantee Account is paid directly to the worker and the rest is used to help pay full, guaranteed Social Security benefits. But that's not all.

In addition to the much needed improvements in benefits for women I mentioned, my plan eliminates the retirement earnings penalty for all workers age 62 and older and reduces the so-called Government Pension Offset affecting spouse and survivor benefits to certain government workers.

Other plans may cost less, because they cut benefits or raise taxes. If our goal is to pay full promised benefits, boost women's benefits, and return Social Security to financial independence, the Guarantee Plus Plan is the lowest-cost proposal to date. The Guarantee Plus Plan does all this and pays for itself over the seventy five-year actuarial period, and that's confirmed by the Social Security Administration's Office of the Actuary. Even under the most conservative estimates, the Guarantee Plus Plan allows the new Social Security system to generate surplus cash in the latter part of the century, actually adding black ink to the government's bottom line.

My plan uses general revenues to fund the accounts. Even assuming borrowing for a transitional period, my plan pays back every borrowed dollar plus interest within the seventy five-year evaluation period. Not only would we pay off the mortgage on Social Security, we would leave workers with substantial account balances and the federal government with excess cash.

The Guarantee Plus Plan also meets or exceeds all of the President's principles for reform—pays promised benefits to retirees, near-retirees, and all workers; no tax increases; no government investing; fully preserves disability and survivor benefits; offers individually controlled, voluntary personal retirement accounts that will augment Social Security. In addition, my plan is consistent with the first option to establish personal accounts recommended by the President's Commission to Strengthen Social Security. My plan also accomplishes the objectives agreed to by the House during the 107th Congress to guarantee current law promised benefits, with cost-of-living adjustments to current and future retirees, without increasing taxes.

This past November, we witnessed yet another election cycle featuring Social Security as a key issue. Once again, Americans showed their willingness to explore new ideas to strengthen this vital program, since the old ways must be improved upon for future generations. Once again candidates who took a stand on ways to save Social Security not only held their own, they won. Yet, once again, not one penny has been invested in saving our nation's most successful retirement program. The result—while politicians debate, the price tag for saving Social Security only goes up and up.

From the time of Social Security's enactment until today, the history of the program's evolution has demonstrated that while every-

body has his or her own ideas on how to strengthen the program, progress toward that goal is only achieved through bipartisan cooperation. It's long past time for us to lay all our best thoughts on the table and work together to build on our success to make a stronger Social Security system that is an asset to all and not a liability to our children and grandchildren.

IN HONOR OF DR. WILLIAM
CLAIBORN

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the accomplishments of Dr. William Claiborn during his 21 years of outstanding and dedicated service as Executive Director of the Alexandria Community Services Board and Director of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse.

Over the course of his career, Dr. Claiborn has taken the Alexandria Community Services Board from an organization of four facilities to a nationally recognized provider serving over 4,000 Alexandrians in 63 facilities. Under his dynamic leadership, the Community Services Board has made many tremendous accomplishments. From creating a nationally recognized Sober Living Unit at the Alexandria Detention Center to establishing the Parent-Infant Education Program that assists infants with developmental disabilities and their families, Dr. Claiborn has consistently gone above and beyond the call of duty to help others.

Dr. Claiborn's extraordinary commitment to improving the lives of his fellow Alexandrians, Virginians and Americans suffering from mental health problems; mental retardation and substance abuse has been a true blessing to those in need. His work in partnering with state and regional leaders led to the development of new Medicaid rules in 1989, representing a major positive change in social policy. Dr. Claiborn also spearheaded a regional cooperative effort to provide funding and carry out the discharge of people from state hospitals into the care of the Community Services Boards, where they would receive better treatment and higher quality care.

Mr. Speaker, it is with the greatest pleasure that I recognize Dr. Claiborn today. He is a brilliant and exceptionally compassionate public servant who has devoted his life to the betterment of our society and the people of Alexandria, Virginia, a city in which he has long served. The benefits of Dr. Claiborn's tireless efforts on behalf of the less fortunate will resonate not only in the present, but throughout Alexandria's history for decades to come.

SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO CHARLES F.
KURFESS FOR HIS YEARS OF
DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay special tribute to

an outstanding gentleman, and good friend, from Ohio. The Honorable Charles Kurfess, from Bowling Green, is retiring from his current post as Common Pleas Judge in Wood County. His retirement marks the conclusion of a distinguished career dedicated to the service of others.

Mr. Speaker, upon his graduation from Bowling Green State University in 1951, Judge Kurfess was drafted into the Army where he was assigned to the Counter Intelligence Corp. He spent thirteen months in Tokyo and then returned home to enroll in law school at The Ohio State University.

While in law school at Ohio State, Chuck was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives. After ten years as a member of the House, Judge Kurfess was elected Speaker and served in that capacity for six years.

Judge Kurfess has had a significant impact on public policy in Ohio. He has also been a strong proponent of justice during his tenure on the bench. He has reached out nationally in an attempt to improve the lives of all citizens living in this great land. This is evidenced by his service as a Past President of the National Legislative Conference (now the National Conference of State Legislatures) and his service to Presidents Nixon and Ford on the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. Serving his community, the state of Ohio and his country was not only Chuck's duty, but also his honor. These chances to give back to the public have brought him a lifetime of both personal and professional achievement. Judge Kurfess truly is a valued asset to Wood County and beyond.

Judge Kurfess has been a great resource and a true friend to everyone around him. Respected by his colleagues in the legislature and in the private sector, Chuck has shown the ability to improve the environment around him. He has been the recipient of many awards that reflect his service, to include being named the Outstanding Young Man of 1965 by the Bowling Green Jaycees, the Outstanding Freshman Representative by the Ohio Statehouse News Corp, he received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Bowling Green State University, and was the recipient of the Distinguished Achievement Award for Contribution to Public Service from Wayne State University.

Judge Kurfess will be missed in the public arena. His wisdom, honesty and forthrightness are attributes to which all public servants should aspire. He has set an example for everyone on how to live a life of service, putting the greater interests of the community before one's own.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Judge Charles F. Kurfess. Our communities are served well by having such honorable and giving citizens, like Charles, who care about their well being and stability. We wish Judge Kurfess, his wife Helyn and their three children all the best as we pay tribute to one of our nation's finest citizens.