

Mrs. Jones began her career as an economist with the Labor Department in Washington, DC. In 1981, she became an elementary teacher in the Jackson Public School (JPS) District in Jackson, Mississippi, where she has served since. In 1994, she served a 4-year tenure as president of the Jackson Association of Educators.

Mrs. Jones has received numerous awards and recognitions for her commitment and service in the interest of public education and the teaching profession. These acknowledgments include the Silver Apple Award, which she was presented by JPS Board of Directors in 1983. In 1988, she was appointed as a teacher representative to the Paperwork Reduction Task Force by then Governor Ray Mabus. And, most recently was selected as teacher of the year by her colleagues at the elementary school where she currently works.

Mrs. Jones is a valued member of the community and her contributions are greatly appreciated.

INTRODUCTION OF NATIONAL VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION WEEK

**HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 25, 2003*

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, today Representative JOHN PETERSON and I are introducing a bill to establish an annual National Visiting Nurse Association Week during the second week of May in honor of the army of health care heroes who, every day, comfort, care for, and assist our loved ones. Modern society takes for granted the need for nursing as an indispensable component of our public health system, but this was not always the case. The very concept of a visiting nurse can be traced to the pioneering work of Florence Nightingale. She reformed British military hospitals in the Crimean War through an expose in the British press, she professionalized nursing and made it an acceptable profession for educated women, devoted the rest of her life to building on her experiences, setting standards and writing books, until the mission of nursing had gained the respect of the world.

When Henry Wadsworth Longfellow read of the work of Florence Nightingale, he penned a poem, *Santa Filomena*, that spoke of the deep appreciation owed by all of us to those dedicated to service in the ultimate caring profession. He wrote:

Whene'er a noble deed is wrought,  
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,  
Our hearts, in glad surprise,  
To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls  
Into our inmost being rolls,  
And lifts us unawares  
Out of all meaner cares.

The Visiting Nurse Associations of today are founded on the principle that the sick, the disabled, and the elderly benefit most from healthcare when it is offered in their own homes. They are non-profit home health agencies that provide cost-effective and compassionate home and community-based health care to individuals, regardless of their condition or ability to pay for services. Through these exceptional organizations, 90,000 clini-

cians dedicate their lives to bringing healthcare into the homes of over 4 million Americans every year. In the face of rising costs and drastic changes in our health care system, visiting nurse associations have continued to deliver high quality health services for over 120 years.

It is time for Congress to recognize the vital services that visiting nurses provide their patients. Moreover, visiting nurses also are an indispensable lifeline for families. The comfort and quality care that visiting nurses provide can help family members cope with the difficulties of a loved one's illness.

I am proud to be introducing this important legislation with my colleague Representative PETERSON and urge my colleagues to join us in supporting National Visiting Nurse Association Week.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY,  
WORK, AND FAMILY PROMOTION  
ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

**HON. RAHM EMANUEL**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 13, 2003*

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 4, the Personal Responsibility, Work, and Family Promotion Act of 2003, and in support of the Democratic substitute amendment.

For twenty years, a complicit agreement regarding welfare existed between conservatives and liberals in this country. Conservatives refused to devote more money to the program, and liberals refused to demand anything of recipients. We lost two generations of Americans to this failed system of dependency.

I am a long-time believer in welfare reform. I worked in the White House and with the Congress to help enact the welfare reform legislation of 1996—and I was proud to be a part of the strong, bipartisan reform that legislation created. I applaud my colleagues in the House on both sides of the aisle who helped to pass what has been a landmark of successful reform. The 1996 reforms broke from the past with a new approach that grounded the welfare system in the values of work and responsibility. It was a bold and daring experiment that worked.

Instead of simply handing needy families a check, we created new opportunities for families on welfare. By providing access to education and training, we helped welfare recipients to get better and more lucrative jobs. Recognizing recipients' need to care for their young children, we helped them to get child care, and allowed mothers of young children modified work requirements. Realizing that many low-paying jobs do not provide health insurance, we instituted transitional medical assistance for families coming off welfare.

Since enactment of the 1996 reforms, enrollment has plunged more than 50 percent. The percentage of welfare recipients who work has increased five-fold over the past decade, and states now spend more on work support than on cash benefits. Thanks in large part to welfare reform, 8 million people left poverty in the 90s, teen pregnancy dropped by more than 20 percent, and child support collections doubled. We are moving in the right direction because we were true to our common values.

The most important thing we've accomplished with welfare reform has been to connect a generation of children with the culture of work. Most of us grew up watching our parents go to work. We internalized the value of work and now are passing these values onto our own children. Today, millions of children who would otherwise have grown up in a home where work was alien, now are being raised in a home where they are learning the routine of work.

In my state of Illinois, caseloads dropped 74.9 percent between 1996 and 2001, and, despite the recession, continued to fall an additional 23.7 percent in 2002. Many credit our strong success in caseload reduction to the state's innovative use of the flexibility in the original legislation, allowing Illinois to provide appropriate support for families making the transition from welfare to work. The proposed reauthorization will have a particularly disastrous effect on states like Illinois that have taken advantage of family support provisions to make notable progress. By removing the support system that has allowed many to get off and stay off welfare, this legislation is likely to create major setbacks in the progress of reform.

The Democratic substitute amendment builds on the success of the 1996 reforms. It retains the strong work incentives that not only help individuals go back to work, but provide them with greater job security by helping them become better educated, and train for better jobs. It recognizes the importance of giving mothers with young children the flexibility to take care of their children. It eliminates the current exclusion of legal immigrants from the system.

The Republican legislation represents a return to the failed ideologies of the past. It is not realistic to count the number of new hours of work mandated by this bill, and call reform a success. In voting for this legislation, you are voting against education and training to help current welfare recipients get out of dead-end jobs. You are voting for standards that will create hardships for working mothers, and add thousands to waiting lists for child care. You are voting to continue to exclude legal immigrants from participating in a program that would help them to contribute to this country rather than being simply a drain on the system.

In fact, I find the title of this legislation ironic: The Personal Responsibility, Work, and Family Promotion Act in fact stifles personal responsibility, discourages work, and creates hardship for families. Inherent in the concept of personal responsibility is making the choice to work towards self-improvement. By mandating more hours of work while limiting the training and education options are available to workers, this bill removes all incentive for personal responsibility.

Promoting work is not as simple as increasing work hours. There are likely to be countless individuals who, because they do not have the time, health, or child care resources to work forty hours each week, or simply cannot find a job where they are permitted to work forty hours, will choose instead not to work at all. If this legislation aims to promote work, it must do so by making work more realistic for workers and their families, not by imposing mandates that make working more difficult.

Lastly, the legislation creates untold hardship for families. By increasing mandated work