

finally have a window into what the true emissions of greenhouse gases are in countries that are rapidly developing such as India and China. The disclosures would also provide a strong disincentive for multinationals to relocate facilities abroad just to avoid disclosure or future regulation.

Madam Speaker, in closing I would like to say that we need to accomplish something this Congress to get us on the path toward mandatory emissions cuts. I truly hope that we enact a strong cap and trade bill, but unfortunately the President has made quite clear that he will veto any efforts to enact such legislation. If the President insists on such an unwise decision I hope that at the very least he would consider backing the Greenhouse Gas Accountability Act. Global warming is simply too important for us to play politics with this issue.

INTRODUCING THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR LOAN FORGIVENESS ACT OF 2007

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 11, 2007

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Early Childhood Educator Loan Forgiveness Act of 2007.

We have paid a lot of attention to reauthorizing the No Child Left Behind Act so far this year. One of the disturbing things we often hear in these discussions is how far behind our students are when compared with their peers around the world. Another problem we have talked a lot about is the persistent achievement gap between well-off, White children and everyone else in this country.

Last month Speaker PELOSI hosted a National Summit for America's Children, where we heard from leading child development experts about the importance of providing high-quality early education opportunities to boost success in school and in life.

Science shows definitively that a majority of brain development occurs in the first few years of life, and that influences—positive or negative—in these formative years can last a lifetime. We were reminded at the summit that “getting it right” in the early years is “far more advantageous than trying to fix things later.”

Kindergarten teachers know from first-hand experience what scientists know from their research: Often when 5 year olds enter school, there is already a noticeable achievement gap between those students from more privileged backgrounds and those from disadvantaged households.

Too often, working families cannot afford to send their children to a high quality preschool, so the youngsters end up spending their formative years in the care of family members—often untrained in early childhood development. The resulting hours in front of a television certainly do not stimulate the positive neural activity needed for healthy brain development.

Not only does this experience limit the child's potential for success in school, it also hurts our country. Children without a high quality early education experience are less likely to contribute to the economy, more likely to commit crimes, and more likely to experience poverty and the poor health that goes with it.

Scientists, economists, teachers, and parents tell us that we must invest in our country's future by funding increased access to high-quality early childhood education.

And yet, time and time again, I hear from the early education community in Hawaii that even with more classrooms and more money, they could not make real progress toward serving every family who wants to send their children to preschool because they don't have enough qualified teachers.

We know that a highly qualified teacher makes a huge difference for children. We owe it to them to have a teacher who knows what he or she is doing. Unfortunately, there are strong economic barriers to increasing the number of qualified early education workers. When students are choosing a career, it is unlikely that they will decide to take on the thousands of dollars in educational debt for a job that will pay so little. The average preschool teacher makes less than janitors, secretaries, and many other workers with only a high school diploma. As the saying goes, “it just doesn't add up.”

We can change the equation. We can start by providing loan forgiveness to students who get a degree in early childhood education or a related field and then teach in low income communities, where the real need is, for 5 years. This bill will do just that.

Cost is not the only prohibitive factor for prospective early education teachers. In some places there are simply no training programs available. Our teachers' colleges are not prepared to turn out the number of quality teachers we will need if we are to make a real investment in early education. Further, even with a more robust workforce, States would not have the money they need to implement high-quality early education standards, build the facilities, and run the programs. I am working with Chairman MILLER and others on the Education and Labor Committee to address these problems in other pieces of legislation.

But while we work on all the other issues, we cannot wait to pass this bill. It is a necessary first step because its benefits will not accrue immediately—training new teachers will take time.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill so that we do not miss a chance to make real progress toward closing the disturbing achievement gaps our children face—both amongst themselves and when compared with their peers around the world.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BLAIR HOLT FIREARM LICENSING AND RECORD OF SALE ACT OF 2007

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 11, 2007

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, today I introduce the Blair Holt Firearm Licensing and Record of Sale Act of 2007.

I introduce this bill in tribute to a brave young hero, Blair Holt, who sacrificed his life in an attempt to protect the life of a friend. Blair was fatally shot and killed by a young man possessing a deadly firearm and a reckless disregard for human life.

Madam Speaker, the proliferation of guns in our community impacts us all. My son lost his

life back in 1999 due to senseless gun violence and my nephew sits in jail today, convicted of fatally shooting someone.

I am sick and tired of shooting and the loss of innocent lives over and over again in our neighborhoods.

In Chicago, since the beginning of this school year alone, over 31 children have lost their life by violence, and the great majority were killed with guns.

This bill will assist law enforcement in tracking the flow of guns and require those who possess guns to be trained in gun safety, handling, and storage.

The purpose of this bill is to restrict the availability of firearms to criminals, youth, and gang members, and to protect the public against the unreasonable risk of injury and death associated with the unrecorded sale and transfer of guns.

I know that the powerful gun lobby will attack this bill for restricting the availability of guns, but all of us who live in the inner cities where our children and family members are losing their lives on a weekly or daily basis understand the need to implement a common sense federal law that will inform law enforcement of where the guns are and who is possessing them.

This bill will implement the same type of system that we have in place for licensing drivers and registering cars. No sensible individual can argue with the fact that with over 200 million guns in the United States, we need a uniform system to keep track of these weapons. Mayors and law enforcement officials across the country have been calling for this type of legislation for years and I hope that we will be successful in making Blair's Bill federal law.

Madam Speaker, the future of our children, our families, and our communities is at stake. I encourage my colleagues to join my efforts to increase accountability in our firearm policy and support H.R. 2666—the Blair Holt Firearm Licensing and Record of Sale Act of 2007.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, June 12, 2007 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.