

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE CHILD SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN ACT

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 2, 2000

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Child Support for Children Act. This legislation will connect non-custodial fathers to their children and provide a crucial support to low-income, single parent families.

When we passed welfare reform in 1996, we dramatically improved the way we enforce payment of child support. As a result of these changes, child support collections nearly doubled in 1999 to \$15.5 billion, an increase of \$8 billion since 1992.

Yet at the same time, we undercut these improvements by requiring a set of arcane rules for how we distribute child support to former welfare families. Worst of all, we repealed the pass-through and disregard of the first \$50 of child support paid to families on welfare, and allowed states to retain all child support for these low-income families.

This is the wrong policy. Child support is meant to help the children of non-custodial parents, not the state. Passing through child support not only connects fathers to their children, it provides a crucial support to poor families. Considering that the income of the poorest single-mother families has dropped for the first time in eight years, we must ensure that child support payments are used to improve the lives of our poorest children.

Federal child support collection and distribution rules are complicated and almost impossible to administer. Most importantly, they discourage payment of support by fathers to their families. With my bill, we have an opportunity to connect fathers to their children, boost the income of poor families, and fix a system in desperate need of change.

The Child Support for Children Act would require states to pass through all current support to families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Furthermore, the bill provides a financial incentive to states to discount this income when considering a family's eligibility for cash welfare. For every dollar of child support disregarded by states for the purposes of TANF eligibility, the federal share of TANF collections is reduced proportionally.

In addition, the Child Support for Children Act simplifies rules for the assignment and distribution of child support arrears. Although a family that has left welfare is currently entitled to receive most past-due support, several exceptions to this rule prevent former welfare families from receiving much-needed support payments. My legislation will eliminate these exceptions.

Finally, my bill would eliminate unfair debts owed to states that discourage the payment of child support to families. For example, states can currently recover Medicaid birthing and other pregnancy-related costs from non-custodial parents. The Child Support for Children

Act would prohibit this practice that often discourages non-custodial parents from coming into compliance with a child support order.

It is not enough to simply enforce child support. The time is long overdue to reform the distribution and assignment system for child support. The Child Support for Children Act takes desperately-needed steps to promote and reward parental responsibility, and extend modest support to struggling, single-parent families.

TRIBUTE TO THE VICTORIA HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY CHEERLEADERS OF VICTORIA, TEXAS

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 2, 2000

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the winners of the National High School Cheerleading Championship sponsored by the Universal Cheerleaders Association held in Orlando, Florida—the Victoria High School Varsity Cheerleaders of Victoria, Texas. This victory follows a history of winning third place in 1997, and second place in 1998.

By taking the championship in 1999, Victoria High became the first Texas squad to ever win the National Championship. With this second impressive win, the VHS Cheerleaders became the first squad in the nation to win back-to-back championships in the Medium Varsity Division of the UCA Nationals.

The competition was fierce, with the Regional competition starting in November, 1999, when the squad's first place win put them in line to take on 65 of the best of the best in Nationals. The teen's first trip before the judges in the preliminary round earned them a shot at the national championship, where they gave a stellar performance, shutting out their competition consisting of the top 14 squads in the country.

I am proud to recognize this very talented group of students for excelling in this very demanding sport. But I am equally proud to applaud their selfless efforts in representing their school through community service to the American Cancer Society, March of Dimes, American Heart Association, and the Texas Zoo of Victoria. They visit local elementary schools and participate in pep rallies during Red Ribbon Week and TAAS week. Each student is also required to maintain an 80 overall average while passing each class. They are to be commended for participating in these additional activities.

National championships do not come along by accident. Many, many hours of practice and training must take place to achieve them. Leadership is also a key ingredient. I want to recognize the VHS teachers, Denise Neel and Terese Reese, who helped make this goal a reality. Additionally, I commend the parents of each cheerleader who, no doubt, contributed greatly to this success.

This group of students deserve the honor they have earned. I commend each one of them: Laurie Beck—Co-Head Cheerleader, Amy Reinmann—Co-Head Cheerleader, Vanessa Bludau, Amber Clemmons, Sara Dickson, Courtney Horecka, Haley Kollé, Lacey Reed, Amanda Rodriguez, Karla Sterne, Sarah Carville, Melissa Keefe, Chelsie Luhn, Julia McLarry, Rachel Schmitt, and Ashley Valentine.

I am proud to have these two-time national champions in the 14th Congressional District of Texas, and trust all my colleagues join me in congratulating them on this impressive achievement.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE KENNETH MADDY

HON. STEVEN T. KUYKENDALL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 2, 2000

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with sadness to remember and honor a beloved figure from California, former State Senator Ken Maddy. Ken passed away last week at the age of 65 after a year-long bout with lung cancer.

I had the privilege of getting to know Ken during my time in the California State Assembly. He was a straight shooter, always sincere, and he treated everyone with the utmost respect; a class act. He was a brilliant legislator, one of the very best. A moderate Republican, Ken was admired by his colleagues from both sides of the aisle.

Ken Maddy knew how to get things done. He was a pragmatic legislator with an even temper, recognizing the importance of compromise. As Senate Republican leader he was the go-to guy for two Republican Governors because he knew how to get things done despite being in the minority party.

Ken represented California's Central Valley for 28 years, serving in both the State Assembly and State Senate. His career in public life came to an end in 1998 as he left the Senate due to term limits.

Ken was diagnosed with lung cancer just two months into his retirement. This came as a shock since Ken was a non-smoker. He had just signed on with a prominent public affairs firm and had gotten engaged when he was dealt this blow. But in typical Maddy fashion, he kept his chin up and put up a courageous fight. I will always remember his passion for life, politics, and people. He was like no other.

The State of California has lost a true leader. His life-long career of service will forever be remembered. Ken Maddy will be dearly missed, but his legacy will live on in the State of California.

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