

Individual Retirement Accounts, that can be used for purchasing a first home, paying for post-secondary education, or capitalizing a business.

IDAs are managed by community organizations and are held at local financial institutions. Low income individuals make a contribution to the account which is then matched by private or public funds. Under the legislation, participants can have no more than \$10,000 in assets (excluding their car and home) to qualify for the program. Federal money can only be used to match private money. In this way, the bill would leverage more private money and local involvement. By encouraging asset development, IDAs help families end their own poverty with dignity.

IDAs and other asset-building strategies for the poor appear to be among the most promising poverty-fighting ideas to emerge in the last few decades. It is estimated that 100 communities are running IDA programs in forty-three states. Twenty-five states, including Ohio, have incorporated IDAs into their welfare-to-work plans, as authorized by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The Joyce, Mott, Ford, Levi Strauss, and Fannie Mae Foundations have issued millions of dollars in grants to support IDA demonstration projects. IDAs have come a long way since the Select Committee on Hunger, which I chaired, first held hearings on this important idea in the early 1990's.

This demonstration project, will provide additional fuel to states, localities, and community based nonprofit groups that are looking for creative and enduring strategies to help low-income families move toward self-sufficiency.

Owning assets gives people a stake in the future and a reason to save, dream, and invest time, effort, and resources in creating a future for themselves and their children. Assets empower people to make choices for themselves.

I would urge my colleagues to pass this important legislation.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to express my opposition to S. 2206, which reauthorizes the Head Start program, as well as the Community Services Block Grant program and the Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). While the goals of Head Start and the Community Services Block Grant program are certainly noble, the means these programs use to accomplish these goals (confiscating monies from one group of citizens and sending them to another group of citizens in the form of federal funding for Washington-controlled programs) are immoral and ineffective. There is no constitutional authority for Congress to fund any programs concerning child-rearing or education. Under the constitutional system, these matters are left solely in the hands of private citizens, local government, and the individual states.

In fact, the founders of this country would be horrified by one of the premises underlying this type of federal program: that communities and private individuals are unwilling and unable to meet the special needs of low-income children without intervention by the federal government. The truth is that the American people can and will meet the educational and other needs of all children if Congress gives them the freedom to do so by eliminating the oppressive tax burden fostered on Americans to fund the welfare-warfare state.

When the federal government becomes involved in funding a program such as Head Start, it should at least respect local autonomy by refraining from interfering with the ability of local communities to fashion a program that suits their needs. After all, federal funding does not change the fact that those who work with a group of children on a daily basis are the best qualified to design a program that effectively serves those children. Therefore, I must strongly object to the provisions in S. 2206 that requires the majority of Head Start classroom teachers to have an Associate or Bachelors degree in early childhood education by 2003. This provision may raise costs and/or cause some good Head Start teachers to lose their positions simply because they lack the credentials a Washington-based "expert" decided they needed to serve as a Head Start instructor.

Mr. Speaker, if programs such as Head Start where controlled by private charities, their staffers would not have to worry about diverting valuable resources away from their mission to fulfill the whims of Congress.

I am also disappointed that S. 2206 does not contain the language passed by the House Committee on Education and the Workforce freeing Head Start construction from the wasteful requirements of the Davis-Bacon Act. Davis-Bacon not only drives up construction costs, it effectively ensures that small construction firms, many of which are minority-owned, cannot compete for federal construction contracts. Repealing Davis-Bacon requirement for Head Start construction would open up new opportunities for small construction companies and free up millions of taxpayers dollars that could be used to better America's children.

Congress should also reject S. 2206 because it reauthorizes the Low Income Heating and Energy Program (LIHEAP). LIHEAP is an unconstitutional transfer program which has outlived its usefulness. LIHEAP was instituted in order to help low-income people deal with the high prices resulting from the energy crisis of the late seventies. However, since then, home heating prices have declined by 51.6% residential electricity prices have declined by 25% and residential natural gas prices have declined by 32.7%. Furthermore, the people of Texas are sending approximately \$43 million more taxpayer dollars to Washington for LIHEAP than they are receiving in LIHEAP funds. There is no moral or constitutional justification for taking money from Texans, who could use those funds for state and local programs to provide low-income Texans with relief from oppressive heat, to benefit people in other states.

Another provision in S. 2206 that should be of concern to believers in a free society is the provision making "faith-based organizations" eligible for federal funds under the Community Services Block Grant program. While I have little doubt that the services offered by churches and other religious institutions can be more effective in producing social services than many secular programs, I am concerned that allowing faith-based organizations' access to federal taxpayer dollars may change those organizations into lobbyists who will compromise their core beliefs rather than risk alienating members of Congress and thus losing their federal funds. Thus, allowing faith-based organizations to receive federal funds may undermine future attempts to reduce federal control

over social services, undermine America's tradition of non-establishment of religion, and weaken the religious and moral component of the programs of "faith-based providers." It would be a tragedy for America if religious organizations weakened the spiritual aspects that made their service programs effective in order to receive federal lucre.

Since S. 2206 furthers the federal government's unconstitutional role of controlling early childhood education by increasing federal micro-management of the Head Start program, furthers government intrusions into religious institutions and redistributes income from Texans to citizens of other states through the LIHEAP program, I must oppose this bill. I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill and instead join me in defunding all unconstitutional programs and cutting taxes so the American people may create social service programs that best meet the needs of low-income children and families in their communities.

Mr. CASTLE, Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the substitute to S. 2206, the Human Services Authorization Act of 1998, offered by Chairman GOODLING.

I am pleased to state that this substitute represent a very balanced view of many long hours of negotiations and thorough evaluations of the needs of some of the countries neediest citizens.

In particular, I want to focus my comments today on the Head Start provisions of the legislation. The Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth, and Families heard from a number of witnesses on ways to strengthen existing Head Start operations to bring better quality, more accountability and more results. Today, we are combining that input and taking several very important steps for our nation's children by implementing a better, stronger, and more focused program. As you are aware, the substitute does not contain the more controversial provisions, including those on parent certificates, construction, and establishment of paternity. I believe the exclusion of these provisions leaves us with a stronger and more united bill and commend the Chairman for his acknowledgment of such.

One of the keys to this reform, that we on the Education Committee identified immediately, is the need to toughen the education components of the program. So, what we have done is clarify those educational components of Head Start. The purpose of Head Start is to promote school readiness. Make no mistake about it, this program was named deliberately—these kids need a "head start" in life. The new performance standards are measures in the substitute will enable us to ensure that students are learning, so that we can meet the needs of children where we haven't been able to in the past.

In addition monies will be available for advancement in the quality of Head Start. Specifically, much needed funds will be put toward teacher training and recruiting college educated teachers. The majority of Head Start teachers will now have a college degree in early childhood development. I, personally, think this is essential. We need to provide strong resources and strong teachers that have an intimate knowledge of child development to assist families through some of the most difficult and vital childhood years.

Finally the substitute also cover areas that we are the Federal level have missed by providing a separate portion of funds directly to