

A lot of them were willing to vote for it because I talked to Members on both sides. They are willing to vote for it, either for or against it this morning without knowing the details. Just the idea of what is in there.

That gives me a great deal of concern, that we have here representatives of the people in the U.S. House of Representatives that are willing to vote on a far-reaching piece of legislation that will impact on millions of people and yet doing it without knowing exactly what is in it. That gives me a great deal of concern about the Members of the U.S. House of Representatives, not as great a deal as the policy that is being followed of, again, dictating to the Members of the House. That is basically what we are seeing here, is a dictatorial policy, autocratic. The leadership knows better than anybody else. We are going to do it their way or no way, and that is what we are up against today.

It is that policy that I think has led us to a lack of bipartisanship in this House. It is the Republican leadership, in my opinion, Speaker GINGRICH, Floor Leader DICK ARMEY, that are responsible for the highly partisanship feeling that pervades this House today. It is not only just on this side. It is on the majority side, too. I hear it constantly, about the partisanship. Yet everybody stands up and says, We ought to be bipartisan; we need to be bipartisan.

How can we be bipartisan when the hand is never reached out to the other side to say, hey, what can we do together on this. That hand is never reached out. Instead, it is just like this legislation, this rule, it is dictated from above. It is toned down. Take it or leave it. That is the way it is. There is no bipartisanship. There is no attempt to be bipartisan in this House.

I hope that somewhere between now and the end of this session the majority leadership under the Speaker would see fit to not be so autocratic, not to be so dictatorial, but to reach out that hand to Members on this side and say, let us work together the rest of the year on legislation and let us be bipartisan. There is not much bipartisanship here today.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, to the gentleman from Missouri, I wanted to caution him a little on the utilization of the word "dictatorship." I do not think that adds to the comity on the floor. I think we should approach those kind of terms with some trepidation.

Let me address the other point. That is, I do not want the gentleman from Missouri, because I have great respect for the gentleman, to continue to use inaccurate facts. The gentleman stated to our body here that when they were in control we did not see these kind of rules until the end of the session. I do not know why this keeps coming up, but time after time after time, when we deal with a rule, Mr. Speaker, we

have to repudiate that. I have got the facts right here. I would be happy, if the gentleman would like to come over here, we will show him the statistics.

Let me cover very briefly 1993. It was not near the end of the session when his side utilized this rule. In fact, it was in February, in March, in March, in March, in March, in March, in March, and then, of course, we had some throughout the rest of the session, too. I just want to make sure that we are accurate on our facts.

The final thing I would caution the gentleman from Missouri, his statements about this is not bipartisan. In fact, I think this bill right here, No. 1, both Democrats and Republicans and unaffiliated and reform party people from across this country acknowledge that welfare needs to be changed. The system does not work. All of the incentive on this system is to stay on it, not to get off it. The system helps people that do not need help and does not help the people that really do need help.

Since I have been up here, I do not think I know such a major piece of legislation that has had more joint effort. Certainly the last 3 or 4 hours, I was somewhat amused when the gentleman said this morning, this morning escaped from us because, frankly, there was a lot of partisanship delay this morning. But we have gotten past that.

The bill itself, the substance of this bill is a bipartisan product, a Democrat and Republican product. Certainly. It has been brought up by the Republican leadership. It is a Republican part of our contract. It was one of our biggest efforts, but we have had lots of help and we have appreciated that.

□ 1345

It is bipartisan, and at 2 o'clock and 15 minutes, the President of this country is going to hold a press conference where we anticipate that he is going to agree to sign this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX].

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. MCINNIS] for extending the time because today, Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity to pass a stark welfare reform that requires work and personal responsibility and lifts families from lives of despair and hopelessness. I think we should especially look to the fact that for able-bodied individuals this Congress and this Government will make sure that we have job training and job placement for the able-bodied, and for those that truly are in need, just seeking it, we will be there.

The fact is that on child nutrition programs we are talking about block-granting the States, which is a great benefit because right now on child nutrition programs we are spending 15 percent to administer those programs, and the States, only 5 percent for administration. With the extra 10 percent they will receive from the Federal Gov-

ernment, they must feed more children more meals by our great standards. The States will follow the Federal standards.

On child support enforcement, we are going to make sure that all of those individuals and families that do not now have, for many deadbeat dads and other parents, the funds they need to make sure that the children are protected. They will have to adopt in each State programs like they have in Maine where they had 21,000 people who had not paid their child support; and when they said they could lose their driver's license, they in fact, 95 percent within 30 days, paid their child support payment.

So we see a program that is going to become more modern, more sensitive, and make sure that we take care of those in need, and we make sure that the welfare reform that we have crafted here is bipartisan and worthy of the votes of both sides of the aisle in both Chambers and, hopefully, as well, with our President.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered. The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3734, PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1996

Mr. SOLOMON, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104-729) on the resolution (H. Res. 495) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3734) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201(a)(1) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1997, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 495) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3734) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201(a)(1) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1997 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 495

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3734) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201(a)(1) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1997. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. The yeas and nays shall be considered as ordered on the question of adoption of the conference report and on any subsequent conference report or motion to

dispose of an amendment between the houses on H.R. 3734. Clause 5(c) of rule XXI shall not apply to the bill, amendments thereto, or conference reports thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY], pending which I yield myself such time as I might consume. During consideration of the resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, this rule waives all points of order against the conference report to accompany H.R. 3734, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, and against its consideration.

Additionally, the rule provides that the conference report shall be considered as read. The rule also orders the yeas and nays on the adoption of the conference report and on any subsequent conference report or motion to dispose of an amendment between the Houses.

Finally, the rule provides that the provisions of clause 5(c) of rule XXI requiring a three-fifths vote on any income tax rate increase shall not apply to the bill, amendments thereto, or to the conference report thereon.

Mr. Speaker, this rule is customary for conference reports. I urge support for the rule in order that we might send this legislation on to the President swiftly, since he now has decided he is going to sign this vital piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, in March 1995, I called up the rule that provided for consideration of the first welfare reform bill. Sixteen months, two bills, and two Presidential vetoes later we stand on the precipice of enacting real comprehensive, compassionate welfare reform legislation.

Throughout the passionate debate on this subject we have held firm on our principles to enact a reform to the Nation's welfare system which requires work, which imposes time limits on benefits for welfare recipients, and which allows for innovative State solutions to help the underprivileged in our communities. We have not departed from these principles throughout the confusing dialog with the President. These principles are embodied in the conference agreement before the House today.

Mr. Speaker, these principles are not implemented in a vacuum. The conference package addresses concerns associated with a radical overhaul of the Nation's welfare programs.

First and foremost, it should be made perfectly clear that this bill takes care of unfortunate people who are disabled, and able-bodied people are taken care of as well on a temporary basis, but the key word is temporary. After being taken care of on a limited basis, these people are going to have to go to work.

The legislation contains valuable reforms to the food stamp program, designed to curb fraud and abuse and requiring work for those food stamps.

The agreement authorizes \$22 billion in child care funding over the next 6 years, which is more than \$3 billion over current law.

Finally, the legislation contains tough measures to crack down on deadbeat dads who abrogate their moral responsibility to their children; and, Mr. Speaker, in contrast to the bold and honest proposals that Congress has put forward to reform welfare, the President has acted with characteristic temerity.

The alleged welfare reform that the Clinton administration says it has achieved is in actuality a fraud. It just is not there, and the savings show it. The President asserts that he has achieved a degree of welfare reform by granting waivers from his bureaucrats for States to experiment in this area.

The reality is that we have heard testimony on this floor from State after State that the waiver process is that thoughtful and experimental governors must troop to Washington DC, hat in hand, and request permission to reform low-income programs at home. The waiver request is then subject to endless debate by bureaucrats and subject to negotiation and even change by the Federal departments involved.

Mr. Speaker, my State of New York has several waiver requests pending for low-income programs, and New York certainly needs flexibility for budgetary purposes, and we are being stonewalled by this administration because none of those waivers have been granted in a State that is overburdened with welfare problems today. Thankfully, this Byzantine procedure will be relegated to the dust bin of history upon enactment of this legislation. The citizens of the States, in whom I have the utmost confidence, will be finally free to use local solutions to help low-income families in their neighborhoods.

Mr. Speaker, I was raised to treat the less fortunate in our society with compassion, as most Americans are. The way to effect change for those who suffer in poverty is certainly not additional handouts and entrapment in the current cycle of dependency that has bred second- and third- and now fourth-generation welfare recipients. Rather, we should emphasize welfare as a temporary boost from despair to the sense of self-worth inherent in work.

Mr. Speaker, that is what we ought to be doing, that is what we can do here today. This legislation gives the single moms and kids, who are the vast majority of welfare recipients, an opportunity to escape a life of relying on government benefits. A vote against this package is a vote to deny kids on welfare hope to escape a life of welfare dependency.

Mr. Speaker, this House will today once again pass comprehensive welfare reform by a wide bipartisan margin.

The Senate is likely to do the same before we recess this Friday. I sincerely hope the President lives up to his announcement a few minutes ago and agrees with the bipartisan majorities in both houses of Congress and overwhelming public sentiment and he signs the legislation into law. If he does, the status quo goes out the window, and finally, we are going to do something about this ever, ever-increasing welfare load in our country.

I strongly urge passage of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Washington [Mr. MCDERMOTT].

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, we started this Congress with the majority indicating that they were going to follow new procedures, and they made a big show of all the rules changes we were going to have, but here we are ramming through the biggest change of policy toward children in this country with a bill that has been in our hands for a little more than 12 hours.

This 1,200- or 1,500-page bill was delivered to the Members of Congress last night at 1 o'clock in the morning. All that is being characterized as partisan fighting out here is basically a resistance to having something like this rammed through the Congress with a lot of good rhetoric wrapped around it, but the facts belie what is being said.

Now, the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] has started to debate the bill and said this is a bill about work, but if my colleagues take this bill, and they go to page 80 under section 415, it is the section called waivers, and if my colleagues can wade through this language, and I will read it for them:

Except as provided in subparagraph (B), if any waiver granted to a State under section 1115 of this Act or otherwise which relates to the provision of assistance under a State plan under this part (as in effect on September 30, 1996) is in effect as of the date of the enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, the amendments made by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (other than by section 103(c) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996) shall not apply with respect to the State before the expiration.

Let me tell my colleagues what that means. That means that in 43 States there is no requirement for work. Every bit of work requirement in this bill is a fraud because with that waiver on page 80, section 415, we allow any State who has a waiver now in effect, and there are 43 of them in, if they are in effect, they can waive the work requirements.

□ 1400.

There are only seven places in the United States making up 5 percent of the welfare load; that is Alaska, Idaho.

Rhode Island, Kansas, Kentucky, New Mexico, and Nevada that do not have waivers. If we read that section further, all they have to do is get a waiver from the Federal Government and those seven States can be out. There is no requirement for work in this bill, because they write all the perfect language, spend 50 pages saying work, work, work, and then at the bottom, they give a waiver. If there is a waiver, Mr. Speaker, in their State, their State does not have to provide a job.

Let me tell the Members what it is like in Washington State, because I know the situation there. We have 100,000 people on public assistance. We have 125,000 people who have been drawing unemployment benefits. That is 225,000 people in the State of Washington who do not have work.

If tomorrow, with this bill passed, every one of them showed up and said, "I want a job," the State of Washington could say, "We do not have any responsibility for you. We have a waiver. The State of Washington has a waiver." Even if they were going to be responsible, even if the State of Washington said, "We really care about these 225,000 people and their families," last year, and the State of Washington, Members have to remember, is the fifth most rapidly growing State economically. We are at the top in this country. In our State last year we provided 44,000 new jobs.

Mr. Speaker I urge people to vote against this bill. It is bad. It is a fraud.

Mr. SOLOMON. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am a little concerned, Mr. Speaker, I want to take just a minute to tell the gentleman, I think he is on the Committee on Ways and Means. As a matter of fact, at 12 o'clock last night this report was filed. There were those of us who were here and saw to it that the report was delivered to the minority at that hour. However, earlier in the day, in the morning yesterday, this report was complete and given to the minority. I do not know why the gentleman from Washington did not see it. His own staff on the Committee on Ways and Means had possession of this report, so the gentleman should have done his due diligence and he would have had that information.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say one thing about the work requirements. I am a little concerned with the bill, because it has been watered down so much. As a matter of fact, when the bill left this House we had a family cap, which meant young girls that continue to have baby after baby after baby could not just continue to have more and more and more welfare benefits given to them. Unfortunately, that was dropped. A phrase was put in that would allow States to opt in, or rather, would allow States to opt out, as opposed to opting in.

Let me tell the Members what happens in a State like New York State, where we have had for years now the Cadillac of welfare programs and the

Cadillac of Medicaid programs, where by New York State has exercised their option to opt in for all of these various programs above and beyond the base coverages for welfare and Medicaid.

In our State, we do not stand any chance of being able to change that law, so if we had arranged to have them be able to opt in, as opposed to opt out, then we could have expected some real change. So I am concerned about that, but we will live to fight that battle another day.

Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman's President is saying, this is a work-for-welfare program. I am surprised to hear the gentleman from Washington try to refute that.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SOLOMON. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the committee for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I know there has been some issue raised regarding the waivers for the work requirement. The waivers are all drawn more strictly than current law. I think that is an important point to make. The waivers that have been given by the administration are more strict than current law. The current waivers do not apply to the percentage work requirement in the legislation. I think that is another important point to make. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. COLEMAN].

(Mr. COLEMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to point out, regardless of the politics of welfare reform, the issue ought to be what does the bill do. Regardless of whether or not a past President or a sitting President would sign or veto a bill, it should have nothing to do with the legislative branch priority and prerogative to pass good legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I know many have worked long and hard on this bill and others like it over the past year and a half and longer. In fact, the discussion of welfare reform has been debated since I came here 14 years ago. I need to say, however, to my colleagues that it is not enough to play the politics with welfare reform that we are attempting to do today.

I certainly do not intend to support welfare reform and then go home and applaud myself and tell people, are you not proud we have welfare reform? We have to look at what we are doing to children. More than 1 million children will be thrown off the welfare rolls.

What kind of Nation is it that says, "We care about what is in front of your name: Documented child, undocu-

mented child, poor child, rich child"? What difference does that make to a great Nation? I submit to the Members, it should make none. All of us here in this country understand that we ought to care for children regardless of their station in life, regardless of the country from which they came. To suggest that we should do this in this legislation is plain wrong.

I know all of the 50 States are greatly benevolent. By the way, that reminds me, why did we take over this program in the 1960's in the first place up here at the Federal level? As I recall, we had a patchwork, quiltwork of 50 different programs, some good to the poor, some bad to the poor, some harsh, causing people, of course, to migrate from State to State, based upon the benefits that they or their children could receive during tough economic times.

This legislation also does not deal with tough economic issues the way it should.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York [Mr. RANGEL].

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] for giving me an opportunity to speak out on this. I am going to say what is on everybody's mind. It is just so close to the election, I suppose, on both sides of the aisle we get blinded about substance in our concern as to what is it that the pollsters really want.

A lot of concern has been in the White House and on the Hill as to whether or not the President would breach his promise to change welfare as we know it. I would think that the chairman of the Committee on Rules, notwithstanding how diligently the Committee on Rules has worked on this legislation, would have to agree that there is no urgency in terms of Members understanding the work that was done in conference. This is not an unusual thing, unless it has something to do with the fact that we are going into recess, and that this will be a political issue back home.

Other than that, it seems to me if we are talking about millions of children, children who would be Democrat, Republican, Christians, Jews, black, white, Americans, and certainly the lesser among us, that all of us would want to make certain that we are doing the right thing; and really, not even push the President into making a hasty decision, when at least the last position he took was that he appreciated the direction in which the legislation was going and he saw some imperfections which could be worked out.

But it was he who said that he wanted to change welfare as we know it. What is welfare? What is this obsession about putting people to work? Everyone agrees if you are able to work, you

should be working. Every taxpayer should be angry and annoyed to find people slipping back on their responsibilities and not working.

Are we talking about just women, or are we talking about women that have children? I pause, because it is not a rhetorical question. The bills that I know of say aid for dependent children. I think what we are saying, I would say to the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON], is that that child will be held responsible for any conduct that we politically do not like about the mother.

We are going even further, not as far as the gentleman would like, but I think even the President agrees with the gentleman's posture, that if after 5 years or 4 or 3 or 2 or whatever the Governors decide, I think the minimum is 2 years, that if for any reason at all, there are no jobs available, and if the mother played by the rules, signed up, went into training, did all of the American things in order to show that she wanted to maintain her dignity, she wanted her family not to stay on welfare, she wanted to go into the private sector and contribute, if all of those things are established, it is my understanding it really does not make any difference. Playing by the rules does not make a difference, in election years, because we said it does not make any difference what the heck you have tried to do; the question is, are you working.

Quite frankly, I believe that the mother could vote with her feet if she does not like the situation employment-wise. I am mean enough to be with you. I am a politician, too. My problem is the child. What did the child have to do with the fact that the mother wanted to work, did not want to work, jobs were there, jobs were not there? Do Members know what the political question is? The Republicans will throw 2 million people, children, into poverty, and my President will only throw 1 million into poverty.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to get involved in religion around here, but there is not a denomination of people that do not believe that the helpless of this country—just being an American means you are supposed to help them. You do not send a 2-year-old child or a 2-month-old child out to get a job. Someone has to be responsible. Someone has to be responsible for that child. Do not ask the child for its identification, and ask whether or not it is a citizen. Do not ask the child whether, by choice, the mother is a bum. Do not ask the child what the unemployment statistics are. As Americans we believe in taking care of our children.

This is a political bill. It should not be passed into law. It should not be passed here. The President should not sign it if you do shove it down his throat.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Jacksonville, FL, Mrs. TILLIE FOWLER, who has been a real leader in this effort.

(Mrs. FOWLER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. FOWLER. Mr. Speaker, the American welfare system was intended to be a safety net for those who fall on hard times. Unfortunately, it has become an overgrown bureaucracy which perpetuates dependency and denies people the chance to live the American dream.

I am pleased the President has just announced that he would sign the Republican welfare bill. We knew when it got this close to the election this President would choose the path of political expediency, as he always does. But this legislation is not about saving money, it is about saving hope and saving lives while reforming a broken system and while preserving the safety net.

This bill encourages work and independence and discourages illegitimacy. I urge my colleagues to vote for fairness, compassion, and responsibility, and pass a conference agreement on H.R. 3437.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California, the Honorable GEORGE MILLER, the ranking member on the Committee on Resources.

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today is a serious and sad day. Not only are we presented with a welfare bill by the Republicans that for the first time in history does a great deal of harm to children in this country, but we have learned in the last few minutes that the President of the United States, Mr. Clinton, now says that he will sign that bill.

This is a President who, along with the First Lady, have spent much of their public life trying to help children. Now he says he will sign a bill that, for the first time, knowingly, he knowingly, he has been presented the evidence by his own Cabinet, he has been presented the evidence by the Urban Institute and others, that will knowingly put somewhere around 1 million children who are currently not into poverty, into poverty.

Almost half of those children are in families that are working, where people get up and they go to work every day. But at the end of the year, they are poor. This bill puts those children into poverty. That cannot be a proper purpose of the U.S. Congress, and that cannot be a proper endorsement for the President of the United States.

□ 1415

It is against the interest of our children. Yes, this program was started many years ago to try and save the children. For many, many years we have lifted those children out of poverty, not as well as we have done for the seniors, but it was a national goal.

This bill now for the first time, again knowingly, the evidence is in front of

us, and yet we are being asked to make a decision to reverse that trend and to once again put children into poverty. They can lose their benefits under this with nobody having offered their parents a chance to work or requiring them to do so, because in the 11th hour those same Governors who boasted about their desire to put people to work came in and got loopholes put into this bill so they do not have to meet the very standards that they said they were prepared to change this program from welfare to work.

So how did they achieve the budget savings, then? They achieved the budget savings by going after children, by going after women. I grew up, and I think most people in this country believe that when you said women and children first, what you were saying is you wanted to care for those individuals. This legislation suggests that they will be the first to be harmed and that is what this legislation allows.

I appreciate all of the theory in the legislation, but the fact of the matter is every time that the pedal meets the road here, what we see is that in fact they are sacrificed. These children now pay to provide the \$60 billion in savings that the majority says that they want. We cannot allow that to happen. This President should be demanding that this bill simply do no harm to those children. You can get all of the welfare reform you want and still do no harm to the children. But unfortunately this President has joined the Republicans now in making the children the very victims of the system he said he wanted to reform.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The Chair will make a brief statement in clarification of his response to the parliamentary inquiry propounded by the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. WELDON] during the consideration of House Resolution 492.

In that response, the Chair merely intended to indicate that, in the discretion of the Chair, the objection by the gentlewoman from Connecticut under rule XXX was not then a dilatory motion.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in response to the previous speaker for whom I have a great deal of respect, he came to this body about 20 years ago and I do not know what experience he had in previous government, but when he is critical of the Governors of these States, I look at my own Governor, Gov. George Pataki. He is probably one of the most knowledgeable people in America today about what it means about jamming things down the throats that we do here in Washington, sending it back to the States and local government.

George Pataki was a town mayor before he became a State assemblyman in the lower house and then before he became a State senator and now Governor. Believe me, he knows what unfunded mandates mean to a State like

ours where we have seen job after job after job chased out of our State because we just could not afford to do the things for business and industry that were necessary because of the terrible welfare burden. That is all changing now and it will change with the adoption of this legislation. We are once and for all going to be able to let those people who have the experience, those people down at the local levels of government who have to deal with the welfare recipients day in and day out, let them come up with the solutions. That is what this debate is all about.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Columbus, OH [Ms. PRYCE], a member of the Committee on Rules.

Ms. PRYCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished chairman of the Rules Committee for yielding me this time. I rise in strong support of this fair rule to bring about real welfare reform.

Mr. Speaker, a generation ago, Americans began a much-celebrated war on poverty in the hope of creating a Great Society. But nearly 30 years and more than \$5 trillion later, what we are left with is a failed welfare system that has deprived hope, diminished opportunity, and literally destroyed precious lives. Our country, and the future generations of Americans who will lead her, deserve a better system.

Today we will consider a conference report that replaces a welfare system debilitated by strict Federal control with a system based on innovation and flexibility at the State and local level. Instead of promoting dependency and illegitimacy, this conference agreement is built on the dignity of work and the enduring strength of families. By taking the Federal bureaucracy out of welfare, this legislation promotes creative solutions closer to home and offers a real sense of hope to the truly needy and the less fortunate.

Mr. Speaker, despite the comments we will hear today, this is a compassionate bill. Helping those who by no fault of their own have fallen on hard times is the right thing to do. This bill responds to that in the finest American tradition. But when we help people that are able-bodied, when we just hand them a check, those people who make little or no effort to help themselves, we risk destroying the American spirit and undermining our society at large.

This conference agreement represents a true bipartisan attempt to change welfare as we know it. I hope the President will not shy away again from this historic opportunity for change.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to have the courage to set aside the status quo, to think of the children and families of this Nation and to embrace real reform. I urge a "yes" vote on both sides of the aisle for this rule and the conference report.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida [Mrs. MEEK].

(Mrs. MEEK of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, both times I have risen, I have risen in strong opposition to the rule and I will be doing so, I feel, to the conference report.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think many people in this Congress really understand the effects of welfare. I think that the system should be reformed. I am sure that there are many people who still abuse this system. We have not yet changed to any great extent the enforcement, to be sure, that people who do not deserve welfare are on it and those who are abusing it get punished for being so.

Mr. Speaker, I contend that this conference report does not meet the needs of the people they are hoping that it will meet. We are still going to have hungry children, children who are not taken care of by their States. I served as a State legislator. We still did not give matching funds for the funds that the Federal Government gave us. Now that we are cutting the funds, are they going to do any better? My answer is no.

The real world will teach everyone in this Congress that you are hurting children. It seems to me that you are doing it deliberately because many of us have said to you and shown you evidence that it is going to do it. OMB has done it. Several agencies with whom you have great credibility have shown the same. It permits the States to experiment with our children in order to save \$40 to \$60 billion in Federal funds. Why save it when you are losing your main human resources, your children?

Almost one-third of these cuts come from mistreating the children of immigrants. Do you feel that the legal immigrant children in this country should be treated any less? Would you want your children to be treated any less than when they go down to get health care and they tell them they cannot be treated because their parents have been here 16 years or more paying taxes into the American Government, their sons and daughters have gone to war for this country? Are you going to say to those children, No, you can't get any more treatment. Go to the State. Go to the county. When they get to the counties and they get to the States, there is no money. I have been there and I know there is none.

The Republican majority is going to ban food stamps and SSI for some children, particularly those that are disabled and those that are poor. It bars Medicaid for legal immigrants. Is that going to make them any less ill because we are barring it in this bill which we are using here in a vacuum?

We have done perhaps no impact study. We do not know how this is going to impact on States like Florida and California. I say, Mr. Speaker, that this is wrong and that the Republican majority should realize what they are doing. Otherwise in the end the people will speak, and I hope they do.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rule and the conference report itself. This rule is designed to prevent both the Members and the public from learning the details of this fatally flawed bill.

This bill permits the States to experiment with our children in order to save \$60 billion in Federal funds. Almost one-third of these cuts—\$18 billion—come from treating the children of immigrants more harshly than other children.

The Republican majority bans food stamps and supplemental security income payments for virtually all legal immigrants. The bill bars Medicaid for legal immigrants who are elderly or disabled.

These immigrants the Republican majority wants to penalize are legally here. They played by the rules. They meet every requirement of the law. They live and work hard; they pay taxes; they serve in the military. They will not vanish simply because the majority passes this bill.

What will happen is that these costs now paid by the Federal Government will be unfairly shifted to States like Florida, and counties like Dade, that have a high number of legal immigrants.

Let me give the House a concrete idea of how unfair this bill really is. My own State of Florida estimates that it will lose more than \$300 million a year in Federal funds because of this bill.

Who ends up paying? My constituents in Dade County and the State of Florida.

The bill instructs States to deny school lunches to undocumented immigrants. The chairman of the Dade County School Board says that one-quarter of the children in the Dade schools were born in a foreign country. The Dade County schools would have to collect information from every single child in order to determine which ones can get subsidized lunches. The Republican majority is trying to balance the budget and cut taxes for the wealthy by creating local paperwork and higher local taxes.

It is wrong and it is unfair for the Republican majority to force State and local governments—meaning our taxpayers back home—to pay for legal immigrant residents who are in this country because they complied with the immigration laws that previous Congresses have enacted.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this rule and against the conference report.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, one of my colleagues just approached me, and they said they hope the American people that might be watching on C-SPAN would ask the question of all of us: Are you satisfied with the status quo?

That seems to be what I hear from the other side of the aisle, even though the President is going to sign this bill, that they are satisfied with the status quo. The people I represent are not satisfied with that status quo.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Erie, PA [Mr. ENGLISH], one of the outstanding freshman Members of this body.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this rule and in strong support of this conference report, the most sweeping welfare reform legislation this country has seen since the Great Society.

As Franklin Delano Roosevelt warned in the late 1930's, giving permanent aid to anyone destroys them. By creating an underclass culture of poverty, dependency, and violence, we have been destroying the very people we have been claiming to help. How many more families will be trapped in the current welfare system while we waste time in Washington?

I am delighted to see that the President has indicated he may support this conference report, which will require for the first time ever able-bodied welfare recipients to work for their benefits. Every family receiving welfare must work within 2 years or lose benefits, and lifetime benefits are limited to 5 years.

This is a balanced, mainstream approach that links welfare rights to personal responsible behavior. I urge the House to adopt this rule and lay the groundwork for passage of this conference report.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Sanibel, FL [Mr. GOSS].

(Mr. GOSS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this rule and this bill because we all know that the era of big government is indeed over.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the distinguished chairman of the Rules Committee, for yielding me this time. The wisdom of SOLOMON has been in great demand these last few days, and once again he has delivered a fair and workable rule to this body. Our Rules Committee labored diligently yesterday evening and this morning to accommodate both the strong desire of the majority of Americans that we end welfare as we know it—and the legitimate efforts that have been underway among Members of Congress and the administration to negotiate a final product. For that reason, we brought two rules, in order to give the conferees as much time as possible to complete their work while getting welfare reform to the President this week. This rule allows the House to consider a milestone bill—one that lays to rest 30 years of big-government policies that have cost \$5.5 trillion but failed to win the war on poverty. I must say I am disturbed by the hand-wringing and demagoguery that is emanating from some members of the minority. Their assurances that they do want to reform welfare, but they just don't want to do it in this way, ring quite hollow. Remember that they had the opportunity when they controlled both Houses of Congress and the White House for 2 years—an opportunity they refused to capitalize on. So now, with a President who has pledged to end welfare as we know it, and a congressional majority committed to dismantling the Big Brother, Washington-knows-best bureaucracy that has made welfare a dependency trap—we are finally going to make welfare reform happen. I am sorry that the ultraliberal wing of the Democrat Party in this House is having trouble with that result—but it's one the American people are demanding. If those in the minority succeed in their carefully orchestrated attempt to delay enactment of this bill, I suspect they

will have to answer to their constituents for denying poor Americans a fighting chance to break out of poverty and become productive members of this society. Mr. Speaker, this legislation unleashes the creativity of our States to solve problems or poverty at home. It unshackles them from the burdens of costly and micromanaging Federal regulation—while providing significant resources for children and job programs. It allows those precious Federal dollars that are so desperately needed by our Nation's poor to bypass the grossly inefficient Federal bureaucracy. And it emphasizes work for those who can, along with compassion for those who can't. This is a balanced bill—and it's time for the defenders of the status quo to get with the program and heed the words of the President. Support this rule and the bill.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the chairman of the Rules Committee just said if people are opposed to this rule and this bill that they are for status quo. That is absolutely incorrect.

The people who are opposed to this bill are opposed to it because it puts another 1 million children into poverty and does not go far enough.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. ROEMER].

(Mr. ROEMER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, this bill, this conference report that we will soon vote on, represents the biggest change to our social policy in the last 60 years. We have moved from the New Deal to the New Frontier to the Great Society, and now hopefully to the fair deal.

Where have we gone in this debate over the last year? We started with H.R. 4, a bill that I think was terrible for this Nation and for our children, that was meant to our children, that was unfair to the people that we wanted to give skills to go to work, that was not fair to our parents who had children home from child care. That bill has been vastly changed. Just recently we voted for a bill to come out of the House, and 30 of us Democrats voted to move the process along and improve the bill in the Senate and House conference, where it has been improved, and I will vote to support this conference.

President Clinton deserves credit for his willingness to sign this bill, and he deserves praise for his determination to change previous bills that were meant to children and that did not give the resources to our workers to stay off welfare.

Let us move forward in a bipartisan way to continue to modify what can be a better and better bill, through Executive order, through legislative change, and through bipartisan work. Let us march forward together, Democrats and Republicans, to change the status quo and move to the fair deal for our taxpayers, and for those recipients of welfare and those children that are being raised from generation to generation in welfare. We can work together.

We can and must work together for the recipients of welfare and for the taxpayers of this country.

Again, President Clinton will sign this bill, according to all the reports, and he has indicated a willingness to work in a bipartisan way. I am glad that the President changed the first bill, H.R. 4. I am glad that the President vetoed those initial bills that were meant to children and were not fair to get people permanently off welfare.

I hope to continue to work across this middle aisle, Democrats and Republicans, reaching out to join hands and to claim back a system for the taxpayer and the American people and our children, so that we do have the biggest change in social policy in the last 60 years, moving from the New Deal to the fair deal for our taxpayers.

□ 1430

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to say that my good friend from Boston, MA, Mr. MOAKLEY, made the statement that he is not for the status quo but he is opposed to this bill. We hear that so many times, but, but, but, but, but. Nobody is ever ready to put themselves on the line for welfare reform. Today we have it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Claremont, CA, Mr. DAVID DREIER, my good friend and member of the Committee on Rules.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this rule and the conference report. The gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] is absolutely right when he says that it is very easy to find things in this measure which we do not all support.

I admit I have some concerns about some provisions as they impact my State of California. But the fact of the matter is, ending welfare as we know it is what the President said that he wanted to do when he was a candidate back in 1992. My friend, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. MANZULLO], just reminded me that it has gotten to the point where a Republican Congress has been able to do what a Democratic Congress did not do in the first 2 years of the President's term, and that is end welfare as we know it.

So we have finally gotten to the point where we are looking at the fact that over the last 3 decades we have expended \$5.3 trillion on welfare payments of all kinds and we have seen the poverty rate move from 14.7 percent to 15.1 percent. So everyone, Democrats and Republicans alike, as the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON] just said, and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY], our friend from south Boston, acknowledges he does not want to support the status quo and we must change the welfare system.

Now, earlier today, when the chairman of the Subcommittee on Human

Resources, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW], was before the Committee on Rules, he talked about the fact that we will most likely, in the 105th Congress, need to make some sort of modification to this measure, but if we defeat this conference report there will be no welfare reform.

We have gotten a measure, and the President has finally gotten to the point where he has agreed to sign it. That is why, as my friend, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. ROEMER], said, we need to move ahead with bipartisan support so we can try our darnedest to address a system which is broke.

There are many more things that need to be done. Entitlement reform is something that is important, so that we are not simply, as many are labeling this thing, attacking those who are less fortunate. We need to realize that this measure is designed not just to help those taxpayers who are shouldering the responsibility but also to do everything we can to help people get out of that generational cycle of dependence.

Support the rule and support the conference report.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It has been referred to some people on my side as being for the status quo. Two weeks ago we voted for the Tanner-Castle bill, which was a reform bill. It had much more reform than this. So it is not that we are for the status quo. We want a real reform bill. This is not it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON].

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I think that the conference report will pass and, therefore, there will be reform because the majority of our Members truly think they are reforming the welfare system. But reforming the welfare system means that we would have provisions in there that would ensure we were decreasing dependency, we would encourage work and we would be supportive to families. Those kind of structures are not present.

I know everyone has good intentions, and certainly reform is because we are trying to reduce a big deficit, because we know already the amount of money we spend on welfare is really insignificant to the total amount that we spend. If we wanted to reduce the budget, we would be reforming other things. Like the gentleman has just said, entitlements would be that issue.

Hopefully, we can understand that those of us who will vote against this are really making a statement. We care about children too much to rob Paul to pay Peter. We are not willing to rob children of their opportunity and their future in order to provide other people an opportunity to live.

Also we say we are about teenage pregnancy prevention, and yet this House last month had the opportunity just to appropriate \$30 million to pre-

vent teenage pregnancy. We know over a half million young people become pregnant every year. We spend annually \$6.5 billion, yet we will not put a small amount of money to encourage young people to do the positive behavior activity so they will not lead a life of dependency.

We say we want to decrease dependency. We want to give kids stepping stones, but we put these stumbling blocks in their way. Mr. Speaker, this is not supportive of children, and I give no bad intents to anyone, but this conference bill, and I hope I am wrong, I hope I am wrong. I hope, indeed, millions of children do not suffer, but I could not vote in good conscience for a bill that I am not assured of that.

Reform means encouraging young people for support, decreasing dependency and making provisions for work. Vote against this conference bill.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Egan, IL, Mr. DON MANZULLO, an outstanding Member.

(Mr. MANZULLO asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, in the last 31 years this country has spent over \$5.4 trillion on the welfare system, and what do we have to show for it? We have generation after generation locked in a seemingly endless cycle of destitution and poverty. They are the lost forgotten statistics, dependent on the Federal entitlement trap that strips them of their dignity, destroys families, damages our work ethic, and destroys the self-esteem of those trapped in the system.

Cruelty is allowing this destructive system to continue. By passing this welfare reform bill we will restore hope and opportunity by making work, and not welfare, a way of life.

Our current welfare system has not only failed those in the system, but it has also failed those who have been supporting it, the hard working taxpayer. It has failed the forgotten American, the one who gets up in the morning, packs a lunch, sends the kids off to school. That person is working harder than ever to make ends meet, and the typical American family is paying over \$3,400 a year in taxes for welfare payments to perpetuate a failed system.

Mr. Speaker, we should pass this bill and pass it swiftly.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Kansas [Mrs. MEYERS], one of the truly outstanding Members of this body, who is retiring at the end of this year. She has been such a great Member, and we are going to miss her.

(Mrs. MEYERS of Kansas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MEYERS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for those comments.

Mr. Speaker, I support this rule and urge my colleagues to support it. The Personal Responsibility Act is a good

start toward reforming our welfare system. Because of the block grant, the entitlement nature of the program is ended.

We ask able-bodied people between 18 and 50 who receive food stamps to do some work for their benefits. We reform the SSI program to help stop monthly checks from going to prisoners and checks that were going to healthy children. And we finally tell recent immigrants that the promise of America does not automatically include a welfare check.

But many issues remain unaddressed, and I believe the most serious is the ever-increasing illegitimacy rate. In 1994, one-third of our children were born into homes where no father ever lived. And by the year 2000, 80 percent of minority children and 40 percent of all children in this country will be born out of wedlock.

Unfortunately, the conference report does nothing to require that fathers be identified. States who currently do nothing to identify fathers can continue to do nothing, and those States who continue to reward teenage pregnancy can continue to do so.

Finally, there is no effort to enforce a family cap, even though we know that the family cap has reduced a drop in additional children in New Jersey, where it is now statewide policy.

To repeat, this bill is a good start, but I believe we cannot reform our welfare system until we address the growth in illegitimacy. The link between our ever-increasing illegitimacy rates and the growth in AFDC rolls are not casual. They are cause and effect. Why is it too much to ask that children have two responsible adults as parents? Sadly, we continue to encourage the opposite.

A previous speaker said that the cost of welfare was very modest in this country. The cost of AFDC alone, I am not talking about SSI or illegal aliens or legal aliens or anything else, just AFDC, is \$70 billion a year because it is \$16 billion a year AFDC, it is one-fourth of Medicaid, half of food stamps, about a third of housing plus all of the training and day care programs. It is between \$70 and \$80 billion a year.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FATTAH].

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule. This rule and this bill, this conference committee, is built on the biggest lie that has ever been told to the American people, and that is that we are spending too much as a country to help poor people.

There is no calculation that any legitimate analysis of a Federal budget would tell us that we spent \$5 trillion on the war on poverty. It is all made up out of whole cloth. It includes items like the Pell grants and all kinds of other programs, and education. The AFDC payments are about a little more than one penny out of every dollar that this Government spends to help poor children.

We have gotten everybody convinced that we are spending just too much money on poor people, and now we have convinced them that Speaker GINGRICH and the Republican majority are coming to help these poor children, that this is just a major effort to really help poor children, and cutting \$60 billion is just the best way to help them find their way to the American dream.

This rule, this conference committee, the Washington Post in its editorial today said it was a bad idea. They said it was a defining moment of where this country was headed. And there will be Members who will come to the floor today, because they want to be re-elected and will vote for it, but out into the future there will be days that they will truly regret that they did not have the courage to stand up and oppose this hideous proposal.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the former governor of Delaware, MIKE CASTLE, one of the people that probably knows best about the real problems or how this ought to be dealt with, and who knows that one of the reasons the welfare system in this country has failed miserably is because we inside the beltway have tried to dictate back to the States and local governments.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I support the rule and the bill. We stand today at a historic divide, a defining moment that separates the past from the future, one which pits personal responsibility, work, and State flexibility against the largely failed welfare policies and practices of the past. Today marks a turning point for all of us, the Congress, our constituents, and perhaps most importantly, those welfare recipients.

I am pleased that the bipartisan Castle-Tanner reform proposal has provided some very positive changes and provisions that will help shape welfare reform for the better. Perhaps the most important provision we helped retain was current law on guaranteeing Medicaid eligibility to all welfare recipients and those who may be eligible in the future. Also, the food stamp optional block grants and the child welfare block grants were dropped, thus retaining minimum Federal standards and preserving these national safety nets.

On balance, we have achieved what we can all support. With this legislation we have finally begun the process by which America's underclass problem can be solved, and break a generational cycle and culture of dependency and poverty.

Congress is now the shepherd of welfare reform, not the President, and it is up to us to review and improve upon this proposal. I, for one, stand ready and committed to revisit it, if need be, to make sure welfare reform is going to work.

Mr. Speaker, we stand today at a historic divide, a defining moment that separates the

past from the future; one which pits personal responsibility, work, and State flexibility against the largely failed welfare policies and practices of the past. Today marks a turning point for all of us—the Congress, our constituents, and perhaps most importantly, those welfare recipients.

Just as our Nation was formed, we stand ready to forward a bold experiment in reforming our Nation's welfare system. But like most experiments, we will most certainly have to revisit our decisions. Though we have tried, there may not be enough resources for children's care, or to adequately fund the work program that is the centerpiece of this legislation. There most likely will be economic downturns that force Governors and the Congress to reevaluate. States may require more flexibility in meeting the stringent work requirements. There are innumerable potential pitfalls.

As a coauthor of the bipartisan Castle-Tanner welfare reform proposal, JOHN TANNER and I have helped forward some very positive changes and provisions that will help shape reform welfare for the better.

Perhaps the most important provision I helped retain was current law on guaranteeing Medicaid eligibility to all welfare recipients, and those who may be eligible in the future. The food stamp optional block grant and the child welfare block grant were dropped, thus retaining minimum Federal standards and preserving these national safety nets.

Protecting children in families that lose cash assistance is a high priority. Although I would have preferred mandatory in-kind assistance after a 5-year time limit on cash assistance, I am mostly satisfied that a provision could be added that would ensure that States can utilize Federal funds from the social services block grant for the care of the child. Furthermore, we were successful in ensuring that a higher State maintenance of effort on State spending could be included in the conference report. We also were successful in including language that would require that Congress review in 3 years the work program to ensure its success. Last, Castle-Tanner has had a moderating impact on the burdens that the noncitizen provisions will put on our Nation's future citizens, primarily in the health care area. While Castle-Tanner included stronger protections for children and families under the cash block grant, increased funding for the welfare-to-work programs, significantly smaller food stamp cuts, and less severe immigrant cuts, its fingerprints can be readily identifiable on this conference report.

Nevertheless, on balance, we have achieved what we all can support: with this legislation, we have finally begun the process by which America's underclass problem can be solved, and break a generational cycle and culture of dependency and poverty.

This is not a perfect experiment, but then experiments usually aren't. Congress is now the shepherd of welfare reform—not the President—and it is up to us to review and improve upon this proposal. I, for one, stand ready and committed to revisit this as it is implemented, and as we gain empirical evidence that our effort can be successful in making work pay more than welfare. And only then will we be truly able to say that we have "ended welfare as we know it." It's worth taking some risks to end it.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. CLYBURN].

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the conference agreement. Being a slightly better option than the House passed version of the bill does not mean this is a good piece of legislation.

Welfare should be a temporary transition from welfare to work. Unfortunately this is 1996, an election year, and we have entered the "silly season." Rather than being a constructive debate, the welfare reform debate has become, for the most part silly talk of budgetary savings and time limits—not helping those in need of assistance learn how to help themselves.

I think the designers of this legislation have forgotten a valuable lesson: If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day but if you teach that man how to fish, he can feed himself for a lifetime.

This conference report would consist of a check for 2 years and then a requirement for work programs for only 50 percent of families receiving welfare payments—6 years from now.

The Republicans have forgotten the parable about feeding a family for a lifetime but instead have decided that it is much cheaper to write a check to a welfare family than provide the necessary training to ensure that another check never has to be written to that family.

And under the guise of welfare reform even these checks are becoming smaller. Under the House passed version of this conference agreement the average annual cut per food stamp household in South Carolina would be \$265, and this cut would grow to \$394 by 2002. Under the Senate version of the bill, food stamp households in South Carolina stand to lose even more. While it is not clear what the actual cut would be for South Carolina families under the conference agreement, it is clear that my State's most vulnerable households would be between the proverbial rock and a hard place with little or no hope of any training to help them lift themselves permanently out of poverty.

With the talk of personal responsibility being tossed around, I find it ironic that at the same time our Nation's most vulnerable families are being required to do more for themselves, our States are being asked to do even less.

In this conference agreement, unlike the Tanner-Castle substitute bill I supported earlier this month, States are required to spend only 75 percent of what they spent in 1994 in return for a block grant check from the Federal Government. At the same time, it is projected that as a result of this legislation 8,170 children in my state of South Carolina will be pushed into poverty.

I urge my colleagues not to support this agreement. Although it may be the lesser of two evils, it is not the best we can do nor is it the best we can afford to do.

□ 1445

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE].

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the politic thing to do today is to get in the well of the House and hit your gavel down and say I am against the deadbeat on welfare, and I am right with you for welfare reform. As America watches those of us who have a difference of opinion, we will get castigated and accused as supporting those who would not work. But I come today to oppose this rule.

I hope that those who have goodwill and understand what America is all about will realize that I believe in welfare reform but I do not believe in putting 1 million children in the streets. I do not believe in a weak work program where States will not have the work to give to those who are on welfare. I do not believe in a shortened contingency fund so that, when the 5 years comes, those who have not been able to bridge themselves out of welfare will not have the support that they need.

I do not believe in sending legal immigrants into war, but yet when they need a helping hand this Nation will say you can fight for us but we do not have any support for you and your children. I do not believe in dispossessing the disabled. I do not believe in denying SSI benefits to 300,000 children.

Oh, we could be politic today and many will do that. But it does not matter to me because there are people in this country who need our help. This is a bad welfare reform. Vote against it.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, if my colleagues want to take child abuse out of the welfare families, the best thing to do is to bring these people up out of the poverty system and given them meaningful jobs. That is what this legislation is meant to do.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WELDON], someone I am very proud of because he gave up a very lucrative medical practice to come here and try to do something for America.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for yielding, and it has been a pleasure for me to be here and advocate for the people in my district, who have been calling out for welfare reform for many years.

Mr. Chairman, they know that the current welfare system is broken. The people in my district know that the rate of poverty has not decreased since welfare has been enacted. The average stay on welfare is 13 years, and today illegitimacy rates among many welfare families approach 50 percent.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the bill, and strong support of this rule. H.R. 734 will truly finally end welfare as we know it.

It did not take a Republican Congress to end welfare as we know it. This bill

makes welfare a helping hand, not a lifetime handout. It places 5-year limits on collecting AFDC benefits. For hardship cases States can exempt 20 percent of their case load from the 5-year limit, and able-bodied people must work after 2 years or lose their benefits.

It cuts taxpayer financed welfare for noncitizens and felons. It returns power and flexibility to the States. It ends numerous redundancies within the welfare system by giving block grants to the States and rewards States for moving families from welfare to work.

It seeks to halt the rising illegitimacy rates. Moms are encouraged for the first time to identify the father or risk losing benefits by as much as 25 percent. It increases efforts to make deadbeat dads pay child support. And these, of course, are men who father children but then have shirked their financial responsibility for caring for them.

It gives cash rewards to the top five States who make the most successful improvement in reducing illegitimacy. As we know, fatherlessness is linked to high juvenile crime rates, high drug abuse rates, and declining educational performance. Support the rule and support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3734 the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act. This historic welfare reform bill will end welfare as we know it. During the past 30 years, taxpayers have spent \$5 trillion on failed welfare programs. What kind of return have the taxpayers received on their investment? The rate of poverty has not decreased at all. Furthermore, the average length of stay on welfare is 13 years. Today's illegitimacy rate among welfare families is almost 50 percent and crime continues to run rampant. Current programs have encouraged dependency, trapped people in unsafe housing, and saddled the poor with rules that are antiwork and antifamily. Clearly, those trapped in poverty and the taxpayers deserve better.

This bill overhauls our broken welfare system. This plan makes sure welfare is not a way of life; stresses work not welfare; stops welfare to felons and most noncitizens; restores power and flexibility to the States; and offers States incentives to halt the rise in illegitimacy.

By imposing a 5-year lifetime limit for collecting AFDC, this bill guarantees that welfare is a helping hand, not a lifetime handout. Recognizing the need for helping true hardship cases, States would be allowed to exempt up to 20 percent of their caseload from the 5-year limit. In addition, H.R. 3734 for the first time ever requires able bodied welfare recipients to work for their benefits. Those who can work must do so within 2 years or lose benefits. States will be required to have at least 50 percent of their welfare recipients working by 2002. To help families make the transition from welfare to work, the legislation provides \$4.5 billion more than current law for child care.

Under this bill future entrants into this country will no longer be eligible for most welfare programs during their first 5 years in the United States. Felons will not be eligible for welfare benefits, and State and local jails will be given incentives to report felons who are skirting the rules and receiving welfare benefits.

Our current system has proven that the one-size-fits-all welfare system does not work. H.R. 3734 will give more power and flexibility to the States by ending the entitlement status of numerous welfare programs by block granting the money to the States. No longer will States spend countless hours filling out the required bureaucratic forms hoping to receive a waiver from Washington to implement their welfare program. States will also be rewarded for moving families from welfare to work.

Finally, this bill addresses the problem of illegitimacy in several ways. H.R. 3734 authorizes a cash reward for the five States most successful in reducing illegitimacy. It also strengthens child support enforcement provisions and requires States to reduce assistance by 25 percent to individuals who do not cooperate in establishing paternity. Lastly, this bill mandates an appropriation grant of \$50 million annually to fund abstinence education programs combating teenage pregnancy and illegitimacy.

The sad state of our current welfare system and the cycles of poverty and hopelessness it perpetuates are of great concern to me. I believe this bill goes to the heart of reforming the welfare system by encouraging and helping individuals in need become responsible for themselves and their family. I wholeheartedly support this bill because it makes welfare a helping hand in times of trouble, not a hand out that becomes a way of life. I truly believe that this reform will give taxpayers a better return on their investment in helping those in need.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maine [Mr. LONGLEY], another outstanding new Member of this body. I particularly like him because he is a former Marine.

(Mr. LONGLEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LONGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON], chair of the Committee on Rules, and also members of the committee for bringing this important legislation to the floor, bringing this rule to the floor. This has been delayed far too long.

This is a bill that is about child abuse. It is drug abuse. It is crime and violence and the fact that, for too many Americans who are trapped in this system, the American dream has become the American nightmare.

I do not argue with the fact that the welfare system is a hand in need to those who need it. But for too many it has become a prison. This is about women and children who are suffering under this system as well as the social workers and the law enforcement officers who are forced to deal with the ramifications of the aspects of the system that do not work.

Mr. Speaker, for too long we have been delaying this. We have delayed this vote for most of the day. The fact of the matter is that welfare reform is at the door. It has been knocking for

almost 30 years, and it is finally here today. This afternoon, hopefully, it will be voted on and we will send it to a President who will endorse it. I think that is a tremendous accomplishment for the people of this country.

I would also say it is a first step. The system has become so complex between the different aspects of service and how they are available to help people, that even the people running the system have difficulty understanding it, let alone those who have need for assistance. So, it is a first step in the direction of reform, in the direction of providing an American dream for more Americans and getting rid of the American nightmare.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. SMITH], an outstanding Member who has dealt with the immigration problem in this country.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the rule and the Personal Responsibility Act. Welfare has harmed our children, families, and taxpayers. It has created a culture of dependency that saps people's desire to better their lives. And welfare has undermined America's longstanding immigration policy.

America has always welcomed new citizens with the energy and commitment to come to our shores to build a better future. We've always ensured that immigrants are self-reliant—not dependent on American taxpayers for support. Since 1917, noncitizens who have become public charges after they enter the United States have been subject to deportation.

Welfare undermines this policy and harms immigrants. Rather than promoting hard work, welfare tempts immigrants to come to America to live off the American taxpayer. Noncitizen SSI recipients have increased 580 percent over the past 12 years, and will cost American taxpayers \$5 billion this year alone.

H.R. 3734 restores America's historic immigrants policy and ends the cruel welfare trap. It ensures that sponsors, not taxpayers, will support new immigrants who fall on hard times. Just as deadbeat dads should support the children they bring into this world, deadbeat sponsors should support the immigrants they bring into our country.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule and vote for this bill.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Savannah, GA [Mr. KINGSTON].

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding.

It is interesting we have heard from the Democrats a number reasons why they are not going to support this bill today. One of their reasons was they have not had time to look at it. I am a relatively new Member of Congress. I have been here 4 years. We have been debating welfare for 4 years. I know that for a fact. I have been here. If they have not read the bill by now and have

not been following the debate, that is not the fault of the Republican Congress.

The second reason they say that is that welfare does not cost that much. If you add in all the Federal Government welfare programs, the cost is \$345 billion, which is more than we spend on defense. I am not sure what they consider money if \$345 billion is not. We spent \$5 trillion since LBJ's Great Society programs, and that is enough money. That is more than we spent on World War II.

The final reason they are saying is that it is cruel to children. Nothing is more cruel than having a welfare system that traps children in poverty, that makes children and families break up, that makes them live in housing projects where the dad cannot be at home, where there is high drug use, where there are teenage dropout rates and teenage drug abuse. I do not see why they think that is compassion.

Our program sends \$4 billion more on child care than the Democrat proposal. And that is using their frame of thinking that is more compassion than what they have. Welfare reform is family friendly. Welfare should not be a life style. It should be something that society gives people a temporary helping hand, not a permanent handout, not a hammock forever to swing in but a temporary safety net so that people can get back into the socioeconomic mainstream and enjoy the American dream just like the rest of us.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by reminding my colleagues of one very important fact. Today 9 million children depend upon Aid to Families With Dependent Children for their survival. When we are talking about reforming welfare, we are talking about these 9 million American children, and we need to be very, very careful on what changes we make.

Mr. Speaker, this is not to say that I am opposed to welfare reform. In fact, I am very much in favor of welfare reform. I have seen too many children growing up surrounded by violence. I have seen too many fathers completely abandon their responsibilities. And I have seen too many single mothers too dejected and overwhelmed to look for jobs.

These days being poor is not what it used to be. It used to be that families stuck together. It used to be if you worked hard enough you could support your family. But, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately times have changed.

I agree with the editorial in the August 12 issue of the New Republic which says that, although our current welfare system may not have created the current underclass, it certainly sustains it. I agree that welfare reform is one of the most important issues that we can take up in this Congress. Today's Boston Globe says that under this bill, poverty will grow with welfare done on the cheap. We need to be very careful,

Mr. Speaker, how we change AFDC and not do it on the cheap.

This bill, Mr. Speaker, is not the way to do it. I hoped that after this bill came out of conference, I would be able to support it. But after looking at it, I cannot because, Mr. Speaker, I cannot vote for a bill that will push 1 million additional children below the poverty level. I cannot vote for a bill that may not guarantee health care to poor children and a conference committee that cuts food stamps. I cannot vote for a bill that will provide no protection for bad times. If there is a recession, millions of people will be completely destitute. And, Mr. Speaker, I cannot vote for a bill that allows States to take at least one-half of their Federal money and spend it on something other than children.

This Gingrich welfare bill, Mr. Speaker, is too tough on children. It is weak on work, and it is soft on deadbeat parents. Mr. Speaker, as I said, two out of every three people on welfare is a child, and we have a responsibility to those children. We have a responsibility to make sure that under no circumstances whatsoever will they be hurt. We have a responsibility, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that their health and their safety is placed far above any jockeying for political advantage.

So I urge my colleagues to oppose this rule and oppose the conference committee bill and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1500

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, did I hear the gentleman right when he said, the Gingrich welfare bill? Is that not strange? I thought it was the Gingrich-Clinton welfare bill, because the President has just announced he is going to sign the bill. Mr. Speaker, colleagues, I would just say to you, what is compassionate about locking poor people into a lifetime of welfare dependency? That is what this debate is all about. If you are really sincere, if you really care about poor people in America, do something for them. Change the status quo which has failed miserably.

I see my good friend, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. STENHOLM], sitting over here, came here with me 18 years ago. He came before the Committee on Rules about an hour or so ago and he said, JERRY, this a bipartisan bill. He said, we Democrats have had input to it. It is a compromise. It is a step in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, what I was hearing is, no more ifs, ands and buts. This is the compromise. This is the step in the right direction we need to move in.

Let us vote for this bill now. Vote for the rule and the bill and let us get on with trying to change the welfare system in America for the good of the poor.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIGGS). The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Pursuant to clause 5 of rule XV, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum period of time within which a vote by electronic device, if ordered, will be taken on the question of agreeing to the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 259, nays 164, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 381]

YEAS—259

Allard	Dooley	Kasich
Archer	Doolittle	Kelly
Army	Dornan	Kim
Bachus	Doyle	King
Baesler	Dreier	Kingston
Baker (CA)	Duncan	Klecza
Baker (LA)	Dunn	Klug
Ballenger	Ehlers	Knollenberg
Barr	Ehrlich	Kolbe
Barrett (NE)	English	LaHood
Bartlett	Ensign	Largent
Barton	Everett	Latham
Bass	Ewing	LaTourette
Bateman	Fawell	Laughlin
Bereuter	Fields (TX)	Lazio
Bilbray	Flanagan	Leach
Billirakis	Foley	Lewis (CA)
Bishop	Forbes	Lewis (KY)
Bliley	Fowler	Lightfoot
Blute	Fox	Lincoln
Boehlert	Franks (CT)	Linder
Boehner	Franks (NJ)	Lipinski
Bonilla	Frelinghuysen	Livingston
Bono	Frisa	LoBiondo
Brewster	Funderburk	Longley
Browder	Gallely	Lucas
Brownback	Ganske	Manzullo
Bryant (TN)	Gekas	Martini
Bunn	Geren	McCollum
Bunning	Gilchrest	McCrey
Burr	Gillmor	McDermott
Burton	Gilman	McHugh
Buyer	Goodlatte	McInnis
Callahan	Goodling	McIntosh
Calvert	Goss	McKeon
Camp	Graham	Metcalf
Campbell	Greene (UT)	Meyers
Canady	Greenwood	Mica
Castle	Gutknecht	Miller (FL)
Chabot	Hall (TX)	Molinari
Chambliss	Hamilton	Montgomery
Chapman	Hancock	Moorhead
Chenoweth	Hansen	Morella
Christensen	Hastert	Myers
Chrysler	Hastings (WA)	Myrick
Clinger	Hayes	Nethercutt
Coble	Hayworth	Neumann
Coburn	Hefley	Ney
Collins (GA)	Heineman	Norwood
Combust	Herger	Nussle
Condit	Hilleary	Orton
Cooley	Hobson	Oxley
Cox	Hoekstra	Packard
Cramer	Hoke	Parker
Crane	Holden	Paxon
Crapo	Horn	Payne (VA)
Cremeans	Hostettler	Peterson (FL)
Cubin	Hunter	Peterson (MN)
Cunningham	Hutchinson	Petri
Davis	Hyde	Pickett
Deal	Ingis	Pombo
DeLay	Istook	Porter
Diaz-Balart	Johnson (CT)	Portman
Dickey	Johnson, Sam	Poshard
Dicks	Jones	Pryce

Quillen	Shadegg	Thornberry
Quinn	Shays	Tiahrt
Radanovich	Shuster	Torkildsen
Ramstad	Skeen	Traficant
Regula	Smith (MI)	Upton
Riggs	Smith (NJ)	Vucanovich
Roberts	Smith (TX)	Walker
Roemer	Smith (WA)	Walsh
Rogers	Solomon	Wamp
Rohrabacher	Souder	Watts (OK)
Ros-Lehtinen	Spence	Weldon (FL)
Rose	Stearns	Weldon (PA)
Roukema	Stenholm	Weller
Royce	Stockman	White
Salmon	Stump	Whitfield
Sanford	Talent	Wicker
Saxton	Tanner	Wolf
Scarborough	Tate	Young (AK)
Schaefer	Tauzin	Zeliff
Schiff	Taylor (MS)	Zimmer
Seastrand	Taylor (NC)	
Sensenbrenner	Thomas	

NAYS—164

Abercrombie	Gibbons	Neal
Ackerman	Gonzalez	Oberstar
Andrews	Gordon	Obey
Baldacci	Green (TX)	Olver
Barcia	Gutierrez	Ortiz
Barrett (WI)	Hall (OH)	Owens
Becerra	Harman	Pallone
Beilenson	Hastings (FL)	Pastor
Bentsen	Hefner	Payne (NJ)
Berman	Hilliard	Pelosi
Bevill	Hinchev	Pomeroy
Blumenauer	Hoyer	Rahall
Bonior	Jackson (IL)	Rangel
Borski	Jackson-Lee	Reed
Boucher	(TX)	Rivers
Brown (CA)	Jacobs	Roybal-Allard
Brown (FL)	Johnson (SD)	Rush
Brown (OH)	Johnson, E. B.	Sabo
Bryant (TX)	Johnston	Sanders
Cardin	Kanjorski	Sawyer
Clay	Kaptur	Schroeder
Clayton	Kennedy (MA)	Schumer
Clement	Kennedy (RI)	Scott
Clyburn	Kennelly	Serrano
Coleman	Kildee	Sisisky
Collins (IL)	Klink	Skaggs
Collins (MI)	LaFalce	Skelton
Conyers	Lantos	Slaughter
Costello	Levin	Spratt
Coyne	Lewis (GA)	Stark
Cummings	Loftgren	Stokes
Danner	Lowe	Studds
de la Garza	Luther	Stupak
DeFazio	Maloney	Tejeda
DeLauro	Manton	Thompson
Dellums	Markey	Thornton
Deutsch	Martinez	Thurman
Dingell	Mascara	Torres
Dixon	Matsui	Torricelli
Doggett	McCarthy	Towns
Durbin	McHale	Velazquez
Edwards	McKinney	Vento
Engel	McNulty	Visclosky
Eshoo	Meehan	Volkmer
Evans	Meek	Ward
Farr	Menendez	Waters
Fattah	Millender-	Watt (NC)
Fazio	McDonald	Waxman
Fields (LA)	Miller (CA)	Williams
Filner	Minge	Wilson
Foglietta	Mink	Wise
Frank (MA)	Moakley	Woolsey
Frost	Mollohan	Wynn
Furse	Moran	Yates
Gejdenson	Murtha	
Gephardt	Nadler	

NOT VOTING—10

Flake	Jefferson	Shaw
Ford	McDade	Young (FL)
Gunderson	Richardson	
Houghton	Roth	

□ 1521

Mrs. KENNELLY and Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIGGS). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 281, nays 137, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 382]

YEAS—281

Allard	Everett	Lucas
Archer	Ewing	Luther
Army	Fawell	Manzullo
Bachus	Fields (TX)	Martini
Baesler	Flanagan	Mascara
Baker (CA)	Foley	McCarthy
Baker (LA)	Forbes	McCollum
Ballenger	Fowler	McCrey
Barcia	Fox	McHugh
Barr	Franks (CT)	McInnis
Barrett (NE)	Franks (NJ)	McIntosh
Bartlett	Frelinghuysen	McKeon
Barton	Frisa	Metcalf
Bass	Frost	Meyers
Bateman	Funderburk	Mica
Bentsen	Gallely	Miller (FL)
Bereuter	Ganske	Minge
Bilbray	Gekas	Molinari
Billirakis	Geren	Montgomery
Bishop	Gilchrest	Moorhead
Bliley	Gillmor	Morella
Blute	Gilman	Myers
Boehlert	Goodlatte	Nethercutt
Boehner	Goodling	Neumann
Bonilla	Gordon	Ney
Bono	Goss	Norwood
Boucher	Graham	Nussle
Brewster	Greene (UT)	Orton
Browder	Greenwood	Oxley
Brownback	Gutknecht	Packard
Bryant (TN)	Hall (OH)	Parker
Bunn	Hall (TX)	Paxon
Bunning	Hamilton	Payne (VA)
Burr	Hancock	Peterson (FL)
Burton	Hansen	Peterson (MN)
Buyer	Harman	Petri
Callahan	Hastert	Pickett
Calvert	Hastings (WA)	Pombo
Camp	Hayworth	Porter
Campbell	Hefley	Portman
Canady	Hefner	Poshard
Castle	Heineman	Pryce
Chabot	Herger	Quillen
Chambliss	Hilleary	Quinn
Chapman	Hobson	Radanovich
Chenoweth	Hoekstra	Ramstad
Christensen	Hoke	Regula
Chrysler	Holden	Riggs
Clinger	Horn	Rivers
Coble	Hostettler	Roberts
Coburn	Hunter	Roemer
Collins (GA)	Hutchinson	Rogers
Combust	Hyde	Rohrabacher
Condit	Ingis	Ros-Lehtinen
Cooley	Istook	Rose
Cox	Jacobs	Roukema
Cramer	Johnson (CT)	Royce
Cubin	Johnson (SD)	Salmon
Cunningham	Johnson, Sam	Sanford
Davis	Jones	Saxton
Deal	Kasich	Scarborough
DeLay	Kubin	Schaefer
Diaz-Balart	Cunningham	Schiff
Dickey	Danner	Kim
Dicks	Deal	King
	DeLay	Kingston
	Deutsch	Klecza
	Diaz-Balart	Klug
	Dickey	Kolbe
	Dicks	LaHood
	Dingell	Largent
	Dooley	Latham
	Doolittle	LaTourette
	Dornan	Laughlin
	Doyle	Lazio
	Dreier	Leach
	Duncan	Levin
	Dunn	Lewis (CA)
	Durbin	Lewis (KY)
	Edwards	Lightfoot
	Ehlers	Lincoln
	Ehrlich	Lipinski
	English	LoBiondo
	Ensign	Longley

Tanner	Upton	White
Tate	Volkmer	Whitfield
Tauzin	Vucanovich	Wicker
Taylor (MS)	Walker	Williams
Thomas	Walsh	Wilson
Thornberry	Wamp	Wolf
Tiahrt	Watts (OK)	Young (AK)
Torkildsen	Weldon (FL)	Zeliff
Torricelli	Weldon (PA)	Zimmer
Traficant	Weller	

NAYS—137

Abercrombie	Gonzalez	Obey
Ackerman	Green (TX)	Olver
Andrews	Gutierrez	Ortiz
Baldacci	Hastings (FL)	Owens
Barrett (WI)	Hilliard	Pallone
Becerra	Hinchey	Pastor
Beilenson	Hoyer	Payne (NJ)
Berman	Jackson (IL)	Pelosi
Bevill	Jackson-Lee	Pomeroy
Blumenauer	(TX)	Rahall
Bonior	Jefferson	Rangel
Borski	Johnson, E. B.	Reed
Brown (CA)	Johnston	Roybal-Allard
Brown (FL)	Kanjorski	Rush
Brown (OH)	Kaptur	Sabo
Bryant (TX)	Kennedy (MA)	Sanders
Cardin	Kennedy (RI)	Sawyer
Clay	Kildee	Schroeder
Clayton	Klink	Schumer
Clyburn	LaFalce	Scott
Coleman	Lantos	Serrano
Collins (IL)	Lewis (GA)	Skaggs
Collins (MI)	Lofgren	Slaughter
Conyers	Lowey	Stark
Coyne	Maloney	Stokes
Cummings	Manton	Studds
Davis	Markey	Stupak
de la Garza	Martinez	Taylor (NC)
DeFazio	Matsui	Tejeda
DeLauro	McDermott	Thompson
Dellums	McHale	Thornton
Dixon	McKinney	Thurman
Doggett	McNulty	Torres
Engel	Meehan	Towns
Eshoo	Meek	Velazquez
Evans	Menendez	Vento
Farr	Millender	Visclosky
Fattah	McDonald	Ward
Fazio	Miller (CA)	Waters
Fields (LA)	Mink	Watt (NC)
Filner	Moakley	Waxman
Foglietta	Mollohan	Wise
Frank (MA)	Moran	Woolsey
Furse	Murtha	Wynn
Gejdenson	Nadler	Yates
Gephardt	Neal	
Gibbons	Oberstar	

NOT VOTING—15

Cox	Houghton	Myrick
Flake	Knollenberg	Richardson
Ford	Linder	Roth
Gunderson	Livingston	Stearns
Hayes	McDade	Young (FL)

□ 1530

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid off the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, on roll-call No. 382. I was in the Rayburn Room. The beeper and the bells failed to function and I missed the above vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, I was inadvertently delayed while attending an International Relations Committee hearing with Secretary Christopher, and missed voting on rollcalls No. 381 and No. 382. Had I been there, I would have voted "yea" on 381 and "yea" on 382.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 495, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 3734) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201(a)(1) of the concurrent

resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1997.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 495, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see Proceedings of the House of Tuesday, July 30, 1996, at page H8829.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. KASICH] and the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. SABO] will each be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. KASICH].

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. ROBERTS], the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Agriculture.

(Mr. ROBERTS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me, and I thank my colleagues for their reluctant attention.

Mr. Speaker, in a year that has been described by many as one of gridlock and finger-pointing and wheel-spinning and even-numbered year partisan rhetoric, we are about to achieve a remarkable accomplishment. This House and the Senate, and now finally the President, have responded to the American public. Simply put, this conference report represents real accomplishment, real welfare reform.

We urged the President to sign this conference report. He has. There are good reasons why. Seventy-five percent of the food stamp reforms in this conference report represent the same things that were proposed by this administration. I do not care whether we are talking about budget savings, the work requirement, the program simplification, the tougher penalties for fraud and abuse, or keeping the program at the Federal level as we go through the welfare reform transition. We have tried to work with the administration. We have done that. The President will sign the bill.

Mr. Speaker, this road has not been easy. We have been working in this House for 18 months. The very first hearing held by me in the Committee on Agriculture was on fraud and abuse, and the critical and urgent need for reform of the Food Stamp Program. The new Inspector General at the Department of Agriculture showed a videotape of organized crime members trading food stamps for cash, and eventually using that cash for drugs and guns. That tape made national news, and it confirmed the suspicions of many taxpayers and citizens.

Following that hearing, our late colleague and dear friend, the chairman of the subcommittee, Bill Emerson, held four extensive hearings and formulated the principles that guided the reform that is now before us.

First, the original Republican plan was to make sure that as we go through welfare reform, no one would

go hungry, that we would keep a reformed Food Stamp Program as a safety net so food can and will be provided while States are undergoing this transition.

Second, we wanted to eliminate as much paperwork and redtape and regulation as possible. We wanted to harmonize the welfare and the Food Stamp Program requirements. This bill does that.

Third, having seen the program costs soar from \$12 to \$27 billion in 10 years, regardless of how the economy has performed, we wanted to take the program off of automatic pilot. We have done that.

Fourth, the food stamps must not be a disincentive to work. In this bill, able-bodied participants, those from ages of 18 to 50 with no dependents, no kids, no children, only the able-bodied, these folks, less than 2 percent of those on food stamps, they must work in private sector jobs and not be rewarded for not working.

Fifth, after hearing firsthand from the Inspector General, we tightened the controls on waste and abuse. We stopped the trafficking with increased and tough penalties.

Mr. Speaker, these principles do represent real reform of the Food Stamp Program. All are incorporated in the conference agreement. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

I want to thank my colleagues for a tremendous team effort, more especially the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. KASICH], more especially the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARCHER], more especially the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GOODLING], and more especially, underscored three times, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW], who said the work we have accomplished is significant. We have true reform. We have a real welfare reform bill. But now the work really starts. This bill is not perfect. We have a lot ahead of us and a lot of challenges. I urge a "yes" vote on the conference report.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. TANNER].

(Mr. TANNER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy today for several reasons. I think Congress has come together with the administration to take a step forward on certainly what is a pressing national social problem. That is welfare reform. We started out, as the previous speaker said, almost 2 years ago to try to bring together something that could be signed and enacted into law so we could actually change the system that is broken, according to everyone who has observed it, and actually do something about it now.

I want to thank the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW], the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. KASICH], the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. SABO], and many others here. I particularly want to

thank the gentleman from Delaware, MIKE CASTLE, who came together with me to put together something that would be bipartisan so we could get off of this partisan gridlock that we have been suffering from.

Mr. Speaker, in our motion to instruct conferees we asked for two or three things: One, a safety net for kids. That has been accomplished with Medicaid and food stamps. The safety net is there for children. The unfunded mandate problem has been partially taken care of, with the States being allowed to continue with waivers, and also because the Medicaid situation is intact, there will not be a lot of costs transferred to county hospitals across our country. We also asked that savings go to the debt. That has not been accomplished, but as the previous speaker said, we will continue to work on that.

The most important difference between the conference agreement and the two bills that have previously been vetoed, in my judgment, is that we protect innocent children. This bill no longer treats a 4-year-old child like he or she is a 24-year-old irresponsible adult. To me that was critical. That is not a part of welfare reform. That is just compassionate public policy. This bill has done that.

I once again thank the Republican conferees for their hard work, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW] and others. I also urge a "yes" vote. Let us make this a red letter day.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mrs. ROUKEMA].

(Mrs. ROUKEMA asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation, and want to associate myself with the statement of the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. ROBERTS], particularly as it applied to the Food Stamp Program. My opposition and stated principle in the last round of this bill before it went to conference was expressing a concern of what it did to innocent children in that regard. I rise in support. It has been corrected, and I support the conference agreement.

Mr. Speaker, as someone who has advocated a "tough love" approach to welfare reform legislation, this goes a long way toward reforming our broken welfare system as we return the system to its original purpose—a temporary safety net, not a way of life.

Furthermore, as a pioneer in the battle to also reform our child support enforcement system, I am very pleased to see that the reforms I have been pushing for almost 4 years now—which represent the heart and soul of the U.S. Interstate Commission on Child Support's final report—have been included in the package before us today.

Ensuring that these child support enforcement reforms were included in this bill acknowledges what I've been

saying for years: Effective reform of our interstate child support enforcement laws must be an integral component of any welfare reform plan that the 104th Congress sent to President Clinton.

Research has found that somewhere between 25 and 40 percent of welfare costs go to support mothers and children who fall onto the welfare rolls precisely because these mothers are not receiving the legal, court-ordered support payments to which they are rightfully entitled.

With the current system spending such a large portion of funding on these mothers, children are the first victims, and the taxpayers who have to support these families are the last victims.

The plan before us also puts teeth into the laws that require unwed mothers to establish paternity of their children at the hospital, thereby laying the groundwork for claiming responsibility for their actions and families.

The core of the welfare reforms incorporated into this bill are clearly defined work requirements for welfare beneficiaries—which is essential to moving people off of the welfare rolls—strict time limits—thereby giving welfare recipients a strong incentive to find a job—and more flexibility for States to design welfare programs that fit the needs of their people.

In addition, this welfare reform plan protects the safety net for children by including a rainy day fund to help the families in States suffering from recession or economic downturns.

The enhanced flexibility that States will receive under this plan is meritorious, provided that the safety net is maintained in order to protect families who truly need temporary assistance—not a lifetime of handouts generation after generation.

For example, while I support the concept of giving States more flexibility in designing their own welfare programs, I am very pleased to see that this bill contains strong maintenance of effort provisions which will require States to continue their commitment to the Nation's safety net.

Under no circumstances should a block grant reform allow States to simply administer welfare or any other program using only Federal moneys—this bill avoids that problem with its tough maintenance of effort language.

I was very distressed by the fact that House version of this bill opened a significant loophole in the Food Stamp Program by giving States the option of using block grants for this critically-important aspect of our Nation's safety net.

Given that I was deeply concerned about giving a blank check to the Governors for the Food Stamp Program would result in innocent children going hungry, I opposed the House plan last week.

But again I am very pleased to see that, once again, the Senate has saved the House of Representatives from it-

self by rejecting this proposal, and successfully retaining its position on this issue in the final bill.

Additionally, this legislation does take a modest step in the right direction by allowing States to use their own money, or social services block grant funds—to provide families on welfare with vouchers—instead of cash benefits—to pay for essential services needed by the family, that is, medicine, baby food, diapers, school supplies—if a State has terminated the family's cash benefits as part of its sanction program.

This is the right thing to do because even if a welfare recipient is playing by all of the rules and has not found a job when the time limits become effective, the use of vouchers for services plays an important role in helping the family and its children keep their head above the water-line.

There should be no question that we must enact strong welfare reform legislation this year. The American people are correctly demanding that we restore the notion of individual responsibility and self-reliance to a system that has run amok over the past 20 years.

Although I have strongly supported some welfare reforms that have been described as "tough love" measures for several years now, I want to reiterate that my goal has always been to require self-reliance and responsibility, while ensuring that innocent children do not go hungry and homeless as a result of any Federal action.

Finally, I am most supportive of the improvements the conference gave to the Medicaid Program. This is an enlightened and humane response to genuine medical needs.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is not perfect. But, it represents the first major reform of our broken-down welfare system in generations. We have been given a historic opportunity that I hope and trust we will not squander. We owe no less to our children. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for final passage of this monumental reform package.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. CAMP asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference agreement.

Today, the Congress is again presented with the opportunity to adopt meaningful welfare reform. Over the past 19 months, my colleagues and I have written, debated, and adopted proposals to reform our current welfare system. Our efforts, however, were twice vetoed by the President.

Since launching the war on poverty in 1965, over \$5 trillion has been spent to eliminate poverty in America. Some 31 years later and despite billions and billions of dollars, poverty in America has worsened and our children grow and mature in an environment with little hope and opportunity.

The proposal before us today reforms a welfare system that has trapped millions in a

cycle of poverty. Our current welfare system punishes families and children by rewarding irresponsibility, illegitimacy and destroying self-esteem. For too long, the Federal Government has defended the current system and turned away as millions of families and children became trapped in a cycle of despair, dependence, and disappointment.

This bill accomplishes several important goals. First, it time limits welfare to 5 years. The Federal and State governments have an obligation to assist those in need but our current system has become a way of life instead of a temporary helping hand for those experiencing hard times.

Second, our bill requires work. The Washington welfare system has also robbed recipients of their self-esteem by merely providing a check. This proposal requires each recipient to work for their benefits, thereby instilling the pride of employment and allowing each recipient to earn a paycheck. This sense of accomplishment and independence increases the individual's self-esteem and often influences the children who can see firsthand the benefits of a strong work ethic. For those continuing to experience hard times, however, the bill allows States to exempt up to 20 percent of the welfare caseload from the time limit.

Most importantly our bill helps those families and individuals working to improve their lives. We provide more funding for child care than current law and more than requested by the President. This funding is extremely important in allowing families to work while ensuring their children receive the proper care. We also protect our children by ensuring eligibility for Medicaid. For those families moving from welfare to work, we continue assistance so they don't have to worry about losing health care coverage if their incomes increase.

Compassion is not the sole property of Washington and our bill creates a Federal-State partnership in meeting the needs of welfare recipients. States will have the power and opportunity to design and implement new innovative programs that best meet the needs of residents. I urge my colleagues to support the conference report.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW] be allowed to control the time and to yield.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIGGS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Washington [Ms. DUNN], a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Ms. DUNN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, this is a good bill. I am very pleased that the President has announced that he is going to sign this bill. I want to commend Members on both sides of the aisle for their hard work. We have worked for a long time to put a good bill together.

To those who are concerned with protecting the children, so were we. We spent a lot of time, a lot of thought, a lot of effort on protecting the children. We have come up with a bill that in the child care portion of the bill provides over \$4 billion more to help those mothers who are trying to get off welfare into the workplace, with the peace

of mind to know their children will be taken care of, \$4 billion more than in the current welfare system.

On the child support portion of the legislation, where we all know that in this Nation today \$34 billion are owed, ordered by the court to be paid to custodial parents, we have tightened up this system. Those children are often the children that go on welfare—30 percent of their parents leave the State to avoid paying money to support their own flesh-and-blood children. We have solved this problem. So it is my great joy to say support this bill, and thanks for all the help.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California [Ms. WOOLSEY].

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, we all agree that the welfare system does not work for the welfare recipients and for the taxpayers. The challenge we face as lawmakers is to improve the system so we can invest in getting families off welfare and into jobs that pay a liveable wage, and also to answer the "what ifs". What if a mother on welfare cannot find a job? What if she is not earning enough to take care of her family? What if she cannot find child care for her 6-year-old?

Unfortunately, this conference report will not ensure families can live on the jobs that they get, that they will earn a liveable wage, and this conference has made sure that it does not answer our "what ifs". It kicks families off of assistance, even if parents are trying hard to find a job. It does not even invest in the education and training parents need to get jobs that pay an actual liveable wage.

Even though the House and Senate agreed that single parents with kids under 11 should not leave their children home alone if there is no child care, the majority went ahead without discussion and lowered that age to under 6.

□ 1545

How many of my colleagues would leave their 6-year-old home alone?

I ask my colleagues, do not take this vote lightly. Do not leave any child behind. The lives of millions of children are at stake. It will be too late tomorrow if the what-ifs are not answered today.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GOODLING], the chairman of the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities.

(Mr. GOODLING asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, as I have said many times, you cannot fix something, you cannot change something unless you first admit it is broken and first admit that you need to change it. Finally, both sides of the aisle came forward and indicated that

we do have a broken system, that we have as a matter of fact put millions of Americans into a bind and took away their opportunity to ever have a chance at the American dream.

Now, the tough part then came as to how do you fix it. Of course we had differing opinions. Our committee started out with the idea that welfare must be a safety net, not a way of life; there must be a very clear emphasis on work and on getting those on welfare into work. There must be a strong measure to stop abuses of the system. We need to return power and flexibility to the States. Welfare should not encourage, it should discourage destructive personal behavior that contributes so clearly not only to welfare dependence but to a host of social problems.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good, balanced welfare reform bill. We have been very generous in providing money for child care. We have protected the nutrition program. We have established strong work requirements. And we have at long last addressed the tremendous problem of out-of-wedlock births and absentee fathers.

Mr. Speaker, I commend all those who have worked so hard to bring about this welfare reform effort. I want to especially mention from the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities, the gentleman from California [Mr. CUNNINGHAM], the gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE], the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. HUTCHINSON], the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. TALENT], and the gentlewoman from Kansas [Mrs. MEYERS]. I strongly support the legislation. I urge all to vote for it because at long last we move forward in transforming welfare to a program of work and opportunity.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. STENHOLM].

(Mr. STENHOLM asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this conference report. In doing so, I want to pay particular thanks to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW] for making this an inclusive conference, at least from the perspective of those of us on this side of the aisle, and also the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. MCCRERY] and the gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE]. They have been very good to work with, at least in listening to those of us on this side of the aisle who had major problems with previous bills before the House and thought we had constructive suggestions of how to make it better. We were listened to, and many of the proposals we made are included, of which we are grateful.

To those that suggest that somehow the State waivers portion of this is contrary to the best interest of the work programs of somehow guts work requirements, I only suggest that they read the bill. Read the language which is available, and they will see. Far

from gutting it, it makes it much more workable.

For States like mine, Texas, Utah, Michigan, and others that have already begun experimenting with work programs, this bill, I believe, allows those States and all of us who are interested in making this bill work as we say we wish it to, it allows the flexibility to allow States to experiment, to do pilot projects and pilot programs. In this case it is already happening in my State.

Some of the concerns that we had with unfunded mandates, they have been alleviated as best as can be possible under a conference report. For that we are grateful. In the area of health care providers, protection of children, this is moved in the direction that we feel is much, much more preferable than the bill that originally passed the House.

While this welfare reform conference report is far from perfect, it is clearly preferable to continuing the current system and preferable to welfare legislation considered earlier.

For these reasons I support the welfare reform conference report. I am extremely pleased that the President has agreed to sign it, and I commend those who have worked so hard for so long in order to bring us to this day.

Mr. Speaker, while some of the comments I've heard this afternoon have tended toward the hyperbolic, it truly is the case that the importance of what we are doing today should not be minimized. When this welfare reform proposal is signed into law, the status quo will be fundamentally changed.

This kind of change does not happen by chance. More people than I can mention deserve credit, but in addition to the obvious leadership of President Clinton, Chairman SHAW, and other members of the leadership, I want to express my thanks for the bipartisan efforts of MIKE CASTLE, JOHN TANNER, JOHN CHAFFEE, SANDY LEVIN, NANCY JOHNSON, and others.

One of the major reasons I opposed previous welfare reform proposals, and specifically the bill that was most recently before the House, was because of the restrictions it would have placed on the State of Texas. Earlier this year I worked extensively with Governor Bush and the White House to obtain approval of the Texas welfare waiver which includes the best plans of our State for moving people from welfare to work.

President Clinton already has approved waivers allowing 41 States to implement innovative programs to move welfare recipients to work. The House's welfare reform bill would have restricted those State reform initiatives by imposing work mandates that are less flexible than States are implementing. Over 20 States would have been required to change their work programs to meet the mandates in that earlier House bill or face substantial penalties from the Federal Government.

The conference report now allows States that are implementing welfare waivers to go forward with those efforts. Specifically, the conference report allows those States to count individuals who are participating in State-authorized work programs in meeting the work participation rates in the bill, even work pro-

grams which otherwise do not meet the Federal mandates in the bill.

I know that some of my colleagues on my side of the aisle have been critical of the State waiver provisions included in this conference report. I must respectfully and forcefully disagree with that sentiment and say that in virtually all cases, I think that conversations with officials from their own States would lead them to supporting this waiver provision.

I am convinced that these various State plans are precisely the best experiments for determining how to put people to work. Frankly, I think the State plans generally are more realistic about the work requirements and are more solidly grounded in the possible, rather than the hypothetical.

Some of us around here have gotten carried away with our rhetoric about being tough on work by getting into a bidding war over who can have work requirements that sound tougher. Our rhetoric about being tough on work has led us to impose work requirements in this bill that virtually no State can implement.

The only work requirements that are meaningful are the work requirements that actually can be met by States. When I have said that previous welfare reform bills were weak on work, I have meant that the bills would not give States the resources to put welfare recipients into work.

The mandates in the bill passed by the House would force States such as Texas to make changes in the plans passed by the State legislature or face severe penalties from the Federal Government.

The important State waiver change included in the conference report gives States necessary additional flexibility in implementing programs to move welfare recipients to work even if they don't meet the mandates in this bill.

The additional flexibility that this bill gives to States in developing work programs will reduce the pressure on States to cut benefits or restrict eligibility for assistance in order to meet the work requirements of the bill. The Congressional Budget Office has reported that States would be forced to tighten eligibility for assistance to needy families or by reducing the size of benefits in order to offset the unfunded mandate in the work programs. Members who are concerned about the impact that welfare reform will have on children should strongly support giving States this flexibility and reducing the unfunded mandates.

Despite some reservations I have about this conference report, I believe it is critical that welfare reform be enacted this year. Failure to do so will signal yet another wasted opportunity to make critically needed reforms. We should enact this conference report and fix the current system now, moving towards a system that better promotes work and individual responsibility.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Nevada [Mr. ENSIGN], a valued member of the Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Committee on Ways and Means.

(Mr. ENSIGN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ENSIGN. I thank the chairman for yielding me the time, and I thank him for all the work he has done on behalf of the welfare recipients in the country.

Mr. Speaker, today is truly independence day for welfare recipients. It is the first day to redefine compassion in America. In Las Vegas, we have a program known as Opportunity Village. It is an incredible program for the mentally disabled. It is a public-private partnership. The primary premise for the program is that it is compassionate enough to care enough about mentally disabled people to where the community works together to find these people jobs.

It is an incredible situation to walk down there and to see the joy that these people have in being able to work every day so that they do not become a drain on society. They feel good about themselves. Today is the first day welfare recipients are going to start feeling good about themselves, and the children are going to start feeling good about their parents.

My mom, when I was young, was divorced, supporting three kids, with very little money, just virtually no child support. I watched her every single day get up and go to work. She taught me a work ethic that has carried through my entire life with myself and my brother and sister. We have robbed that of welfare families. This bill starts giving that work ethic back to the American people.

The Wall Street Journal did a poll. Ninety-five percent of all presidents of companies had their first job by the time they were 12 years of age. Compassion, work ethic, today; vote for this bill. It is a good bill for America, and today is a great day for America.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from California [Ms. WATERS].

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, someday more politicians will approach tough decisions such as welfare reform with more care and integrity. This is not that day. Someday politicians will place children above politics. This is not that day. Someday politicians will place truth above personal gain. This is not that day.

Too many Democrats and Republicans will run for reelection on this so-called welfare reform legislation. The truth is this bill does nothing to train mothers for work, to develop jobs, to help recipients become independent. This bill is welfare fraud, not welfare reform. This bill penalizes poor working families and will drive more children into poverty. Only time will reveal the shame of what happened this day, and only history will record the blatant lack of courage to simply do the right thing.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida [Mrs. MEEK].

(Mrs. MEEK of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, let no one fool you. This bill is not about reforming welfare. It is not about that. It is about saving money and trying your very best to influence

the American public that we have balanced the budget. I would not mind this. I want to see welfare reform. But this is not the way to do it. What we are doing here is hurting children. Every time I stand here, I talk about that. These are all children. The conference report did much worse than the Senate. You allow the States, and I come from a State that will, you are allowing a State to cut 25 percent of their 1994 spending levels without any penalty. When the Florida legislature gets ready to cut, they are going to cut this particular program. The parents of children ages 6 to 11 will have to work without assurance of child care at all. Who is going to take care of the children? Are they going to run all over the world and get into trouble? Yes. The transfer of funds from transfer assistance to work, the Senate bill did better than that. The conference bill allows them to divert funds.

I am hoping that people listen to this bill because what this conference bill does is worse than the Senate bill and it should not be passed. Mr. Speaker, this is a travesty to the American public.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Mrs. JOHNSON], a distinguished member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding me the time and commend him on his extraordinary leadership now over 4 years in getting this bill to the President.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is about work, responsibility, hope, and opportunity. I wish I had the time here today to answer some of the concerns that have been raised about day care and jobs and all of those things. I think this bill addresses them. But I would like to discuss two issues that have not received much attention but are integral to our underlying goal of helping families become self-sufficient: Child support enforcement and Medicaid.

First, I am very pleased to say that this bill retains current eligibility standards for families on Medicaid. All families now on Medicaid will continue to get Medicaid. Furthermore, all families in the future that meet today's criteria will continue to get Medicaid even if their State redefines their welfare program with more constricted criteria.

Regarding the Medicaid transition period, under current law when a family leaves the welfare rolls to work, they are guaranteed 1 year's transitional Medicaid benefit. In the future, this will be absolutely true. We retain current law in this regard. Medical coverage is often one of the biggest barriers to families leaving welfare, especially since lower paying jobs are less likely to have employer-provided health coverage. By keeping the transition period policy constant, we are enabling families to go to work without worrying about losing their medical benefit.

Second, this bill contains landmark child support provisions. Today in America 3.7 million custodial parents are poor; of those 3.7 million, fully three-quarters receive no child support. Of those who have child support orders in place, which is only 34 percent of the women, only 40 percent receive the payment they should receive. This is catastrophic for women and children, and this bill fixes that system, an enormous advance for women and children and a way off welfare.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida [Mrs. THURMAN].

Mrs. THURMAN. I thank the gentleman from Minnesota for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my friends from the other side of the aisle for their wisdom in adopting the position of the bipartisan Castle-Tanner coalition in maintaining the Federal commitment to food stamps.

My colleagues were right to eliminate the optional block grant that would have forced States to turn away hungry families with children. They were right to modify the Kasich food stamp amendment in favor of a provision that provides assistance to laid-off and downsized workers.

Of course, I still believe it would have been more beneficial if this bill realized that people who cannot find jobs still need to eat. But my colleagues have come a long way, and it is significant improvement over the first attempt at welfare reform. I am happy that my friends from the other side of the aisle listened to us and made these important changes along with others such as Medicaid coverage and vouchers. I look forward to the opportunity for us to continue in a bipartisan spirit to look at the future of these programs and to ensure that people that we are trying to help to get to work are able to do so.

My colleagues so aptly put in a provision so that we do a review every 3 years. We need to make sure we follow through with that.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida [Mr. BILIRAKIS], a valued member of the Committee on Commerce.

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, as representatives of the people we do not get as many opportunities as we would like to do something that would truly help improve the lives of the people we serve. This bill presents us with just such an opportunity. This conference report is more than just a prescription for much needed welfare reform, however. It is what I hope will be the first step in our bipartisan efforts to improve the public assistance programs on which disadvantaged families depend.

After all, welfare as we know it means more than AFDC. It includes

food stamps, housing assistance and energy assistance, and it includes medical assistance. That is right. For millions of Americans, Medicaid is welfare. That is because income assistance alone is not sufficient to meet the pressing needs of disadvantaged families.

For States, too, Medicaid is welfare. In fact, it makes up the largest share of State public assistance funding. As a share of State budgets, Medicaid is four times larger than AFDC.

□ 1600

If President Clinton does the right thing and signs this welfare reform bill into law, Medicaid will still be caught up in the choking bureaucratic red tape of Federal control, and that is why the Medicaid Program must be restructured if States are to fully succeed in making public assistance programs more responsible and effective.

Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their commitment to true welfare reform, and I look forward to continuing our efforts to making all sources of public assistance work better for those who need a helping hand up.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. JACKSON].

(Mr. JACKSON of Illinois asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this deadly and Draconian piece of garbage which will do nothing to reform the conditions of poverty and unemployment suffered by our Nation's most vulnerable.

As I listen to the debate on the floor of this body today, I felt compelled to make clear to the American people exactly what this bill will do to our Nation's families and our Nation's future. Despite the deceptive rhetoric that we have heard on the floor today, let us be clear—at its core, this bill unravels a 60-year guarantee of a basic human safety net for our Nation's poorest and most vulnerable children and their families.

The President and many Members of the 104th Congress have decided to cut welfare as they know it—to children, immigrants and the poorest Americans—but they have left intact welfare as we know it—welfare to America's largest corporations. We cannot and must not balance the budget on the backs of the least of these.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard Members on this floor urge support of this deadly measure, cloaking its defense in terms like "This is for the good of the poor." How can this be anything but bad for the poor, when we know that in my Home State of Illinois alone, 55,800 children will be pushed below the poverty line as a result of this bill, and 1.3 million children will be similarly impacted nationwide.

Please know, Mr. Speaker, that I will not join demopublicans and republicrats in this mean-spirited attack. You can rest assured that I will work to continue to provide equal protection under the law for our Nation's poor, our disabled, our immigrants and our children.

Posturing tough on welfare mothers is viewed as good politics at least by a press

corps that admires cynicism. But ending welfare as I know it is a good idea if done well. So before you push more poor kids and their mothers out on the streets let's apply "Two Years and You're Off" to dependent corporations and find a real jobs program for all Americans. Perhaps conservative Republicans and Democrats and posturing Presidents should begin to beat up on the welfare king for a change.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. MALONEY].

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, this conference report is dangerous and unrealistic. I do not believe the American people will tolerate a policy of ending support to a single mom who has played by the rules, tried to find a job for 2 years and could not.

Our unemployment rate is over 5 percent, and that does not include millions of welfare recipients. This conference report does not require the Government to create jobs. The result will be the world's wealthiest nation putting families out on the street to fend for themselves. Will we tolerate destitution and call it reform?

Republicans say the States will solve these problems. Already Philadelphia, as reported yesterday in the paper, has stopped providing shelter beds for single homeless people due to Federal and State welfare cuts. I am not predicting that Republican welfare reform will put people out on the street. I am pointing out that it already has.

Oppose this conference report.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE], who has done a great deal in this conference in bringing the two sides together.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I cannot thank the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW] enough. At a time when somebody had to listen, he did. We do not always do that in this building, and it is just a tremendous honor to him that we are passing this bill today.

I thank the gentleman from Tennessee, Congressman JOHN TANNER, not a finer person to work with I know in the House, who acted in a bipartisan way when I think we needed that in order to bring this bill into line.

I thank the President, who I understand is going to sign this legislation. I believe he is doing the right thing for a variety of reasons.

I believe the safety net was put back into place that we have talked about in several ways in the area of Medicaid, food stamps, and the ability of States to set up voucher systems after 5 years. I think they can deal with that.

I have believed strongly, in my fight for welfare reform for 12 years now, that this is the opportunity. Everyone talks about this in a very draconian sense. I believe this is opportunity for women, for children, in some instances for men, and for families. It is opportunity because we are going to take people who have not had a true chance to live the American life in terms of

their education and background and we are giving them that chance.

It is an experiment. We may have to come back to it, but I congratulate everybody.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. CLYBURN].

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, 2 years and you are out is not a bad proposition in and of itself, but in this bill it relies on that tried-and-true adage if you give a man a fish you may feed him for a day, if you teach a man how to fish he may feed himself for a lifetime.

In this bill, Mr. Speaker, only 50 percent of those 2-years-and-you-are-outers can reasonably expect any chance at training. In this era of personal responsibility, this legislation asks our most vulnerable citizens to do more, but our States are being required to do less.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the best we can do, and it is not the best we can afford. I urge a no vote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished new mom from Arkansas, Mrs. LINCOLN.

(Mrs. LINCOLN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and for his kind remarks.

I think we can find that no one will argue that our current welfare system needs changed and today we have the opportunity to pass legislation that will hopefully move our Nation's low-income citizens from passively accepting a welfare check to actively earning a paycheck.

Welfare reform has been one of my top priorities since first coming to Congress, especially reform of the SSI disability program or the crazy check problem.

I have worked diligently with members of the Blue Dog Coalition, with the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Human Resources, the task force, and with Members of both sides of the aisle to find a reasonable solution to those who truly need SSI assistance and welfare reform, hoping we can crack down on the abuse in the system while making provisions for those who need it.

Although this conference report is not a perfect bill, it represents a significant improvement over our status quo. No one should get something for nothing, and if the American people are going to be generous with their tax dollars, they should get something in return.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides responsible reform through the three main goals we started with: State flexibility, personal responsibility, and work. I urge my colleagues to support this provision, a lot of hard work in a bipartisan spirit.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. GOODLATTE].

(Mr. GOODLATTE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, for his fine work on this bill, and I rise in strong support of the welfare reform conference report.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Hawaii [Mrs. MINK].

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member of the Committee on the Budget for yielding me this time.

I intend to vote against this conference report. The Urban Institute tells us that over a million children will be put into poverty as a result of this legislation. We are told by our own Republican Congressional Budget Office that it is underfunded insofar as the work requirements.

If indeed we want our people on welfare to go to work, is it not fair to expect that there will be dollars there to provide them jobs, not to cut them adrift after 2 years without any cash support whatsoever?

That is what the consequence of this bill will do. It will force people out on the streets, literally, with no cash assistance whatsoever and without the promise of any assistance in finding jobs.

The women on welfare want to work. Look at any study that has been issued. These studies tell us that over 60 percent of the young mothers on welfare are out there looking for jobs and half of them do find them and they get off welfare. These people who say that the women stay there 13 years on welfare are simply not telling the truth.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. MYRICK], the former mayor of Charlotte.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, the President's decision to sign this welfare reform bill is really great news for working Americans and for people in need. The welfare bill will really reform and empower the States to be creative in solving their own problems and it will help end the cycle of dependency and poverty, which really truly helps millions of children with a decent fulfilling future.

As a former mayor, I know firsthand these ideas work because we had pilot programs in our area where we were moving people out of public housing and into home ownership and off of welfare with child care help and really giving them their dignity back again.

It is a sin not to help someone who genuinely, truly needs that help through no fault of their own, but it is also a sin to help people who do not need help. So this bill is going to encourage that personal responsibility that we are all so proud of and give people their dignity back.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from North Dakota [Mr. POMEROY].

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this legislation. I believe this

bill is clearly an improvement over the current system.

I voted against the previous GOP bills because I believed they inadequately protected children and were weak on work. Unlike those bills, this conference report does not deprive kids on Medicaid of their health care coverage.

The conference report allows States to provide vouchers for children's necessities when their parents reach the time limit on benefits. The conference report removes the optional food stamp block grant and provides families with high rent or utility bills an adjustment for more grocery money than the earlier House versions allowed. I remain concerned that funding for job training may not be adequate yet, and that may need to be addressed in the future.

A lot of us have worked hard to improve the various welfare reform proposals we have considered. Real welfare reform has meaningful protections for children, has a tough work requirement and demands personal responsibility. While this bill is not perfect, it fits those parameters and begins a process of reforming welfare.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. MCCRERY], a most valuable member of the Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. MCCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the subcommittee for yielding me this time and congratulate him on the great work in getting this welfare reform bill to the floor today. I also commend the President today for agreeing to sign this most historic bill.

I want to talk for just a second about a part of the bill that I helped write, and I have gotten several calls today and yesterday, and some of my colleagues have, regarding the SSI for children's provisions in this bill.

I want to assure all those teachers who brought this problem to my attention and to the attention of other of my colleagues this is being taken care of in this welfare reform bill. We do away with a very subjective qualifying criteria that allows children to qualify for a disability when they really should not be on the program and replaces it with very definitive medical criteria that will be much, much superior to the current system.

So I want to thank the gentlewoman from Arkansas, BLANCHE LAMBERT LINCOLN, the gentleman from Wisconsin, GERALD KLECZKA, and others who helped me to bring to the attention of this body the very serious problems with the SSI disability for children.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California [Mr. FARR].

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield the remainder of the time on our side to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GIBBONS] and that Mr. GIBBONS be permitted to manage that time and to yield time to others.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCINNIS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California [Mr. FARR] is recognized for 1 minute.

(Mr. FARR of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, everybody in this Congress wants welfare reform. That is not the debate. But not everybody in the Congress wants to shift the cost from Federal Government to local government.

We usually ask ourselves as lawmakers to look before we leap. I do not think we have done that here on the welfare reform bill. We have asked to be quoted by Governors, but Governors do not administer welfare, communities do. Counties and cities do. Has anyone asked the mayors and county supervisors? Well, I did.

In California we are going to shift 230,000 people who are legal residents of the United States who are disabled. They are cut off. They live in our community. Where are they going to go? What will this bill do to help them?

This bill goes on. It hurts the people in our neighborhoods, people who go to school with our children. What can we do with a bill that hurts children, that hurts the disabled, that hurts the elderly? In the Congress of the richest Nation in the world, what we can do is vote "no" on this bill and say we can do a better job.

We want welfare reform, but a welfare reform bill that just plows the problem on the community is not reform at all. I ask for a "no" vote.

Mr. Speaker, I insert the following material for the RECORD:

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ,
HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY,
Santa Cruz, CA, July 17, 1996.

Re recommendation to oppose H.R. 3507 and S. 1795 denying eligibility for federal programs for legal immigrants.

Hon. SAM FARR,
U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN FARR: On behalf of Santa Cruz County, we are asking for your assistance and intervention in deleting from H.R. 3507 and S. 1795, requirements which deny eligibility for federal programs to legal immigrants. These two bills are moving forward under the heading of welfare reform and in their present form, are expected to save the Federal government \$23 billion over seven years. At least \$9 billion of this total would be achieved by eliminating services to legal immigrants in California. Santa Cruz County with less than 1% of the state's population, because of its population history, dependence on agriculture and demographics, expects an adverse financial impact far in excess of its population share.

While the federal budget will experience some relief, the budgets of local governments, especially over-taxed budgets such as Santa Cruz's, will be severely impacted. These important issues demand thoughtful, coordinated planning and implementation to assure the least negative impact on those taxpayers who fund local government services and those residents who look to local government for care.

These two legislative proposals, regardless of their noble intent, will savage local government and cause severe personal and societal disruption. For these reasons, we urge that you oppose these measures as long as they contain these unacceptable provisions which deny eligibility for legal immigrants.

Very truly yours,

CHARLES MOODY,
Health Services Administrator.

WILL LIGHTBOURNE,
Human Resources Agency Administrator.

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE,
Sacramento, CA, July 18, 1996.

Hon. SAM FARR,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE FARR: We are writing to convey major concerns raised by the most recent proposed welfare legislation currently being considered by Congress.

SERVICES FOR AGED AND DISABLED LEGAL IMMIGRANTS

Denying Federal benefits to legal immigrants disproportionately harms California communities. Over 230,000 non-citizen legal immigrants currently receive SSI in California, excluding refugees. This aid is provided to the aged, blind and disabled, who could not support themselves by going to work if their SSI benefits ended. Under H.R. 3507, SSI and Food Stamps would be denied to non-citizens already legally residing in California as well as to new legal entrants, unlike the immigration reform legislation currently under consideration in Congress, which permits continued benefits for existing legal residents.

The proposed bar on SSI and Food Stamps for all legal immigrants, and the denial of other Federal means-tested programs to new legal entrants for their first five years in the country would have a devastating effect on California's counties, which are obligated to be the providers of last resort. It is estimated that these proposed changes would result in costs of \$9 billion to California's counties over a seven-year period. At a minimum, the very elderly, those too disabled to become citizens and those who become disabled after they arrive in this country should be exempted from the prohibition on SSI—if for no other reason than to lessen to counties the indefensible cost of shifting care from the Federal government to local taxpayers for a needy population admitted under U.S. immigration laws.

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

While we agree that welfare dependence should not be encouraged as a way of life, it is essential in setting time limits on aid that adequate protections be provided for children once parents hit these time limits. Some provision must be made for vouchers or some other mechanism by which the essential survival needs of children such as food can be met. The Administration has suggested this sort of approach as a means of ensuring adequate protection for children whose parents hit time limits on aid.

California's child poverty rate was 27 percent for 1992 through 1994, substantially above the national rate of 21 percent. H.R. 4, which was vetoed by the President, would have caused an additional 1.5 million children to become poor. Though estimates have not been produced for H.R. 3507, it is likely that it also would result in a significant additional number of children falling below the poverty level.

ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR CHILD CARE

Funds provided for child care are essential to meet the needs of parents entering the

work force while on aid and leaving aid as their earnings increase. For California to meet required participation rates, about 400,000 parents would have to enter the work force and an additional 100,000 would have to increase their hours of work. Even if only 15 percent of these parents need a paid, formal child care arrangement, California will need nearly \$300 million per year in new child care funds.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns. If your staff have any questions about these issues, they can contact Tim Gage at (916) 324-0341. Sincerely,
Bill Lockyer,

President Pro Tempore, California Senate.

RICHARD KATZ,

Democratic Floor Leader, California Assembly.

NATIONAL IMMIGRATION LAW CENTER—OVERVIEW OF CURRENT LAW AND WELFARE REFORM IMMIGRANT RESTRICTIONS—104TH CONGRESS

	Current Law	Welfare Reform Reconciliation Act of 1996 (H.R. 3734) as passed by the House	Personal Responsibility, Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (H.R. 3734) as passed by the Senate	Differences/Comments
Programs barred to most legal immigrants including current residents	None	Denied until citizenship: SSI, Food Stamps, and Medicaid. Current recipients: phased in over one year. Exemptions Refugees, asylees, withholding of deportation during 1st 5 years only. Veterans and family members. Immigrants who work 40 "qualifying quarters" (as defined for Title II Social Security) and did not receive any means-tested assistance in any of those quarters. Minor children get credit for quarters worked by parents; spouses get credit for work if still married or if working spouse is deceased.	Denied until Citizenship: SSI, and Food Stamps. Current recipients: phased in over one year. Exemptions Refugees, asylees withholding of deportation during 1st 5 years only. Veterans and family members. Immigrants who work 40 "qualifying quarters" (as defined for Title II Social Security) and did not receive any means-tested assistance in any of those quarters. Minor children get credit for quarters worked by parents; spouses get credit for work if still married or if working spouse is deceased.	Medicaid: House bars Medicaid to most legal immigrants. Senate imposes lesser restrictions on immigrant access to Medicaid. The Senate Medicaid provisions affect about half as many people after six years. Refugees/Asylees: Most refugees and asylees have been here more than five years and would be subject to the bar.
State option to bar current legal residents and future legal immigrants.	States may not discriminate against legal immigrants in the provision of assistance.	Programs: State have option to bar both current residents and new immigrants from: AFDC, title XX, and all entirely state funded means-tested programs.	Programs: State option to bar both current residents and new immigrants from: Medicaid, AFDC, title XX, and all entirely state funded means-tested programs.	Identical provisions. The definitions of "means-tested" programs was deleted from the Senate bill because of the "Byrd rule".
Five Year prospective bar (on future legal immigrants).	None.	Provision: Bars AFDC and most federal means tested programs to legal immigrants who come after date of enactment for 1st 5 years after entering the U.S. Exceptions: Emergency Medicaid. Immunizations & testing and treatment of the symptoms of communicable diseases. Short-term non-cash disaster relief. School Lunch Act programs. Child Nutrition Act programs. Title IV foster care and adoption payments. Higher education loans & grants. Elementary & Secondary Education Act. Head Start. TPA. At AG discretion, community programs (such as soup kitchens) that do not condition assistance on individual income or resources and are necessary to protect life or safety.	Provision: Bars AFDC and most federal means tested programs to legal immigrants who come after date of enactment for 1st 5 years after entering the U.S. Exceptions: Emergency Medicaid. Immunization & testing and treatment of communicable disease if necessary to prevent the spread of such disease. Short-term non-cash disaster relief. School Lunch Act programs. Child Nutrition Act programs. Certain other emergency food and commodity programs. Title IV foster care and adoption payments. Higher education loans & grants (including those under the Public Health Services Act). Elementary & Secondary Education Act. At AG discretion, community programs (such as soup kitchens) that do not condition assistance on individual income or resources and are necessary to protect life or safety.	Communicable Diseases: House permits doctors to be reimbursed for treating symptoms of communicable diseases even if the disease later turns out not to have been communicable. Nutrition: Senate permits food banks and others who administer emergency food programs to avoid spending volunteer resources to verify citizenship. Head Start and ITPA: House does not restrict legal immigrant access to these programs. Student Assistance Under the Public Health Services Act: These programs were added to the Senate bill by floor amendment sponsored by Senator Paul Simon (D-IL). The definition of "means-tested" programs was deleted from the Senate bill due to the "Byrd rule."
Programs restricted by deeming (impacts most family-based immigrants).	AFDC, Food Stamps, and SSI.	Provision: Virtually all federal means-tested program must deem future immigrants. Exempted programs: Same programs exempted from deeming as from the 5-year prospective bar (see above). State and local programs: Programs that are entirely state funded may deem (or ban) current legally resident immigrants as well as future legal immigrants (except for those exempt from federal deeming and programs that are equivalent to federal programs exempted from deeming).	Provision: Virtually all federal means-tested programs must deem future immigrants. Exempted programs: Same programs exempted from deeming as from the 5-year prospective bar (see above). State and local programs: Programs that are entirely state funded may deem (or ban) current legally resident immigrants as well as future legal immigrants (except for those exempt from federal deeming and programs that are equivalent to federal programs exempted from deeming).	Identical provisions. Neither bill exempts non-profit organizations from burdensome verification requirements (as does the Senate immigration bill).
Length of deeming period/retroactivity.	3 years (SSI 5 years until 10/1/96).	Current residents: same as current law. Future immigrants: until citizenship unless an exemption applies (e.g. 40 quarters).	Current residents: same as current law. Future immigrants: until citizenship unless one of the exemptions applies (e.g. 40 quarters).	Identical provisions.
Immigrants exempt from deeming.	Disabled after entry (SSI only). Sponsor is receiving Food Stamps (Food Stamps only).	Immigrants who work 40 "qualifying quarters" (as defined for Title II Social Security) and did not receive any means-tested assistance in any of those quarters. Minor children get credit for quarters worked by parents; spouses get credit for work if still remarried or if working spouse is deceased. Veterans, exempt from SSI, Medicaid and Food Stamp bar, are not exempt from deeming.	Immigrants who work 40 "qualifying quarters" (as defined for Title II Social Security) and did not receive any means-tested assistance in any of those quarters. Minor children get credit for quarters worked by parents; spouses get credit for work if still married or if working spouse is deceased. Veterans, exempt from SSI, Medicaid and Food Stamp bar, are not exempt from deeming.	Identical provisions. About half of the legal immigrants who will be cut off of SSI under these bills have been in the U.S. more than ten years. There is no exemption for battered spouses or children in either bill.
Affidavits of support provision.	Affidavits of support are unenforceable against the sponsor.	Enforceable to recover money spent on most means-tested programs. Sponsor liable for benefits used until citizenship, unless immigrant works 40 "qualifying quarters" is credited for work of spouse or parent. For definition of "qualifying quarter," see Immigrants Exempt from Deeming above. Enforceable against sponsor by sponsored immigrant or government agencies until 10 years after receipt of benefits. Sponsor fined up to \$5,000 for failure to notify when sponsor moves. Only the petitioner may qualify as a sponsor.	Enforceable to recover money spent on most means-tested programs. Sponsor liable for benefits used until citizenship, unless immigrant works 40 "qualifying quarters" is credited for work of spouse or parent. For definition of "qualifying quarter," see Immigrants Exempt from Deeming above. Enforceable against sponsor by sponsored immigrant or government agencies until 10 years after receipt of benefits. Sponsor fined up to \$5,000 for failure to notify when sponsor moves. Only the petitioner may qualify as a sponsor.	The requirement that only the petitioner may be the sponsor precludes all other close relatives from obligating themselves to support the immigrant. This entire section was deleted from the Senate bill because of the Byrd rule.
Treatment of "Not qualified" immigrants.	Eligibility of classes of immigrants the INS does not plan to deport varies by program.	Definition: "Not qualified" = all but LPR, refugee, granted asylum, deportation withheld, parolee for > 1 year. Prohibition: Not qualified barred from: Social Security (affects new applicants only), unemployment, all federal needs-based programs, and any governmental grant, contract, loan, or professional or commercial license (nonimmigrants may receive license or contract related to visa.)	Definition: "Not qualified" = all but LPR, refugee, granted asylum, deportation withheld, parolee for > 1 year. Prohibition: Not qualified barred from: Social Security (affects new applicants only), unemployment, all federal needs-based programs, and any governmental grant, contract, loan, or professional or commercial license (nonimmigrants may receive license or contract related to visa.)	Child Nutrition: The House would require the schools, churches, charities, and clinics that operate school lunch programs and WIC clinics to verify immigration status and turn away ineligible children. The Senate exempts child nutrition programs from these requirements.
	Undocumented immigrants ineligible for cash assistance and all major federal programs. Exemptions include: emergency Medicaid, public health, child nutrition, child care, child protection, and maternal care, emergency services.			

Current Law	Welfare Reform Reconciliation Act of 1996 (H.R. 3734) as passed by the House	Personal Responsibility, Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (H.R. 3734) as passed by the Senate	Differences/Comments
	<p>Exceptions: Emergency Medicaid. Short-term emergency relief. Immunizations and testing and treatment of the symptoms of communicable diseases.</p> <p>Current recipients of housing or community development funds. At AG discretion, community programs (such as soup kitchens) that do not condition assistance on individual income or resources and are necessary to protect life, or safety. State and Local Programs: Immigrants who are not lawfully present may not participate in state or locally funded programs unless the state passes a law after enactment affirmatively providing for such eligibility (state has no option to provide assistance to "not qualified" immigrants who are here lawfully).</p>	<p>Exceptions: Emergency Medicaid. Short-term emergency relief. Immunizations and testing and treatment of communicable disease if necessary to prevent the spread of such disease. School Lunch Act programs. Child Nutrition Act programs. Certain other emergency food and commodity programs. Current recipients of housing or community development funds. At AG discretion, community programs (such as soup kitchens) that do not condition assistance on individual income or resources and are necessary to protect life, or safety. State and Local Programs: Immigrants who are not lawfully present may not participate in state or locally funded programs unless the state passes a law after enactment affirmatively providing for such eligibility (state has no option to provide assistance to "not qualified" immigrants who are here lawfully).</p>	<p>No Battered Women's Exception: Beneficiaries of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) self-petitioning provisions are treated the same as persons who are unlawfully in the U.S.</p>
Verification and reporting.	<p>Agencies such as battered women's shelters, hospitals, and law enforcement agencies may keep immigration information confidential if they feel such confidentiality is advisable given their mission. For example, a law enforcement agency may assure a timid witness that he or she will not be deported as a result of coming forward to report a crime.</p> <p>No Confidentiality: No state or local entity may "in any way" restrict the flow of information to the INS.</p> <p>Required Verification: All federal, state and local agencies that administer non-exempt federal programs must verify immigrant eligibility "to the extent feasible" through a computerized database. Required Reporting: SSI, Housing, and AFDC agencies must make quarterly reports to INS providing the name and other identifying information of persons known to be unlawfully in the U.S.</p>	<p>No Confidentiality: No state or local entity may "in any way" restrict the flow of information to the INS.</p> <p>Required Verification: All federal, state and local agencies that administer non-exempt federal programs must verify immigrant eligibility "to the extent feasible" through a computerized database. Required Reporting: SSI, Housing, and AFDC agencies must make quarterly reports to INS providing the name and other identifying information of persons known to be unlawfully in the U.S.</p>	<p>Identical provisions.</p> <p>The no confidentiality provision endangers witness protection programs and all other endeavors in which confidentiality is necessary to encourage cooperation or participation.</p>

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California [Mr. RIGGS].

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and for his hard work on this very historic and very important legislation.

This legislation curtails food stamp fraud, it limits the access of resident aliens to welfare programs, which just might persuade some visitors to our country who did not come here to work to return home, but, more importantly, it is another step in the process of devolving or sending social services back to the States and getting control back in the hands of local managers who are closer to the problems of the poor.

It addresses a fundamental fairness issue in American society, and that is the resentment of working individuals toward able-bodied individuals who refuse to get off the dole. Most importantly, in my mind, it addresses the problem of welfare dependency and welfare pathology in this country, which has led to soaring rates of family disintegration, illegitimacy in American society, and the other consequences, like youth crime.

This is indeed an historic day in this body and a very, very important piece of legislation, in my view the most important legislation we will enact in the 104th Congress.

□ 1615

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, let me say first of all that there are some good things in this legislation that could have and should

have become law without being tied to the rest of this fundamentally flawed package. The President has made a mistake in endorsing this legislation and the Congress will make a mistake in passing it.

Essentially, Mr. Speaker, this legislation reduces assets that we need to help those who are the most vulnerable in our society. Seventy percent of all the people on welfare are infants and children. The rest are so disabled one way or another, and they cannot make a go of it. This bill reduces their assets, reduces the assets of the people who we are trying to help to improve and better their situation.

For some reason that we do not thoroughly understand, the bottom three-fifths of all the people in the United States have not made any progress in the last 20 years, economically speaking. The bottom one-fifth have lost 18 percent of their resources that are available to them. This bill further exacerbates that problem and will hurt infants and children. It should not become law. It should be vetoed.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS], a member of the Committee on the Budget.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, politicians are elected by adults to represent the children. We need to save our children from crippling national debt, Government debt. We need to make sure that our trust funds, like Medicare, are there for our children. And most importantly, we

need to enable, we need to help our children become independent citizens of this great and magnificent country. This bill helps to transform our caretaking, social and corporate welfare state into a caring opportunity society.

I extend tremendous admiration to the gentleman from Florida, [Mr. SHAW] for not giving into those who wanted to weaken the bill so that it would end up not doing anything. We have a caring bill that does this. In the final analysis, it is not what you do for your children but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings.

It ends this caretaking society and moves toward a caring society where we teach our children and the adults who raise our children how to grow the seeds, how to have the food.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York [Mr. RANGEL].

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, what time is it? It is time for us to get on with our conventions. We better get on with the Democratic Convention and Republican Convention. What do we want to say that we are for? Reform. What is a nagging sore in everyone's problem? Welfare. People who do not work.

What is the bill all about? Well, the bill is supposed to be to protect children. I heard the previous speaker say that. He said that this child will be cut off of welfare if the mother does not

get a job in 2, 3, 4 or 5 years. He did not say it, but I know he read the bill.

The winners in this are the Governors. There is nothing to tell the Governors what to do, and they will be the losers in the long run, but not as bad as the children. They can do what they want with immigrants and with little kids because for 60 years we have said there is a safety net for children. But not before this election.

Who won? Bob Dole? Oh, yes, he said it already. He shoved this one down the President's throat. Three strikes and the President would have been out so he wins because what the heck, he forced the issue.

And who is another winner? My President. He is a winner. He has removed this once again. Everything you come up with, my President says, oh, no you do not. And so here again he is a winner.

So when we look at it, this is a big political victory. The Democrats are happy in the White House. The Republicans are happy because they made him do it. The Governors are happy. They begged for the opportunity to do it their way after all. They are closer to the problem. And the only losers we have now are the kids.

The got no one there to protect them. The religious leaders came out. Obviously they are not as highly registered as some other people, but they said do not do this to our children. They are the weakest. They cannot vote. If my colleagues do not like their mothers and their fathers and their neighborhoods, then get involved in education and job training and make them work. But there are winners and losers and the kids are the losers.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARCHER], the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the only way we can change people's behavior is by changing the system. Franklin Roosevelt warned that giving permanent aid to anyone destroys them. By creating a culture of poverty and a culture of violence, we have destroyed the very people we are claiming to help. Can any serious person argue that the federalization of poverty by Washington has worked?

Government, since 1965, has spent over \$5 trillion on welfare, more than we have spent on all the wars that we have fought in this century. And we have lost the war on poverty. With this bill, we can begin to win the war.

We need to come to the realization that dollars alone will not solve the problem. We need to give unemployed people hope and equip them for work so they will be better able to help themselves. As our colleague, the gentleman from Oklahoma, J.C. WATTS, says, they are eagles waiting to soar.

Today we will ask those now receiving welfare to make a deal with the

taxpayer. We will provide you with temporary help to get you through the hard times and we will help you feed your family and get the training you need, and in exchange, we ask that you commit yourself to find a job and move back into the economy.

I am pleased to see that the President has finally agreed to join us in our fight to overhaul the broken-down welfare system. It has been a long, arduous road since 1988 when Ronald Reagan first made the effort to do something about work fare and finally we are here.

Mr. President, the poor have suffered long enough and now we have the opportunity to change it all and help the hard-working taxpayers as well.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Mrs. KENNELLY].

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, we all can be proud of the record that many of us have in working on this bill to protect children. Eight months ago we had a welfare conference report on the floor that would have blocked foster care or would have made foster care a block grant, and also food stamps. Today's legislation retains the Federal guarantee for these services.

Eight months ago we had Federal welfare legislation on this floor that would have cut severely disabled children by 25 percent. Today we do not have that flawed two-tiered system.

Eight months ago we considered legislation that would have denied millions of Americans Medicaid because they lost welfare eligibility. Today's legislation, the legislation before us, guarantees continual health coverage for those who are currently entitled to these services.

Eight months ago we voted on legislation that would have underfunded child care. This bill has \$4.5 billion in it for child care.

I am not suggesting the legislation is perfect. Most legislation is not perfect. But I predict we will be back on this very floor finding more answers and better answers than we have today. If that is there, I will be involved in these changes. But today we have to decide if this legislation as a whole represents an improvement over the status quo. My answer is: Yes, it does.

While some of the changes here being suggested pose risks, so does the current system. Welfare is clearly broken, offering more dependence than opportunity. We can vote today to at least begin to transform the welfare system. Today we can begin welfare reform, those of us who have worked hard over the months to make the bill, working with those who have had the bill. We now have the bill. We should vote for the bill and get on with welfare reform.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DELAY], the distinguished Republican whip.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to hear that President Clinton has endorsed the welfare bill that will

pass the House today. Clearly, the time has come to end welfare as we know it. The welfare system as we know it has been a disaster. The only thing great about the Great Society was the great harm it has caused our children.

With this bill, Mr. Speaker, we make commonsense changes long requested by the American people.

Common sense dictates that able-bodied people work.

Common sense dictates that only Americans should receive welfare benefits in this country.

Common sense dictates that incentives to keep families together.

Common sense dictates that welfare should not be a way of life.

Now liberal Democrats will vainly challenge these simple truths, and even the President could not help himself and has challenged some of these truths, but time and experience has proven them wrong. Welfare has not worked for the people it was supposed to help. Everybody knows that fact. Now is the time to change that system. Some well-meaning people will once again make the claim that welfare reform is mean-spirited. Well, I disagree.

We reform welfare not out of spite but out of compassion. We change this system not because we want to hurt people, but because we want to help people help themselves. And we change this system not to throw children into the streets, but to give children a greater chance to realize the American dream and still maintain a safety net for those truly in need.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of this Congress for the great work on this historic legislation, and I am pleased that President Clinton has agreed to finally live up to his campaign promise.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York [Mr. NADLER].

(Mr. NADLER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, sadly, it seems clear that this House today will abdicate its moral duty and knowingly vote to allow children to go hungry in America. Sadly, our President, a member of the Democratic Party, the party of Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, will sign this bill.

Does this bill allocate sufficient funds to provide employment for people who want to work? No.

Does this bill provide adequate child care so parents can leave their children in a safe environment and earn a living? No.

Does this bill ensure that people leaving welfare can take their kids to a doctor when they get sick? No.

Does this bill do anything to raise wages so people who work hard to play by the rules will not have to see their children grow up in poverty? No.

Does this bill reduce the value of food stamps for children of the poorest working people to push these children into poverty and hunger? No.

Mr. Speaker, I know that scapegoating poor children is politically popular this year, but it is not right. We must stand up for our country's children. I urge my colleagues to reject this immoral legislation.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LEWIS].

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the bill we are considering today is a bad bill. I will vote against it and I urge all people of conscience to vote against it. It is a bad bill because it penalizes children for the actions of their parents. This bill, Mr. Speaker, will put 1 million more children into poverty. How, how can any person of faith, of conscience vote for a bill that puts a million more kids into poverty. Where is the compassion, where is the sense of decency, where is the heart of this Congress. This bill is mean, it is base, it is downright low down.

We are a great nation. We put a man on the Moon. We have learned to fly through the air like a bird and swim like a fish in the sea. We are the world's only superpower. We did not do this by running away—by giving up. As a nation, as a people—as a government—we met our challenges—we won.

This bill gives up—it throws in the towel. We cannot run away from our challenges—our responsibilities—and leave them to the States. That is not the character of a great nation. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, What does it profit a great nation to conquer the world, only to lose it's soul? Mr. Speaker, this bill is an abdication of our responsibility and an abandonment of our morality. It is wrong, just plain wrong.

It was Hubert Humphrey, who said:

We can judge a society by how it treats those in the dawn of life, our children, those in the twilight of life, our elderly and those in the shadow of life, the sick and the disabled.

I agree with Hubert Humphrey, my colleagues. What we are doing here today is wrong.

I say to you, all of my colleagues, you have the ability, you have the capacity, you have the power to stop this assault, to prevent this injustice. Your vote is your voice. Raise your voice for the children, for the poor, for the disabled. Do what you know in your heart is right. Vote "no."

□ 1630

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. LEVIN].

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, the status quo is gone.

The current system does not meet the American values of work, opportunity, responsibility, and family.

We have been wrestling for a long time with what should replace it.

The key always has been the linkage of welfare to work, within a definite time structure, and with sensitivity to

the children of the parent who needs to break out of a cycle of dependency, for her/his good, for the child's and for the taxpayer.

The challenge has been to find a new balance, that combines State flexibility with national interest.

The first two bills vetoed by the President failed to address effectively work and dealt insensitively with children.

If the AFDC entitlement was going to be replaced by a block grant—which was already beginning to happen through Federal waivers—after the vetoes we successfully pressured the Republican majority to make substantial improvements in day care, health care, benefits for severely disabled children and to retain the basic structure of foster care, food stamps and the school lunch program.

In a word, this is a different bill than those vetoed by the President.

The bill before us is at its very weakest in two areas essentially unrelated to AFDC—food stamps and legal immigrants. Reform was needed in these areas, but surely not punishment nor a mere search for dollars, as was true of the majority's approach.

The question is whether the defects in those areas should sink changes in our broken welfare system.

On balance, I believe it is better to proceed today with reforms in the welfare system, with a commitment to return on a near tomorrow to the defects in this bill.

I hope in the next session there will be a Congress willing to address these legitimate concerns with President Clinton.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the distinguished gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. HAYES], a valued member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, folks at home simply wonder if they can tell the difference between a disabled veteran from a real war and someone who has become disabled because of a fake war on poverty, converting food stamps into drugs, why cannot the Government. They want to know, if they can tell the difference between a young woman whose husband has walked out on them, leaving them a child with no recourse, and a teen who becomes pregnant because of a system that rewards it, why cannot the Government?

Today this body answers that it can tell the difference. The Senate can tell the difference. And I am very pleased to understand that the President is going to sign the bill that allows people at home to at least know we have that judgment to make that difference.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER]. (Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bill.

America's welfare system is at odds with the core values Americans believe in: Responsibil-

ity, work, opportunity, and family. Instead of rewarding and encouraging work, it does little to help people find jobs, and penalizes those who go to work. Instead of strengthening families and instilling personal responsibility, the system penalizes two-parent families, and lets too many absent parents off the hook.

Instead of promoting self-sufficiency, the culture of welfare offices seems to create an expectation of dependence rather than independence. And the very ones who hate being on welfare are desperately trying to escape it.

As a society we cannot afford a social welfare system without obligations. In order for welfare reform to be successful, individuals must accept the responsibility of working and providing for their families. In the instances where benefits are provided, they must be tied to obligations. We must invest our resources on those who value work and responsibility. Moreover, we must support strict requirements which move people from dependence to independence. Granting rights without demanding responsibility is unacceptable.

The current system undermines personal responsibility, destroys self-respect and initiative, and fails to move able-bodied people from welfare to work. Therefore, a complete overhaul of the welfare system is long overdue. We must create a different kind of social safety net which will uphold the values our current system destroys. It must require work, and it must demand responsibility.

Today, the House will take a historic step as it moves toward approving a welfare reform conference report which takes significant steps to end welfare as we know it. The bill is not perfect. But, at the insistence of the President and congressional Democrats, significant improvements to require work and protect children have been made. It is because of these important changes that I will vote in favor of this bill.

This bill requires all recipients to work within 2 years of receiving benefits. The bill requires teen parents to live at home or in a supervised setting, and teaches responsibility by requiring school or training attendance as a condition of receiving assistance.

When the House Ways and Means Committee marked up its first welfare bill 1½ years ago, Democrats proposed an amendment to exempt mothers of young children from work requirements if they had no safe place for their children to stay during the day. The amendment was defeated by a unanimous Republican vote. I am pleased that the conference report prohibits States from penalizing mothers of children under 6 if they cannot work because they cannot find child care.

A year and a half ago, Ways and Means Committee Republicans defeated Democratic amendments to strengthen child support enforcement provisions, because committee Republicans felt those sanctions were "too hard" on deadbeat dads. I am pleased that this conference report includes every provision in the President's child support enforcement proposal, the toughest crackdown on deadbeat parents in history.

A year and a half ago, the Republican welfare bill included a child nutrition block grant that would have caused thousands of children in Maryland to lose school lunches—for some of those children, the only meal they would receive in a day. I am pleased that the conference report maintains the guarantee of school meals for our neediest kids.

As recently as last week, the House Republican bill eliminated the guarantee of food stamps for poor children and assistance for children who had been neglected or abused. I am pleased that this bill prohibits the block grants which dismantle food stamp and child protection assistance.

Like many Americans, I continue to have concerns about some of the provisions in this bill. We must be certain that both the Federal and State governments live up to their responsibilities to protect children who may lose assistance through no fault of their own. We must make sure that legal immigrants, who have paid taxes and in some cases defended the United States in our armed services, are not abandoned in their hour of need. And it is not enough to move people off of welfare—we must move them into jobs that make them self-sufficient and contributing members of society.

This bill supports the American values of work and personal responsibility. It has moved significantly in the direction of the welfare reform proposals made by Congressman DEAL and Congressmen TANNER and CASTLE, both of which I supported. I applaud this important step to end welfare as we know it, and intend to vote in favor of this bill.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Rhode Island [Mr. KENNEDY].

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, just hearing my colleague, the gentleman from Georgia, JOHN LEWIS, speak so passionately, I think should move anyone who listened to his speech. Over 30 years ago it was JOHN LEWIS who was fighting against States rights, States rights meaning justice dependent on geography. How you were treated depended on what State you lived in.

And yet our Republican friends who are offering this welfare reform, as they call it, are willing to embrace States rights; what their block grant plan means is that again justice will depend on geography. In my State of Rhode Island, over 40,000 kids in poverty are going to be put at a disadvantage under the block grant system because when you take away the money that is entitled to kids based upon their poverty, you leave it to the whim of the States.

I can tell you, each State is under pressure to lower the bar so that you can squeeze people even more. This is wrong.

When Mr. SHAW and Mr. ARCHER say that dollars will not do it alone, I want to ask the Republicans, what are they going to substitute when a poor child needs food, what are they going to substitute for the money that they are supposed to be providing through these programs?

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. PELOSI].

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding the time.

I rise in opposition to the welfare bill. If this bill passed today, it will be a victory for the political spin artists and a defeat for the infants and children of America.

We all agree that the welfare system must be reformed. But we must make sure that that reform reduces poverty, not bashes poor people. The cuts in this bill will diminish the quality of life of children in poor families in America and will have a devastating impact on the economy of our cities.

Food and nutrition cuts will result in increased hunger. Local government will be forced to pay for the Federal Government's abdication of responsibility. How can a country as great as America ignore the needs of America's infants and children who are born into poverty?

The Bible tells us that to minister to the needs of God's children is an act of worship; to ignore those needs is to dishonor the God who made them.

Mr. Speaker, let us not go down that path today.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York [Mr. TOWNS].

(Mr. TOWNS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, vote no on this pain and shame that we are inflicting on young people, a garbage bill.

This agreement along with the other vetoed welfare bills amount to nothing short of a roll-call of pain and shame that will be dumped on those Americans who are clearly in need of a social service safety net.

And to add to that pain, legal immigrants will bear 40 percent of the cuts in welfare even though they make up only 5 percent of the population receiving welfare benefits.

No one is satisfied with the way welfare policy is constructed or practiced. The Federal Government doesn't like it; the local administrators don't like it; the social workers don't like it; the majority of the taxpayers don't like it and the recipients don't like it. There is no doubt that the welfare system in this country needs to be changed. Clearly reform is necessary. However, the overall scope of the proposed reforms will victimize those Americans most in need of assistance.

I urge a "no" vote on this conference agreement.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the gentlewoman from Florida [Ms. BROWN].

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this was a bad House bill, a bad Senate bill and the conference report did not fix it. It is still bad.

You can judge a great society by how it treats its children, its senior citizens. This bill guts our future. I urge my colleagues to vote against it.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose this conference report. The House welfare reform bill was a bad bill, the Senate bill was a bad bill and the conference report does not fix it. This legislation is so bad that it can't be fixed.

This bill will have a horrible impact on the children in my State. In Florida, at least 235,000 children would be denied benefits under this legislation. In Florida alone, 48,000 would be pushed deeper into poverty. Children will be hungrier if this bill becomes law.

In Florida, 111,926 children would be denied aid in the year 2005 because of the 5 year

time limit. In Florida, 42,714 babies would be denied cash aid in the year 2000 because they were born to families already on welfare. In the year 2000, 80,667 children in Florida would be denied benefits if the State froze its spending on cash assistance at the 1994 levels.

In addition to the travesty this bill does to our children, this bill will pull the rug out from under our seniors who are legal immigrants. For a State like Florida whose population has such a large number of legal immigrants, the impact will be extremely high.

There is another troubling aspect of this bill we need to look at. No victim of domestic violence, no matter how abused nor how desperate, could know that if she left her abusive spouse, that she would be able to rely upon cash assistance for herself or for her children—even for a short period of time until she was able to secure employment.

I have always believed that the sign of a great society is how well it treats its most vulnerable—children and seniors. Our children are America's future. This bill prevents the future generation from meeting its potential to contribute to American society and instead dooms today's poor children to deeper poverty and no chance to take their place as productive members of our society.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I come over here to do something I have never done before; that is, to trespass on the Democrat side. I hope that they will give me their understanding in my doing so, because I do not do it out of smugness or arrogance. I do it out of coming together.

We have heard a lot of name calling, a lot of rhetoric, a lot of sound bites that we have heard all through this debate. We have come down a long road together. It was inevitable that the present welfare system was going to be put behind us.

Today we need to bring to closure an era of a failed welfare system. I say that and I say that from this side of the aisle because I know that the Democrats agree with the Republicans. This is not a Republican bill that we are shoving down your throats. We are going to get a lot of Democratic support today. I think the larger the support, the more chance there is for this to really work and work well.

The degree of the success that we are going to have is going to be a victory for the American people, for the poor. It is not going to be a victory for one political party. It is time now for us to put our hands out to one another and to come together to solve the problems of the poor.

Without vision, the people will perish. Unfortunately, we have not had vision in our welfare system now for many, many years. It has been allowed to sit stagnant. We have piled layer upon layer of humanity on top of each other. We have paid people not to get married. We have paid people to have children out of marriage. We have paid people not to work.

This is self-destructive behavior. We know that. We all agree with that.

I know we have heard many, many speakers: My friend, the gentleman from Georgia, JOHN LEWIS, thinking that we are going the wrong way; my friend, the gentleman from New York, CHARLIE RANGEL, saying that we are going the wrong way.

I also see some of my colleagues who have fought for different changes within the welfare bill within the Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Committee on Ways and Means, now coming to closure, where they do not believe this is a perfect bill. And I can stand here and say it is not a perfect bill, but it is as good as this Congress can do. It is as good as we can come together.

We have included the Governors in balancing out their interests and in seeing what they have been successful with and how they feel that they can be successful. We have talked to many of the Members on the Democrats' side, and to my Republican colleagues I say, we are not through. We have another long road ahead of us. We need to get to a technical corrections bill as we see problems arise within this bill that we are going to be passing today.

It was unexpected to hear that the President was going to endorse this bill and announced his signature of it. But let us now be patient with each other. Let us work with each other and let us bring this awful era of a failed welfare system to closure.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. CARDIN].

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCINNIS) The gentleman from Maryland [Mr. CARDIN] is recognized for 2½ minutes.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GIBBONS] for yielding me the time.

Let me say to my friend, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW], first, congratulations on a job very well done and come on back over on this side of the aisle a little bit more frequently. I think that if we would have started working together in a bipartisan spirit, we could have had a better bill today, and we could have gotten here a little bit sooner. But I thank the gentleman very much for the way in which he has provided leadership on this issue. I know it has been heartfelt, and I know he has worked very, very hard.

□ 1645

Mr. Speaker, I support the conference report because I think it is important that we return welfare to what it was originally intended to be, and that is a transitional temporary program to help those people that are in need. The current system does not do that. We cannot defend the current system.

But let me make it clear to my colleagues, the bill before us is a far better bill than the bill that was originally brought forward by the Republicans 2 years ago, the bill that was vetoed twice by the President. We have a better bill here today.

It is a bill that provides for major improvement in child support enforcement, something all of us agreed to; provides protective services for our children, which was not in the original bill; provides health insurance to people coming off of welfare, something that is very important; day care services, another important ingredient that people are going to get off welfare to work. Food stamps are in much better condition than the bill that was vetoed by the President. There is a Federal contingency fund in case of a downturn of our economy, and we have maintenance of effort requirements on our States so we can assure that there are certain minimum standards that are met in protecting people in our society.

The bottom line is that this bill is better than the current system.

It could have been better, and I regret that. I am not sure there is enough resources in this bill to make sure that people get adequate education and job training in order to find employment, and I look forward to working with the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW] to make sure that this becomes a reality.

But I do urge my colleagues to support the conference report because bottom line: It is far better than the current system.

Yes, we are going to take a risk to get people off of welfare to work, but the current system is not fair either to the welfare recipient or the taxpayer.

This conference report is far better, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio [Mr. KASICH], chairman of the Committee on the Budget.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCINNIS) The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 5¾ minutes.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to initially congratulate the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SHAW] for his relentlessness in being able to pursue welfare reform and he deserves the lion's share of the credit, along with the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARCHER], who has done an outstanding job, and although I do not see him on the floor, our very able staff director, Ron Haskins, who has probably lived with this bill for about a decade, feeling passionately about the need to reform welfare.

As my colleagues know, it was pretty amazing today to watch the President of the United States come on television and say that he was going, in fact, to sign this welfare bill. The reason why it is so amazing today is that because the American people, during all of my adult lifetime, have said that they want a system that will help people who cannot help themselves, but they want a system that is going to ask the able-bodied to get out and begin to work themselves. This has been delayed and put off, with a million excuses as to why we could not get it done.

I just want to suggest to my friends who are in opposition, and I respect

their opposition; many of them just did not talk; many of them were not able to talk, as they were beaten in the civil right protests in this country. I respect their opposition. But the simple fact of the matter is that this program was losing public support.

Mr. Speaker, the cynicism connected to this program from the folks who get up and go to work every day for a living, and I do not mean the most fortunate, I mean those mothers and fathers who have had to struggle for an entire lifetime to make ends meet, they have never asked for food stamps, they have never asked for welfare, they have never asked for housing, and they are struggling. They are counting their nickels. They do not take the bus transfer because it costs a little extra money, and they walk instead so they can save some more money to educate their children. These people were becoming cynical, they were being poisoned in regard to this system, and they were demanding change.

Mr. Speaker, we all know here, as we have watched the Congress, the history of Congress over the decades, that when the American people speak, we must deliver to them what they want. They said they wanted the Vietnam war over. It took a decade, but they got it, and public cynicism and lack of support was rising against this program. It was necessary to give the people a program they could support.

But I also want to say that the American people have never, if I could be so bold as to represent a point of view, have never said that those who cannot help themselves should not be helped. That is Judio-Christianity, something that we all know has to be rekindled. Our souls must once again become attached to one another, and the people of this country and Judeo-Christianity said it is a sin not to help somebody who needs help, but it is equally a sin to help somebody who needs to learn how to help themselves.

But I say to my friends who oppose this bill:

This is about the best of us. This is about having hopes and dreams. After 40 or 50 years of not trusting one another in our neighborhoods and having to vacate our power and our authority to the central government, to the Washington bureaucrats, this is now about reclaiming our power, it is about reclaiming our money, it is about reclaiming our authority, it is about rebuilding our community, it is about rebuilding our families, it is about cementing our neighborhoods, and it is about believing that all of us can march to that State capitol, that all of us can go into the community organizations and we can demand excellence, we can demand compassion, and that we can do it better.

We marched 30, 40 years ago because we thought people were not being treated fairly, and we march today for the very same reason. What I would say, and maybe let me take it back and say many of my friends marched. I was

too young, but I watched, and I respect it. What I would suggest at the end of the day, however, is that we all are going to have to stand up for those who get neglected in reform, but frankly this system is going to provide far more benefits, far more hope, restore the confidence in the American people that we have a system that will help those that cannot help themselves and at the same time demand something from able-bodied people who can. It will benefit their children, it will help the children of those who go to work.

America is a winner in this. The President of the United States has recognized that. He has joined with this Congress, and I think we have a bipartisan effort here to move America down the road towards reclaiming our neighborhoods and helping America.

And I would say to my friends, we will be bold enough and humble enough when we see that mistakes are being made, to be able to come back and fix them; but let us not let these obstacles stand in the way of rebuilding this program based on fundamental American values. Support the conference report.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this welfare reform conference report. This bill is far from perfect, but it does move us down the road toward reforming the welfare system to help families in need.

I have long advocated and agree with provisions requiring work and encouraging self-sufficiency and personal responsibility.

This legislation is an improvement over more extreme earlier bills. It includes necessary provisions which I and others fought for during the last 2 years because they are important to working families, children, and fast-growing states such as Texas. It provides some transitional health care benefits and child care assistance. It retains the Federal guarantee of health care and nutritional assistance for children. It eliminates the Republicans' proposal to raise taxes on working families by cutting the earned income tax credit. It provide a safety net, albeit minimal, for high growth states such as Texas, Florida, and California and for recessions. It lets States give noncash vouchers to families whose welfare eligibility has expired, so they can buy essentials for children. None of these provisions were contained in previous so-called welfare reform.

While I am supporting this legislation, I am troubled by the elimination of benefits for legal immigrants who have participated in the workforce and paid taxes. Harris County, TX, which I represent, currently faces a measles epidemic. Future prohibitions on Medicaid for such instances would result in the State and county facing tremendous cost increases. I have no doubt that Congress will be forced to revisit this issue in part at the behest of States as we may be creating huge unfunded mandates. Unfortunately, while this bill contains many positive reforms which I support, it also contains many misguided provisions for which the only motivation is monetary, not public policy.

Mrs. FOWLER. Mr. Speaker, the American welfare system was intended to be a safety net for those who fall on hard times. Unfortunately, it has become an overgrown bureaucracy which perpetuates dependency and de-

nies people a real chance to live the American dream.

I am pleased that President Clinton has just announced he would sign the Republican welfare bill. We knew that when it got this close to the election, this President would choose the path of political expediency, as he always does.

This legislation is not about saving money, it is about saving hope and saving lives, while reforming a broken system and preserving the safety net.

The bill encourages work and independence, and discourages illegitimacy. I urge my colleagues to vote for fairness, compassion, and responsibility. Pass the conference agreement on H.R. 3437.

Mrs. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (H.R. 3734). This landmark piece of welfare reform legislation emphasizes responsibility and compassion. It provides a helping hand and not a handout. Americans today want a future filled with hope. Parents want to be able to take care of themselves and their children. They want to teach their kids how to take responsibility for their lives.

This legislation reverses welfare as we know it. Today, the average length of stay for families on welfare in 13 years. The cycle of dependency must stop.

Congress' welfare reform legislation also has tough work requirements. Families must work within 2 years or lose their benefits. Work is the beginning of dignity and personal responsibility. Single mothers who desire to work but cannot leave their children home alone will be provided with child care assistance. In fact, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act provides \$14 billion in guaranteed child care funding.

Two parent families are encouraged through this plan. It takes two people to make a baby. Strong paternity requirements and tough child support measures ensure that deadbeat parents will take responsibility for their actions.

This welfare reform package is estimated to save the American taxpayers \$56.2 billion over the next 6 years. It is a balanced approach that gives the States more autonomy and flexibility in crafting solutions. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act promotes work while also guaranteeing families adequate child care, medical care, and food assistance. It is compassionate while promoting the dignity of Americans through an honest day's work. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against a great injustice, an injustice that is being committed against our Nation's children, defenseless, nonvoting, children, I am referring of course to the conference agreement on H.R. 3734, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act.

We speak so often in this House about family values and protecting children. At the same time however, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, have presented a welfare reform bill that will effectively eliminate the Federal guarantee of assistance for poor children in this country for the first time in 60 years and will push millions more children into poverty.

A recent study by the Urban Institute estimated that the welfare legislation passed by the House would increase the number of chil-

dren in poverty by 1.1 million, or 12 percent. The analysis estimated that families on welfare would lose, on average, about \$1,000 a year once the bill is fully implemented. More than a fifth of American families with children would be affected by the legislation.

This partisan legislation is antifamily and antichild. The Republican bill continues to be weak on work and hard on families. Without adequate funding for education, training, child care and employment, most of our Nation's poor will be unable to avoid or escape the welfare trap. Even before the adoption of amendments increasing work in committee, the Congressional Budget Office [CBO] estimated that the Republican proposal is some \$9 billion short of what would be needed in fiscal years 1999 through 2002 to provide adequate money for the States to carry out the work program.

Furthermore, the increase in the minimum work hours requirement, without a commensurate increase in child care funding, will make it almost impossible for States to provide child care for families making the transition from welfare to work. True welfare reform can never be achieved and welfare dependency will never be broken, unless we provide adequate education, training, child care, and jobs that pay a living wage.

I am particularly concerned that, like the House bill, the conference agreement prohibits using cash welfare block grant funds to provide vouchers for children in families who have been cut off from benefits because of the 5-year limit. We must not abandon the children of families whose benefits are cut off. We must continue to ensure that they will be provided for and not punished for the actions of their parents.

Many more children will be hurt by the bill's denial of benefits to legal immigrants. Low-income legal immigrants would be denied aid provided under major programs such as SSI and food stamps. States would also have the option of denying Medicaid to legal immigrants. They would also be denied assistance under smaller programs such as meals-on-wheels to the homebound elderly and prenatal care for pregnant women. Under this bill, nearly half a million current elderly and disabled beneficiaries who are legal immigrants would be terminated from the SSI Program. Similarly, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that under the House bill, which is similar to the conference agreement, approximately 140,000 low-income legal immigrant children who would be eligible for Medicaid under current law would be denied it under this legislation. Most of these children are likely to have no other health insurance. I cannot believe we would pass legislation that would result in even one more child being denied health care that could prevent disease and illness.

This bill also changes the guideline under which nonimmigrant children qualify for benefits under the SSI Program.

As a result, the CBO estimates that by 2002, some 315,000 low-income disabled children who would qualify for benefits under current law would be denied SSI. This represents 22 percent of the children that would qualify under current law. The bill would reduce the total benefits the program provides to disabled children by more than \$7 billion over 6 years.

Mr. Speaker, mandatory welfare-to-work programs can get parent off welfare and into jobs, but only if the program is well designed

and is given the resources to be successful. The GOP bill is punitive and wrongheaded. It will not put people to work, it will put them on the street. Any restructuring of the welfare system must move people away from dependency toward self-sufficiency. Facilitating the transition off welfare requires job training, guaranteed child care, and health insurance at an affordable price.

We cannot expect to reduce our welfare rolls if we do not provide the women of this Nation the opportunity to better themselves and their families through job training and education, if we do not provide them with good quality child care and, most importantly, if we do not provide them with a job.

Together, welfare programs make up the safety net that poor children and their families rely on in times of need. We must not allow the safety net to be shredded. We must keep our promises to the children of this Nation. We must ensure that in times of need they receive the health care, food, and general services they need to survive. I urge my colleagues to oppose this dangerous legislation and to live up to our moral responsibility to help the poor help themselves.

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I take this opportunity to address the welfare reform conference report before us today. This measure will do exactly what its name promises: promote personal responsibility and work opportunity for disadvantaged Americans. More important, it will replace the despair of welfare dependency with the pride of independence.

This measure is critical to welfare reform initiatives taking place in the States. In my State, the Virginia Independence Program has already helped two-thirds of all eligible welfare recipients find meaningful jobs and restore hope to their lives.

This legislation will enable Virginia to continue its highly successful statewide reform program. And it will allow other States to create similar initiatives—without having to waste time and money seeking a waiver from the Federal Government.

I am also proud of the role that the Commerce Committee has played in crafting this landmark initiative. Although the Medicaid reform plan designed by the Nation's Republican and Democrat Governors is not a part of this legislation, the conference report does include important Medicaid provisions.

In particular, the conference report guarantees continued coverage for all those who are eligible under the current AFDC Program. It also ensures that eligible children will not lose the health coverage they need. And it requires adult recipients to comply with work requirements in order to remain eligible for Medicaid benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by congratulating all those who helped to shape this historic measure. It deserves our full support, and it should be signed by the President.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, today this body will take a large step in making sweeping reform in our welfare system. By passing the welfare reform agreement, we move toward a system that emphasizes work and independence—a new system that represents real change and expanded opportunity. Although this bill is not perfect, it is our best chance in years to enact welfare reform that represents an opportunity to improve the current system.

Sadly, our current system hurts the very people it is designed to protect by perpetuat-

ing a cycle of dependency. For those stuck on welfare, the system is not working. It is clear that we cannot and should not continue with the status quo. The status quo has fostered an entire culture of poverty. Our current system does little to help poor individuals move from welfare to work.

It is clear the best antipoverty program is a job. To that end, this bill encourages work. It requires welfare recipients to work after 2 years and imposes a 5-year lifetime limit on welfare benefits. The bill turns Aid to Families with Dependent Children [AFDC] into a block grant program, allowing States to create their own unique welfare programs to best serve their residents. The bill maintains health care benefits for those currently receiving Medicaid because of their AFDC eligibility and provides \$14 billion for child care so parents can go to work without worrying about the health and safety of their children. In addition, this bill preserves the earned income tax credit which has been successful in helping working families.

Mr. Speaker, I voted against the Republican welfare reform bill when it was before this House. That bill represented a drastic departure from the actual intent of welfare—to help the most vulnerable in our society in their time of need. The House bill eliminated the safety net of Medicaid and food stamps for many children. It was mean in spirit and should not have passed. The conference agreement that is before us today, however, is much more reasonable. Children will have the guarantee of health care coverage through Medicaid even as their parents transition to work. Further, unlike the House bill, States will not be able to opt out of the Federal Food Stamp Program. The conference agreement is a far better bill than the measure passed by the House. It is a bold, yet compassionate step in helping foster independence.

I am pleased the President has indicated he will sign this bill into law. I applaud the President—who has worked on this issue for years, even before it was politically fashionable—for continuing to insist that the bill be improved before signing it into law. While the President and I agree that this bill is by no means perfect, it is a good starting point. We can begin the process of moving toward a system that encourages and rewards work for all able-bodied citizens.

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this antifamily, antichildren bill. There are so many parts of this bill that should concern us. I could stand here all day and describe, in detail, how this bill falls short of our shared goal of welfare reform.

For example, consider the effects on our Nation's most unfortunate children. I say unfortunate because these children are being sacrificed by election year politics simply because they came from poor families. Their already difficult lives will be made impossible due to food stamp reductions, loss of SSI assistance, and no guarantee of Federal assistance when time runs out for them and their families. The effect will be to drown an additional 1.1 million children in poverty.

Like I said, I could go on and on. But, I won't waste your time discussing what we all know: that block grants aren't responsive to a changing economy and inadequate child-care provisions make welfare-to-work a very difficult journey.

I will tell you what this so-called reform will mean to California, and how my State is being

asked to absorb 40 percent of the proposed cuts. Why? Because California is home to the largest immigrant population in our country and this bill denies legal immigrants Federal assistance. It does not take much to do the math and understand the consequences of denying food stamps, supplemental security income, or Medicaid to our legal immigrant population. There are no exceptions for children or the elderly, regardless of the situation.

The needs of these taxpaying, legal residents will not vanish because the Federal Government looks the other way. The children will still be hungry, the elderly will still get sick, and the disabled will still have special needs. Someone will have to provide these services, and it will be our cities and counties who are forced to pick up the tab. And for California, the bill will be approximately \$9 billion over 7 years.

My district of Los Angeles County is home to some 3 million foreign-born residents. County officials estimate that denying SSI to legal immigrants could cost the county as much as \$236 million per year in general relief assistance. More importantly, this translates into no Federal assistance for the elderly or disabled children.

These costs would continue to rise with the loss of Medicaid coverage for legal immigrants. More than 830,000 legal immigrants in California would lose Medicaid coverage, including 286,000 children. Overall, the total number of uninsured persons in California would rise from 6.6 million to 7.4 million. Under this bill, these people would turn to county hospitals for care. And the costs of that care will be shifted to local governments already operating on shoe string budgets. In Los Angeles County, this could mean as much as \$240 million per year.

To say this is unfair is an understatement. Legal residents, who play by the rules and contribute over \$90 billion a year in taxes, do not deserve this. They deserve what they earn; to be treated with the same care and provided with the same services enjoyed by the rest of the tax-paying community.

I encourage my colleagues to oppose these short-sighted cuts and unfair rule changes: Say no to a bad deal and vote against this report.

Mr. ORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of this welfare reform bill. I commend this Congress for creating a flexible reform bill that will allow Utah and other innovative States to continue their successful welfare reform efforts.

My greatest concerns during the course of the welfare reform debate have been to transform the system to a work-based system, to ensure that States like Utah have the flexibility to continue their successful reform efforts, and to protect innocent children. I have worked diligently with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to craft a bill that accomplishes these goals, and I am pleased to say that Congress has finally passed a bill that achieves them.

I am extremely pleased that this bill contains a provision that allows Utah to continue its successful welfare reform efforts. Under the bill that passed the House 2 weeks ago, Utah would have had to change its program to meet the restrictive Federal requirements contained in the bill. Moreover, CBO estimated that the earlier bill imposed \$13 billion in unfunded costs on States unless they restricted eligibility or decreased assistance to those in need.

Both the National Governors' Association and the State of Utah expressed concerns about these unfunded costs. I worked with members of the conference committee to address these concerns, and now we have a bill that really is flexible.

The bill that passed the House today contained several of the provisions proposed by myself and others who have worked over recent months to find bipartisan common ground on welfare reform. For instance, this conference report is much more flexible than the earlier House bill because it allows States with waivers to use their own participation definition in meeting Federal work participation requirements. It also reduces the unfunded costs in the bill substantially. Unlike the House version, the conference report maintains current protections against child abuse, guarantees that children do not lose their Medicaid health care coverage as a result of the bill, and provides States with the option to provide noncash assistance to children whose parents have reached the time limit. Finally, it improves upon maintenance of effort provisions and enforcement of work participation rates.

It wasn't long ago that we were debating H.R. 4, an extreme proposal that would have eliminated 23 child protection programs like foster care and child abuse protection and replaced them with a block grant that contained \$2.7 billion less funding than provided under current law. H.R. 4 would have eliminated nutrition programs like school lunch, school breakfast, the Summer Food and Adult Care Food Program, the Women, Infants and Children Program, and the Homeless Children Nutrition Program, and replaced them with two block grants that provided \$6.6 billion less funding for nutrition than provided under current law. Although claims were made that there were no cuts to certain popular programs like school lunch, the truth was a State would have to eliminate or severely reduce all other programs in order to fully fund these high profile programs.

Even in the House version of welfare reform passed 2 weeks ago, children could have lost their Medicaid coverage as the result of the bill; current child abuse protections were eliminated and States were prohibited from providing noncash assistance to children whose parents have reached the time limit. I am pleased that the conference report has corrected these provisions and protected children.

Previous bills, which I opposed, treated 4-year-old children like 40-year-old deadbeats. This bill is far better for children and far more flexible for States than any of the other welfare reform proposals that have been passed by this Congress. We finally have a bill that should be signed into law.

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, there is virtually universal agreement that our current welfare system is broken and must be dramatically overhauled. Americans are a compassionate people, eager to lend a helping hand to hard workers experiencing temporary difficulties and especially to children who are victims of circumstances beyond their control. But Americans also are a just people, expecting everyone to contribute as they are able and to take responsibility for themselves and their families. It is the balancing of these two concerns that makes correcting our welfare system a challenge, but a challenge which must be met.

This welfare reform conference report is far from perfect, but it clearly is preferable to con-

tinuing the current system and preferable to welfare legislation considered earlier this Congress. For these reasons, we support the welfare reform conference report and have encouraged the President to sign it.

We have opposed previous welfare reform proposals because we believed that they offered empty, unsustainable promises of moving welfare recipients to work. Additionally, earlier bills were seriously deficient in their protections for children and other truly vulnerable populations. We have decided to support this final conference report because it is considerably better than the welfare reform bill (H.R. 4) appropriately vetoed by the President last year and it also makes significant improvements to the bill passed by the House last week. The conference committee agreed with our proposals giving States additional flexibility in moving welfare recipients to work, allowing States to use block grant funds to provide vouchers, and providing other protections for children.

This conference report incorporates several improvements proposed by the National Governors' Association to H.R. 4 in its final form. It provides \$4 billion more funding for child care that will assist parents transitioning to work. It doubles the contingency fund for States facing larger welfare rolls caused by economic downturns. The latest bill returns to a guaranteed status children eligible for school lunch and child abuse prevention programs. The reductions in benefits for disabled children contained in last year's H.R. 4 are eliminated, and greater allowances are made for hardship cases, increasing the hardship exemption from the benefit time limits to 20 percent of a State's caseload.

Several changes proposed in the Castle-Tanner alternative were subsequently made to the bill passed by the House in July. The amount States must spend on child care was increased. Additionally, States will be required to assess the needs of welfare applicants and prepare an individual responsibility contract outlining a plan to move to work. Also, an increase in the State maintenance of effort for States that fail to meet the participation rates was added to the bill. All of these changes strengthen the effort of moving welfare recipients to work.

The conference report further improved the bill. The conferees adopted our suggestions providing additional State flexibility in developing work programs and adding additional protections for children. We were disappointed that the conference did not incorporate constructive suggestions that were made regarding penalties for failure to meet work requirements and, unfortunately, an authorization for additional work funds was eliminated because of parliamentary "Byrd rule" considerations in the Senate. On balance, however, the conference report produced a bill that is significantly better than the bill passed by the House.

President Clinton already has approved waivers allowing 41 States to implement innovative programs to move welfare recipients to work. The House's Welfare Reform bill would have restricted those State reform initiatives by imposing work mandates that are less flexible than States are implementing. Over 20 States would have been required to change their work programs to meet the mandates in that earlier House bill or face substantial penalties from the Federal Government.

The conference report now allows States that are implementing welfare waivers to go forward with those efforts. Specifically, the conference report allows those States to count individuals who are participating in State-authorized work programs in meeting the work participation rates in the bill, even work programs which otherwise do not meet the Federal mandates in the bill.

States such as Tennessee and Texas that have just received waivers will be permitted to begin implementing these reforms and States like Utah and Michigan which have a track record in moving welfare recipients into self-sufficiency will be able to continue their programs. We will work to ensure that States will continue to have this flexibility when their waivers expire if the State plan is successful.

Another key goal we have maintained throughout the debate is protecting innocent children. The earlier House bill would have treated a 4-year-old child the same as a 24-year-old deadbeat by prohibiting States from using block grant funds to provide vouchers after the time limit for benefits to the parents had expired. The conference report reverses this extreme position. In addition, the conference report moderates the impact of the food stamp cuts on children by maintaining a guaranteed status for children and by increasing the housing deduction to \$300 a month for families with children.

Third, we have been concerned about the impact of health coverage to individuals and payments to health providers as a result of welfare reform. The House bill effectively would have denied Medicaid to thousands of individuals, removing \$9 billion of Medicaid assistance from the health care system and resulting in a cost shift to health care providers that would affect the cost, availability, and quality of care of to everyone. While the correction is less than we had hoped, the conference report effectively reduces this cost shift to health care providers by more than half. The conference report also contains language very similar to the Castle-Tanner bill continuing current Medicaid eligibility rules for AFDC-related populations, ensuring that no one loses health care coverage as a result of welfare reform.

As we began by saying, this conference report is far from perfect and we continue to have concerns about the impact of several provisions. Although the report provides States with additional flexibility in implementing work programs, the work provisions in the bill still may impose unfunded mandates on States that will make it more difficult to move welfare recipients to work. Given the unfunded mandates in the bill, the provisions penalizing States for failing to meet participation rates by reducing funding to the State are counterproductive. The contingency fund in the conference report, while much stronger than the contingency fund in H.R. 4, will not be sufficient to respond to a severe national or regional recession.

The conference report contains a requirement that Congress review the impact of the bill 3 years. This review process will allow Congress to make a number of changes that we feel certain will be necessary to fulfill successful welfare reform.

Despite these reservations, we believe that it is critical that welfare reform be enacted this year. Failure to do so will signal yet another wasted opportunity to make critically needed

reforms. We should enact this conference report and fix the current system now, moving toward a system that better promotes work and individual responsibility.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, as I was reading the papers this morning I noticed some stories that claimed that this welfare reform proposal is not such a big change—that its significance has been overrated. That all sides are coming to a consensus and it's not such a big deal after all.

In the short term, that's how it may look. But in the long term, we are making a fundamental change to the status quo—we've gone beyond questioning the failed policies of the past—we are implementing a whole new approach. We are beginning to replace the welfare state with an opportunity society.

Ideas have consequences and bad ideas have had consequences. The Great Society approach may have been well-intentioned, but the impact was tragic. We have done a disservice to those who have fallen into the welfare trap. The incentives have been all wrong and the logic backward.

We need a welfare system that saves families, rather than breaking them. And that's what this bill does.

Our welfare system has deprived people of hope, diminished opportunity and destroyed lives. Go into our inner cities and you will find a generation fed on food stamps but starved of nurturing and hope. You'll meet young teens in their third pregnancy. You'll meet fatherless children. You'll talk to sixth graders who don't know how many inches are in a foot. And you'll talk to first-graders who don't know their ABC's.

It's time for Washington to learn from its past mistakes. It's time to reform our welfare system, to encourage families to stay together and to put recipients back to work.

That's what our plan does. Four years ago, President Clinton promised to end welfare as we know it, and I am pleased that he has committed to sign our bill into law.

Our plan calls for sweeping child support enforcement. We end welfare for those who won't cooperate on child support. We strengthen provisions to establish paternity. We force young men to realize they will be required to provide financial support for their children by requiring States to establish an automated State registry to track child support information.

One of the key elements of our welfare reform bill is ending fraudulent welfare payments to prisoners and illegal immigrants—saving \$22 billion.

Each year, millions of taxpayer dollars are illegally sent to prisoners in State and local jails through the Supplemental Security Income Program. In fact, in one case, infamous "Free-way Killer" William Bonin illegally collected SSI benefits for 14 years while on San Quentin's death row.

This bill removes the Washington-based intermeddling and bureaucratic micromanagement that has resulted in welfare programs that build a welfare population but do not relieve the suffering of those who are poor. We do not want to maintain the poor, we want to transform them. That's exactly what this bill would do.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, today we will debate legislation to radically change our welfare system. We will hear a lot about the fundamental principles that should govern the

way we help those truly in need. And while I agree with those who say our welfare system must work better for the American people, we need to remember that something much more profound than rhetoric is at stake.

There is no denying that we should encourage work and parental responsibility. And I have long argued that States and localities can deliver some services better than we can at the Federal level. But, there are also other principles that we need to remember when we discuss welfare.

We need to remember that the safety net for vulnerable people is fundamentally important to our society. There has long been widespread support among Americans of all political views that the Government should help people who are too sick, too old or too young to help themselves—particularly when they don't have families who can take care of them. This is why the safety net was developed in the first place and has had the continued support of Republicans such as Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan as well as Democrats.

I congratulate the Republican majority for its attempts to reform welfare, but I believe this legislation fails in many ways. Simply labeling this bill welfare reform cannot disguise the fact that it shreds the national safety net for millions of vulnerable people.

The Urban Institute has estimated that 1.1 million children will be pushed into poverty because of this legislation. More than a fifth of American families with children will be hurt by it. They also note that almost half of the families affected by this bill are already employed.

The provision to cut off food stamps after 3 months for unemployed people without dependents is unprecedented and unnecessarily harsh. These are some of the most vulnerable people in our country. Under this measure, even if they are trying to find work, if they don't succeed they will go hungry.

And, personally, I find the treatment of legal immigrants mystifying. My parents were immigrants. They, like many others, came to this country, worked hard, and contributed to their community. Today's immigrants are no different. They come to this country, they work hard, and they pay taxes. If they should fall upon hard times, why shouldn't we help them just like we help each other? Under the terms of this bill we aren't allowed to help them. They lose food stamps and SSI even if they have been paying taxes and living legally in this country for years. And new immigrants will be denied Medicaid.

Equally as disturbing as this bill's reduction in its Federal commitment to a national safety net is the pressure it puts on States to reduce their commitments to help vulnerable people. The reduction in State match set by the bill and the flexibility to shift 30 percent of basic block grant moneys to other uses will exacerbate pressures within State governments to pull their own resources out of these programs. That combined with the cuts in Federal dollars will lead to a sharp reduction in resources available for needed services and benefits.

The logical end result of all these interactions is significant cost-shifting to local governments. Because of the deep cut in Federal resources and potential reductions in State support, localities will need to spend more of their own funds to help move people from welfare to work and to provide needed services while that process is occurring. Many local of-

ficials including the Republican mayor of New York, Rudolph Giuliani, have expressed alarm at the hundreds of millions of dollars in additional costs their cities and residents will have to bear. Clearly, this will mean higher property taxes for working families all over the country.

We should reform our welfare system. But we must do it in a way that does not simply shift costs and that does not abandon the safety net for people who are truly in need. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this bill badly fails that test and America will be the worse for it. We can and should do better.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I condemn both the process and the substance of the Republican conference agreement on welfare. As the 104th Congress draws to a close, the Republican majority has not wavered from its autocratic role of this institution nor from its vicious indifference to our Nation's poor and infirm.

Like my other Democratic colleagues, I was systematically denied any meaningful role on that conference. The time and location of conference negotiations have been a closely-held secret among Republicans. This most anti-democratic process is an affront to the people of the 1st Congressional District of Missouri who send me here to represent their concerns on all matters of political discourse. Time and time again, this new Republican majority has interfered with my ability to fully represent the interests of my constituents.

As a matter of policy and substance, this conference report is an evil charade. From the outset, I had little expectation that the final product of the conference would mean reasonable, viable, and compassionate welfare reform. After all, both the House and Senate bill contained unrealistic work requirements, woe-ful funding for meaningful workfare, and the very real risk of throwing millions of children into poverty.

The Republican majority has no real interest in truly reforming welfare. Then real objective is to steal \$60 billion from antipoverty and antihunger programs in order to help finance their tax cuts and other gifts to the wealthy—Robin Hood in reverse. I can think of no more desperate, shameful act than to use the poor, especially children and the elderly, in a game of political chicken.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot in good conscience support a welfare reform bill that will punish those who, through no fault of their own, must turn to their Government for help in times of need.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise to support the conference report for H.R. 3734, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act.

As chairman of the House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families, as a former teacher and coach, and as a dad, I understand the need to take into account the needs and interests of children. I cannot imagine a policy that is crueler to children than the current welfare system. Certainly it was born of the good intention to help the poor. But in the name of compassion, we have unleashed an unmitigated disaster upon America. Today's welfare system rewards and encourages the destruction of families, and childbirth out of wedlock. It penalizes work and learning. It poisons our communities and our country with generation after generation of welfare dependency. It robs human beings of hope and life and any opportunities at the American Dream.

In the name of compassion, and with good intentions, the welfare status quo is mean and

extreme to children. It is mean and extreme to families. It is mean and extreme to the hard-working Americans who foot the bill.

Thus, without a doubt, we must replace this mean, extreme, and failed system of welfare dependency with work, hope, and opportunity. We can and must do better as Americans. And we will, by adopting this compassionate, historic legislation.

Our measure makes welfare a way up, not a way of life. It replaces Washington-knows-best with local control and responsibility. It replaces a system that rewards illegitimacy and destroys families, with a family-friendly fighting chance at the American Dream.

Now, President Clinton promised in his 1992 campaign to end welfare as we know it. He also made several other promises, including starting his administration with middle class tax relief. Unfortunately, the President has not kept his promises. He raised taxes. And twice, he has vetoed legislation to fulfill his own promise to end welfare. The President who pledged to end welfare as we know it has twice vetoed legislation to end welfare for illegal aliens.

Let me speak for a moment about illegal aliens. Illegal immigration is breaking our treasury, burdening California, and trying America's patience. It is wrong for our welfare system to provide lavish benefits for persons in America in violation of our laws.

I am proud that the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act ends welfare for illegal aliens. It ends eligibility for Government programs for illegal aliens. It ends the taxpayer-funded red carpet for illegal aliens. Our plan is to send a clear message to those who jump our borders, violate our laws, and reside in America illegally: Go home. Stop freeloading off of hard-working American taxpayers.

Let me address the matter of legal immigrants. America is a beacon of hope and opportunity for the world. That is why we continue to have the most generous system of legal immigration that history has ever known. It is in America's interest to invite those who want to work for a better life, and have a fighting chance at the American Dream. But we will not support those who come to America to be dependent upon our social safety net. Thus, our legislation places priority on helping American citizens first, and represents the values held by Americans.

For we are determined to liberate families from welfare dependency and get them work and a chance at the American Dream. We understand that for many single parents, child care can make the difference between being able to work or not. That's why our bill provides more and better child care, with less bureaucracy and redtape, and more choices and resources for parents striving for a better life.

Here are the facts: This conference report provides \$22 billion for child care over 7 years. That amounts to \$4.5 billion over current law, and \$1.7 billion more than President Clinton's plan recommends. And we dramatically increase resources for child care quality improvement. By investing in quality child care, we provide more families the opportunity to be free from welfare dependency and to strive for the American Dream.

In the end, this bill is what is about the best of America. We are a compassionate people, united by common ideals of freedom and opportunity. The great glory of this land of opportunity is the American Dream. Families

trapped by welfare, and especially their children, have had this dream deferred. We can do better. And we do, through this legislation, because this is America. I urge the adoption of the conference report on H.R. 3734.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join in supporting the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. As representatives of the people, we do not get as many opportunities as we would like to do something that will truly help improve the lives of the people we serve.

This bill presents us with just such an opportunity.

The landmark welfare reform plan before us today will bring education, training, and jobs to low-income Americans. It will replace welfare dependence with economic self-reliance. And it will create more hopeful futures for the children of participants.

This conference report is more than just a prescription for much-needed welfare reform. It is what I hope will be the first step in our bipartisan efforts to improve the public assistance programs on which disadvantaged families depend.

Last February, the Nation's Republican and Democrat Governors unanimously endorsed welfare and Medicaid reform plans. And although the conference report before us today will give States the tools they need to improve their public assistance programs, our work is not done.

After all, welfare as we know it means more than AFDC. It includes food stamps, housing assistance, and energy assistance. And it includes medical assistance.

That's right—for millions of Americans, Medicaid is welfare. That is because income assistance alone is not sufficient to meet the pressing needs of disadvantaged families.

For States, too, Medicaid is welfare. In fact, it makes up the largest share of State public assistance funding. As a share of State budgets, Medicaid is four times larger than AFDC.

If President Clinton does the right thing and signs this welfare reform bill into law, Medicaid will still be caught up in the choking bureaucratic redtape of Federal control. That is why the Medicaid program must be restructured if States are to fully succeed in making public assistance programs more responsive and effective.

I commend my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their commitment to true welfare reform. And I look forward to continuing our efforts to making all sources of public assistance work better for those who need a helping hand up.

Thank you.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, today's vote is about change. Today we begin the move from a status quo that no one approves of to a reformed and improved welfare system. Our current welfare system traps too many families in a cycle of dependency and does little to encourage or help such individuals find employment. Both welfare recipients and taxpayers lose if the status quo is maintained.

I have repeatedly stated that meaningful welfare reform should move recipients to work and protect children. Just 2 weeks ago, I supported a bipartisan welfare plan, authored by Republican Representative Michael Castle and Democratic Representative John Tanner, which I believe met these goals.

The conference agreement on H.R. 3734 is not perfect, but it is a good first step into an

era of necessary welfare reform. This legislation contains many useful and necessary improvements over the previous welfare proposals put forth by the Republican majority. In fact, this legislation has moved several steps closer to the Castle-Tanner bill.

The agreement ensures that low-income mothers and children retain their Medicaid eligibility; provides increased child care funding; removes the optional food stamp block grant; removes the adoption and foster care block grant; and allows States to use a portion of their Federal funding to provide assistance to children whose families have been cut off welfare because of the 5-year time limit.

While this legislation attempts to protect children from the shortcomings and failures of their parents, it does not fulfill all of my goals for welfare reform. I am concerned that H.R. 3734 fails to provide adequate Federal resources for States to implement work programs, nor does it contain adequate resources for States and individuals in the event of a severe recession.

In addition, the legislation makes cuts in food stamps for unemployed individuals willing to work and contains legal immigrant provisions that will deny access by legal immigrant children to SSI, food stamps, and other benefits. These concerns should be rectified by this and subsequent Congresses. I am committed to realizing this goal, and therefore, I am pleased that the President plans to propose legislation to repeal many of these provisions.

Furthermore, several States are currently working on plans to reform their welfare reform systems. We must ensure that these efforts are accommodated by this legislation.

This is the first Republican proposal which adequately acknowledges the need to protect children, while emphasizing work. Rhode Island, through the work of a coalition of State officials, business leaders, and advocacy groups, has crafted a welfare reform plan that also accomplishes these goals. Should H.R. 3734 prove detrimental to Rhode Island or the children of Rhode Island, I will work to make necessary changes to further strengthen the Nation's welfare reform efforts.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this conference report. Despite the slanderous accusations by the advocates of the current welfare state, our welfare reform plan is compassionate and humane, two adjectives rarely used to describe the current welfare program.

Our welfare reform plan ends welfare as a way of life and gives back welfare recipients their self-worth. By replacing welfare with work, current recipients will realize that they have talents in which to make a productive and self-reliant life. They are so used to the government providing for them that they never believed they could provide for themselves and their families.

We know this transition isn't going to be easy; nothing worth having is easy. That is why our welfare reform plan continues government assistance as long as they are making a good-faith effort to be a productive member of society.

We separate from bona fide eligible welfare candidates those who have been convicted of a felony or those that refuse to become citizens. For too long, those that have been trying to make their own way but are suppressed by the big thumb of government have been represented by those welfare recipients that

make the headlines. By denying convicted felons and noncitizens taxpayer-funded assistance we take away the scourge previously associated with all welfare benefits. We create a new benevolent program and therefore a positive and refreshing atmosphere for its recipients.

Along with increased sense of self-worth that necessarily comes with a pay check that isn't a donation comes a greater sense of personal responsibility. Our reform promotes self-responsibility in an attempt to half rising illegitimacy rates. Once we diminish illegitimacy we can truly end the cycle of dependency created by our current welfare state.

As a condition for benefit eligibility, a mother must identify the father. This will ensure that single parents get the support they need and remind fathers that their children is their responsibility, not the State's.

Our welfare reform plan gives power and flexibility back to the States. I think this is the provision that gives the proponents of the current welfare state the most heartburn. The block grants give the power and flexibility once enjoyed by big government advocates to our Nation's Governors and State legislatures. Non longer will Washington power brokers be able to dictate who gets and how much they get. Rather, those who know the solutions for their unique challenges won't have to wait for bureaucratic approval to put their programs in action.

Mr. Speaker, not only is this reform plan historic, it is futuristic. This plan ends welfare as we know it and helps us see a society which encourages all of its members to be productive and self-reliant.

Mr. FRANKS of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, this welfare reform conference bill brings us one step closer to fixing a welfare system that has been broken and in need of major repairs. We have had a welfare system that has caused generations of American citizens to live in poverty and become consumed by a condition of hopelessness and despair. We have had a welfare system that has created dependency upon a monthly stipend instead of employment as a viable solution to overcome poverty.

I strongly believe in the American dream where each individual is given the opportunity to work, provide for their family, and participate in our society. The current welfare system has taken that dream away from too many Americans.

The conference committee bill represents the change that will place the welfare program back into the hands of the States so that States can implement programs that best fit the needs of their welfare constituents. The bill will reinforce the American principle in which parents are responsible for the well-being of their children. Welfare recipients will be required to identify the absent father, and all able-bodied parents will be expected to work to provide for the needs of their children. The bill strengthens child support enforcement so that absent fathers will be located and required to pay child support.

The conference committee bill encourages States to implement the debit card for disbursement of welfare funds and food stamps. No longer will welfare recipients be able to use welfare funds to purchase illegal drugs. The bill will bring greater accountability in the spending of American taxpayer's money.

This conference committee bill will lead to greater self-sufficiency. The bill will give fami-

lies who have had to live in poverty a new chance for a better life and an opportunity to participate in the American dream.

I urge support for the conference committee bill.

Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have heard of a rush to anger and a rush to judgment. What we have here is a rush to the floor. We're told an agreement on a conference committee report to H.R. 3734 was made near midnight last night. I haven't seen the conference report and don't know what's in the conference agreement. I read what's in the National Journal's Congress Daily/A.M. edition and the Congressional Quarterly's House Action Reports "Conference Summary." The Congressional Quarterly Action Report includes the disclaimer that they haven't seen the conference agreement report either, but prepared a morning briefing anyway, using information provided by committee staff. Well, excuse me.

I don't consider it appropriate to rely only on some nebulous statement written by someone who hasn't read the report before casting my vote on behalf of my constituents. I want to have a copy of the legislation available and that's why we have the rule that we don't vote on a conference agreement the same day it is reported.

In my 23 years in the Congress, I have been accustomed to reading and studying legislation before I cast my vote on behalf of the Seventh District of Illinois, a responsibility I take very seriously. The House has rules governing debate, rules designed to keep us from rushing to judgment. Those rules dictate that we don't vote on conference reports the same day they are filed so that we have time to study the provisions. That's why there is a two-thirds majority vote requirement to overturn that rule.

So why are we being asked to waive the time requirement and go immediately to a vote on this conference report? We are told we will have 1 hour of debate on the rule that will give us 1 hour of debate to consider a special rule to waive the two-thirds vote requirement. Why? Because once again the Gingrich Republicans are trying to force legislation through the process without adhering to the safeguards established to protect the American people and the legislative process.

I object to this rule and urge my colleagues to defeat this rule so that America has a chance to look at what we are being asked to approve as new changes, major revisions really, in the provisions and control of public assistance programs that provide a safety net for the needy and vulnerable among us. I owe it to my constituents to study legislation and weigh the measure before casting my vote for them. Let's get back to reasoned debate, let's follow the rules, just like we are going to ask the recipients of the benefits provided or denied under this bill to follow. Let's stop changing the rules as it suits the desires of the Gingrich Republicans. I urge my colleagues to defeat this motion to change the rules. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, there is perhaps no more urgent issue in America today than ending welfare dependency.

In place of a welfare program built around welfare checks, we need a program built around helping people get paychecks. We need to move people toward work and independence. And we need to be tough on work and protective of children.

When the work on welfare reform started last year, the Republican proposals were weak on work, tough on kids, and the President was right to veto them.

Unfortunately, the bill before us today, while a significant improvement on the earlier versions, still falls short in both regards.

On work, the bill is, in fact, too weak, for it underfunds employment assistance by \$13 billion. According to the Congressional Budget Office, a \$13 billion shortfall is a guarantee that no State can meet the employment requirements in this bill. So we have missed an opportunity to make these poor families self-supporting.

On children, the bill is, in fact, too weak in its child care provisions; it is too harsh in the manner children are punished for the failures of their parents; and it is far too extreme in its potential to push an additional 1 million children into poverty.

I am also deeply concerned by the fundamental premise of this legislation. There are many Governors, in many States, who today are sincerely committed to using a welfare block grant to raise the well-being and quality of life of people within their States. And as I listen to them, I hear a haunting echo of a situation which occurred some years ago when many well-intended State legislators, myself included, voted to transition the mentally ill in Oregon into mainstream society. The concept seemed solid, as the welfare block grant seems to many Governors. But when the 1980's recession hit Oregon, the commitments we made to the mentally ill—similar in so many ways to the commitment the Governors today are making to their welfare recipients—simply came undone. And today, many years later, the mentally ill of Oregon still live on the streets, and Oregon's neighborhoods and local governments are struggling under the burden of serving this neglected population.

This, Mr. Speaker, is what I fear we face when the next recession rumbles through this land. When times get tough, and resources grow scarce, and the contingency funds are drawn down, who will be hurt the most? Will it be our schools? Our ports? Our highway funds? Our economic competitiveness programs? Or will it be those who are struggling to find a route out of poverty?

I fear without adequate planning, safeguards, standards, and funding, welfare reform will likewise turn into a nightmare not just for the poor, but for the people in our community ill-equipped to deal with the consequences of another experiment that backfires.

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this conference agreement on welfare reform. This is truly an important moment in my legislative career and in the history of the House. I trust our judgement today will be proven wise in years to come.

I have supported welfare reform with my work and with my votes during this session. I voted for the bill proposed by my colleague from Georgia, Congressman DEAL, and for the bill most recently proposed by a bipartisan coalition led by Congressmen CASTLE and TANNER.

By voting for those bills, and opposing the bills which were passed but vetoed by the President, we have been able to move toward a sensible middle ground, a tough yet humane bill which is worthy of our support. I will enter into the RECORD at this point a number of improvements which helped earn my support for this legislation.

Unlike the House bill, the Conference Agreement forces states wanting to transfer funds between block grants to transfer those funds specifically into child care and social services block grants.

The Agreement allows states the flexibility to implement pilot welfare programs like the one being put into place in Illinois. [A part of the Castle-Tanner Plan] However, states many use federal funds to provide vouchers and health and food stamp benefits to children through the five year time limitation mandated in the bill. After that, states have the option of continuing benefits in the form of a voucher.

The Conference Agreement provides additional flexibility in meeting the work requirements by allowing states that are implementing plans under federal waivers to count individuals who are participating in work programs under the waiver in meeting the work participation rates in the bill, even if the hours of work or the definition of work in the state plan do not meet the mandates in the bill.

The Agreement does not include the House provision that would have prohibited states from using block grant funds to make cash payments to families that have an additional child while on welfare.

Unlike the House bill, the Conference Agreement does not give states the option to receive food assistance in the form of a block grant, instead of under the regular Food Stamp program. The bill retains the current Food Stamp program. [A major part of the Castle-Tanner Plan]

The Conference Agreement decreased the amount cut from the Food Stamp program by \$2.3 billion. (The Agreement cuts the Food Stamp program by \$23.3 billion over six years.)

Tightens SSI eligibility criteria to restrict eligibility to children who meet the medical listings. However, individualized functional assessment and references to maladaptive behavior are repealed. [Criteria contained in Castle-Tanner Plan] All children meeting medical listings will be eligible for SSI benefits.

The House bill restricted Food Stamps benefits for able-bodied, unemployed adults who have no dependent and who are between the ages of 18 and 50—limiting Food Stamp benefits for this group to three months over their lifetime up to age 50. The Agreement provides such individuals with Food Stamps for three months out of every three years, with the possibility of another three months within that period. [Moved closer to the Castle-Tanner Plan]

Under the agreement, all families currently receiving welfare and Medicaid benefits will continue to be eligible for the Medicaid program. In addition, there is a one year transition period for Medicaid for those transitioning into the workforce.

The Conference Agreement does not deny Medicaid benefits for legal immigrants retroactively and applies the ban on benefits for five years instead of until citizenship to legal immigrants.

The Agreement retains the current Family Preservation and Support program, which is a preventive program designed to teach improved parenting skills before a child must be removed to foster care. The House bill would have replaced the program with a block grant.

The Agreement includes \$500 million more than the House bill for a fund to reward states that are effective in moving people from welfare to work, preserving two-parent families, and reducing the out-of-wedlock births.

I come from a rural area. I know times can be tough. But I also grew up on a farm where

we worked for everything we ever had, and where we took care of each other. Most of the people I represent in the 19th district have similar backgrounds. They know that jobs can be lost or families can break apart and that we need to look after our neighbor. But they also want that neighbor to take responsibility for their behavior and for them to look for work if they're able.

This bill helps us respect those old-fashioned traditions in a modern world. It helps us move people from welfare to work, helps us save money in the program, and gives the states the flexibility to meet the needs of their people.

We should be prepared to revisit this bill if in fact children are left behind as some critics fear. But today, we should embrace this proposal with courage and faith, confident that we are changing not only the construct but also the culture of welfare.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of reforming the welfare system. As the American people know, the current welfare system is in desperate need of reform. For public aid recipients trapped in the system, for those who exploit the welfare system, and for the taxpayers who foot the bills, an overhaul of welfare in America is a high priority.

The fundamental problem with our current system is that for many people welfare becomes more than a helping hand; it becomes a way of life. For some who enroll in the primary welfare program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children [AFDC], welfare becomes a trap they cannot escape. Some are afraid to lose the health benefits they receive through Medicaid. Others are unable to secure child care to enable them to go to work. We must eliminate these barriers and chart a clear path for welfare recipients to go after a paycheck instead of a welfare check. Welfare should be viewed as temporary assistance, not a lifestyle.

I believe welfare benefits should be cut off for recipients who are unwilling to pursue work, education or training. I also believe we must strengthen child support enforcement. Billions of dollars in child support payments go uncollected each year. By establishing paternity at birth and pursuing deadbeat parents, we can reduce the number of families impoverished by the failure of non-custodial parents to fulfill their financial responsibilities.

The legislation before the House today makes many of the changes needed to reform the welfare system. It will move people from welfare to work, and it provides child care funding and Medicaid to help people make the move from a welfare check to a paycheck. It maintains nutritional guarantees. And it includes child support provisions to press deadbeat parents to meet their responsibilities so their children do not end up on welfare.

This legislation is better than the Gingrich bill which I opposed 2 weeks ago. The Gingrich bill eliminated the Federal guarantee of nutritional assistance. The Gingrich bill denied Medicaid to legal immigrants. The Gingrich bill denied benefits to children born to parents on welfare. And the Gingrich bill did not allow States to provide vouchers for children when their parents exceeded time limits. The legislation before us today does not include any of these problems.

This legislation is also far better than the Gingrich bill I opposed last year. Last year's Gingrich bill would have block-granted and re-

duced funding for the nutrition program for Women, Infants and Children; school lunches and breakfasts; and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. It would have eliminated the critical nutrition, education and health services that are an important part of the WIC program's effectiveness in increasing the number of healthy births. It would have eliminated the assurance of food assistance for many children, leaving many of them without enough food to eat. And it would have eliminated the assurance of sound nutrition standards for these programs.

Last year's Gingrich bill also would have eliminated the guarantee of Medicaid coverage for millions of women and children on AFDC. It would have terminated most Federal day care programs and replaced them with a block grant to States. It would have cut overall child care funding and caused many families to be denied day care assistance. Without day care, many parents would be forced to quit their jobs and enter the welfare system. It also would have eliminated many of the health and safety standards that have previously been required of day care providers receiving Federal funds, and put many children's lives at risk. And it would have cut funding for foster care, adoption assistance, child abuse prevention and treatment and related services, and turned these programs over to the States in a block grant. Today's bill does not contain these enormous flaws.

The legislation before the House today is far from perfect. It has significant problems that must be corrected, and I will work with the President to ensure that these problems are effectively addressed. I support effective requirements on the sponsors of legal immigrants who apply for benefits, but I do not believe that people who live legally in our country should be treated unfairly. The legislation before the House today is unfair to legal immigrants who play by the rules and contribute to the progress of our country, just as all of our ancestors have done. And the legislation before us today cuts nutritional assistance too deeply, which will be harmful to children and may force some working families to continue to choose between paying the rent and putting food on the table.

I will vote for the legislation that is now before the House because it makes many of the changes that must be made to change welfare from a way of life to a helping hand. And I will work with the President to correct the problems in this legislation that have nothing to do with welfare reform.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for the conference agreement before us and to voice my gratitude to the many members of the Democratic Caucus who have worked long and hard over the last 2 years on this difficult issue.

These members, including XAVIER BECERRA, LYNN WOOLSEY, JOHN TANNER, CHARLIE STENHOLM, SANDY LEVIN, BOB MATSUI, MARTIN SABO, and many, many others, have worked long and hard to improve the welfare reform bill that we are considering today. They have increased the awareness of their colleagues and have worked for a whole range of improvements which have moderated some of the bill's original provisions. I truly appreciate their efforts.

While this conference agreement isn't perfect, it represents a step in the right direction. This agreement acknowledges the view that

welfare should be a second chance for those in need, not a way of life.

This agreement sets a 5-year time limit on receiving benefits, includes tough welfare-to-work requirements, and allows States to decide how best to meet the needs of their citizens.

I am pleased to see that the conference agreement moved toward the President's position on a number of important issues, especially the removal of a provision that would have allowed States to opt out of the food stamp program. This will help keep the nutritional safety net intact for our kids. In addition, I am pleased that strong child support enforcement provisions have been included in this agreement.

The agreement that we're voting on today is the first step toward a much-needed overhaul of our welfare system. It stresses both fiscal and personal responsibility and it breaks the cycle of dependence.

I urge my colleagues to support this conference agreement.

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3734, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, a bill which would dramatically overhaul our Nation's welfare system.

On July 18, 1996, I joined with 170 of my colleagues to show my staunch opposition to H.R. 3734. After reviewing the product of the conference committee, my position remains unchanged.

During this session of Congress, our Republican colleagues assured us a family friendly Congress. They promised us that our children would be protected from harm. However, this bill is not about helping our families, nor is it about saving our children. The primary purpose of this bill is to achieve more than \$61 billion in budget cuts. And unfortunately, those who will suffer most from this legislation will be those who need assistance the most, our children, and the poor.

Seven months ago, President Clinton was forced to veto a welfare bill which, much like the bill before us today, would place an alarming number of children into poverty. According to the Urban Institute, H.R. 3734 would push 1.5 million children into poverty. I appeal to President Clinton to veto this measure which abandons the Federal commitment and safety net that protects America's children.

H.R. 3734 slashes more than \$61 billion over 6 years in welfare programs. This bill guts funding for the Food Stamp Program, cuts into the SSI protections for disabled children, drastically cuts child nutrition programs, and slashes benefits for legal immigrants. Mr. Speaker, I find these reductions in quality of life programs appalling.

Mr. Speaker, I believe most of us agree that our Nation's welfare system is in the need of reform. But do we reform the system by denying benefits to legal immigrants who, despite working hard and paying taxes, fall upon hard times? How can we demand that welfare recipients work 30 hours a week, yet provide inefficient job training and job services—essential components in contributing to longevity in the workplace? In short, how can we justify punishing children and their families simply because they are poor?

If we are truly to talk about the reform of welfare, if we are going to talk about increasing opportunities for our low-income residents, we cannot expect productive changes for our

community by taking away from those who already have very little.

Mr. Speaker, I can understand and support a balanced and thoughtful approach to addressing the reform of our Nation's welfare system. However, I cannot support this legislation which would shatter the lives of millions of our Nation's poor.

The pledge to end welfare as we know it is not a mandate to act irresponsibly and without compassion. On behalf of America's children and the poor, I urge my colleagues to vote against H.R. 3734.

Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the conference agreement on H.R. 3734, legislation that revises our current law providing welfare to needy children, individuals, and families in America. This welfare revision does little more than poke holes in the safety net that is called welfare. In my opinion, this legislation is a desperate—and unsuccessful—attempt to claim reform when it is an illogical revision. Change merely for change's sake can lead to chaos, damage, and injury.

This bill reportedly contains changes to our welfare system that will ensure insecurity and forecast fear on the part of the many vulnerable, loving parents out there trying their best to provide for their children a safe, secure, and nurturing environment.

Some of my constituents in the Seventh District of Illinois are among the poorest of the Nation. For the 23½ years that I have served in this body, I have fought strong and sometimes bitter battles for the benefit of the vulnerable, the disenfranchised, the young, old, disabled, and poor. That is what I hope to be remembered for when I retire from the House at the end of the year.

So, I feel I have an obligation to rise today in opposition to the conference agreement developed in the 11th hour by a few secretly selected Members of Congress. I continue to be concerned that we are applying Band-Aid policy and control instead of prevention and early intervention. The funds provided in current law attempt to address, and/or remedy, the symptoms of poverty: joblessness, hunger, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, illiteracy; but until and unless we set about strategically to address the causes, we go far short of adequate to eradicate the problem and then wonder why we are losing the fight.

I was contacted this morning by the Day-Care Council of Illinois, located in Chicago, who reminded me that President Franklin Roosevelt, under whose leadership the safety net for our most vulnerable children and families was established some 60 years ago once said: "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

We do too little when we take away the Federal oversight of funds that are channeled into State and local coffers in the form of block grants; reduce the Food Stamp program in the name of budget deficit; deny benefits to legal immigrants; and make children-having-children continue to live in housing environments that failed them as teenage parents instead of supporting communities in their efforts to provide stable, dependable support systems. Whether that support is supplied by the teen parent's biological or substitute parent, or a publicly funded shelter, should be the decision of that child-parent, not the Federal Government.

Block granting welfare benefits is likely to block grant suffering. I can only hope that if

this legislation passes, sufficient Federal criteria and oversight can make them work. The States have asked for block grants and will be called upon to demonstrate that they can act responsibly to all vulnerable populations in a non-discriminatory manner. My fear and recollection of contemporary history is that many of them will not.

On the issue of Medicaid eligibility, until and unless Congress can achieve meaningful health care reform to provide for universal access to health care financing, there must be Medicaid eligibility for the unemployed, uninsured families who receive public assistance. The well-being of our children is what public welfare should be all about; and we should focus on how best we can prevent and protect the vulnerable children of our Nation from experiencing poverty and despair, against hunger and sickness, and against fear and helplessness.

I urge my colleagues to reject this rush to agreement. I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the welfare conference agreement. This bill is an outrage. It constitutes the latest chapter in the right wing majority's all-out attack on children and the poor.

Let's get real. Less than 2 percent of Federal dollars are spent on assisting poor women and children. Yet radicals are ramming a bill down our throats that does nothing more than single out and punish children in the name of deficit reduction.

Many on the other side of the aisle are under the false assumption that all we need to do to eliminate poverty is take food and money away from poor people. But I have news for you—this sink or swim approach will not work. According to the Urban Institute this bill would push 1.1 million children into poverty and eliminate their ability to count on basic income support.

The worse tragedy of all is that this cruel bill comes up short on jobs. Cutting financial assistance to poor families without money for job creation, job training and day care will not force recipients to swim but cause millions of poor children to drown.

The real problem is that in poor areas like the one I represent, there simply are not enough jobs for people. In fact in some areas in NYC there are 14 applicants for every one fast-food job.

Let's end this charade. I implore my colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, to support fairness and basic decency and reject this heartless legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to House Resolution 495, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 328, nays 101, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 383]

YEAS—328

Ackerman	Baessler	Barr
Allard	Baker (CA)	Barrett (NE)
Andrews	Baker (LA)	Bartlett
Archer	Baldacci	Barton
Armey	Ballenger	Bass
Bachus	Barcia	Bateman

Bentsen
Bereuter
Bevill
Billray
Bilirakis
Bishop
Bliley
Blute
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Borski
Boucher
Brewster
Browder
Brownback
Bryant (TN)
Bryant (TX)
Bunn
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cardin
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chapman
Chenoweth
Christensen
Chryster
Clement
Clinger
Coble
Coburn
Collins (GA)
Combest
Condit
Cooley
Costello
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Crapo
Cremeans
Cubin
Cunningham
Danner
Davis
de la Garza
Deal
DeFazio
DeLay
Deutsch
Dickey
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Dooley
Doolittle
Dornan
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Durbin
Edwards
Ehlers
Ehrlich
English
Ensign
Everett
Ewing
Fawell
Fazio
Fields (TX)
Flanagan
Foley
Forbes
Fowler
Fox
Franks (CT)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Frisa
Frost
Funderburk
Furse
Gallegly
Ganske
Gejdenson
Gekas
Geren

Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Gingrich
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Greene (UT)
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hamilton
Hancock
Hansen
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hefner
Heineman
Herger
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hoke
Holden
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (SD)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennelly
Kildee
Kim
King
Kingston
Kleczka
Danner
Klink
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Laughlin
Lazio
Leach
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Solomon
Sonder
Spence
Spratt
Stearns
Stenholm
Stockman
Stump
Stupak
Talent
Tanner
Tate
Manzullo
Martini
Mascara
McCarthy
McCollum
McCrery
McHale
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
Meehan
Metcalf
Meyers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Minge
Molinari
Montgomery
Moorhead
Moran

Morella
Murtha
Myers
Myrick
Neal
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Norwood
Nussle
Obey
Orton
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Parker
Paxon
Payne (VA)
Peterson (FL)
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickett
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Poshard
Pryce
Quillen
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Reed
Regula
Richardson
Riggs
Rivers
Roberts
Roemer
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Rose
Roth
Roukema
Royce
Salmon
Sanford
Sawyer
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer
Schiff
Seastrand
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Shuster
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skeen
Skelton
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Solomon
Sonder
Spence
Spratt
Stearns
Stenholm
Stockman
Stump
Stupak
Talent
Tanner
Tate
Manzullo
Martini
Mascara
McCarthy
McCollum
McCrery
McHale
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McKeon
Meehan
Metcalf
Meyers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Minge
Molinari
Montgomery
Moorhead
Moran

Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield

Abercrombie
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Beilenson
Berman
Blumenauer
Bonior
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Clay
Clayton
Clyburn
Coleman
Collins (IL)
Collins (MI)
Conyers
Coyne
Cummings
DeLauro
Dellums
Diaz-Balart
Dixon
Engel
Eshoo
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Fields (LA)
Filner
Foglietta
Frank (MA)
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gonzalez

Flake
Ford

Wicker
Wilson
Wise
Wolf
Wynn

NAYS—101

Green (TX)
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hastings (FL)
Hilliard
Hinchee
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee
(TX)
Jacobs
Jefferson
Johnson, E. B.
Johnston
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
LaFalce
Lantos
Lewis (GA)
Lofgren
Maloney
Markey
Martinez
Matsui
McDermott
McKinney
McNulty
Meek
Menendez
Millender
McDonald
Miller (CA)
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Nadler

NOT VOTING—5

Gunderson
McDade

□ 1710

Young (AK)
Zeliff
Zimmer

Oberstar
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pastor
Payne (NJ)
Pelosi
Rahall
Rangel
Ros-Lehtinen
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabó
Sanders
Schroeder
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Slaughter
Stark
Stokes
Studds
Tejeda
Thompson
Torres
Towns
Velazquez
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Williams
Woolsey
Yates

Young (FL)

grams for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3517, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

Mr. GOSS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104-731) on the resolution (H. Res. 497) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3517) making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3230, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1997

Mr. GOSS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104-732) on the resolution (H. Res. 498) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3230) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1997 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 1997, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

□ 1715

INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM ACT

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 489 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 489

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2823) to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to support the International Dolphin Conservation Program in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment recommended by the Committee on Resources now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in the Congressional Record

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous matter on the conference report on H.R. 3734.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ARMEY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3603, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

Mr. GOSS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104-730) on the resolution (H. Res. 496) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3603) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies pro-