

our model. There are other good ideas out there. Our bill is called SPICE, the Senior Prescription Insurance Coverage Equity Act. We are not saying this is the last word on how to address this issue, but I would like to see the Senate look at an approach that utilizes marketplace forces, along the lines of what we do in the Federal Employee Health Benefits Plan and one that will not produce a lot of cost shifting on to other groups of vulnerable people.

For example, there is one proposal going around, certainly well-meaning, which has Medicare buying up all the drugs for the Nation's senior citizens. I am very fearful what will happen under that approach is we may control prices for the elderly, but you could have a divorced woman, a 27-year-old, say, African American women in my State or the Presiding Officer's State. She could see her drug bill go through the roof because prices would be controlled in just one segment of the pharmaceutical area, the Medicare area, and the costs would be shifted on to somebody else's back.

I know the Senate has a lot of important business. By the way, I am with Senator MOYNIHAN and Chairman ROTH on this great bill as well. I know they want to go on to that important matter. I intend to keep coming to the floor. Senator SNOWE had to be in Maine today and could not be here. We have already done this together. We urge seniors to send in copies of their prescription drug bills.

We hope they will back the bipartisan Snowe-Wyden bill. Frankly, I would rather hear from them so as to bring this Senate together in a bipartisan way and deal with this issue. Let's not let it become fodder for the 2000 election. Let's make this issue a legacy of this Congress where we really came together to do something important, something that is the wave of the future in American health care, which is to give good preventive approaches, wellness-oriented approaches as part of our American health system.

I thank Chairman ROTH and Senator MOYNIHAN and my friend, Senator AKAKA, for indulging me this morning. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, before the Senator from Oregon leaves, I express my own personal gratitude to him and to Senator SNOWE for bringing this issue in the congenial, collegial way they do. It must be addressed. I feel presumptuous to speak on such matters in the presence of the Presiding Officer, the Senator from Tennessee, but since the advent of sulfa and penicillin, the great medical revolution has been the development of the array of prescription drugs that prevent disease as against cured, in the case of penicillin. We will one day go this way, and we will have Senator WYDEN and Senator SNOWE to thank and the Senator from Tennessee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). The distinguished Senator from Hawaii is recognized.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. AKAKA. Thank you, Mr. President.

SLAVERY IN AN AMERICAN TERRITORY

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise to call attention to a recent announcement by Bill Lann Lee, Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. The Justice Department announced the conviction of three individuals charged with luring women from China into slavery and forced prostitution in the Northern Mariana Islands. The three pled guilty in Federal district court in Saipan.

The defendants pled guilty to extortion, transportation for illegal sexual activity, and conspiracy to violate the right of women to be free from involuntary servitude. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the Justice Department announcement be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. (See Exhibit 1.)

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, regretfully, this is not the first incident of such behavior in the Northern Mariana Islands. As Bill Lann Lee said in announcing the pleas:

We have seen too many cases of modern-day slavery.

Nor is it the first incident of sexual slavery in the Northern Mariana Islands. Indeed, slavery and prostitution are endemic to the islands' economy.

According to the Department of the Interior's latest report on working conditions in the Commonwealth "many workers are virtually prisoners, confined to their barracks during non-working hours." There are documented reports of Chinese female workers becoming pregnant and who are pressured to have abortions.

The grave situation in the Northern Marianas is captured by the headlines in the Department of the Interior's report. Here are a few of them: "Local Control Over Immigration Has Led to an Unhealthy, Pervasive Reliance Upon Indentured Alien Workers," "The CNMI Garment Industry Has Abused Current Trade Privileges to the Detriment of U.S. Workers," "U.S. Companies and U.S. Taxpayers."

Another one: "Worker Exploitation in the Form of Recruitment Fraud," "Payless Paydays & Coerced Abortions, Ineffective Border Control," and "Smuggling of Aliens and Increased Criminal Activity." This is not a pleasant picture, and it only gets worse. In another report earlier this year, an undercover investigative team sponsored by the Global Survival Network detailed the sex trade and slavery in these once idyllic Pacific islands.

According to their report, "Trapped: Human Trafficking for Forced Labor in The Commonwealth of The Northern Mariana Islands":

Many of the Chinese women working in clubs with local clientele, for example, said they had come to the CNMI ostensibly to work as waitresses, unaware that they would have to work in a nightclub and/or be forced into sexual slavery. These women had been trafficked into the CNMI specifically for sex work without their knowledge or consent.

Given this environment, is it any wonder three people have pled guilty to forcing women into slavery and prostitution?

No. The wonder is that more people have not been so found. Hopefully this will change. As the Department of Justice notes, this prosecution was the result of a new effort to increase resources and oversight in the Commonwealth.

Fortunately, some American clothing retailers are beginning to react to sweatshop conditions in the Northern Marianas. Just the other day, five major retailers—Ralph Lauren, Donna Karan, Phillips-Van Heusen, Bryland L.P., and The Dress Barn—agreed to settle a class-action lawsuit about this deplorable working environment. The settlement with these businesses follows a similar settlement agreed to last June with Nordstrom, J. Crew, Cutter & Buck, and Gymboree. Hopefully this marks a trend toward ending indentured servitude in the Commonwealth.

More needs to be done. The central cause of the slavery and prostitution on this American territory is the lack of any controls on immigration.

For my colleagues who may not be familiar with this U.S. territory, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is located 4,000 miles west of Hawaii. In 1975, the people of the CNMI voted for political union with the United States. Today the CNMI is a U.S. territory.

A 1976 covenant enacted by Congress gave U.S. citizenship to residents of the CNMI. However, the covenant exempted the Commonwealth from the Immigration and Nationality Act. As we now know, that omission was a grave error.

I want my colleagues of the Senate to know that the chairman of the Senate Energy Committee, Mr. MURKOWSKI, and I have introduced legislation to correct fundamental immigration problems in the Commonwealth, such as the ones that led to the convictions obtained by the Justice Department. It was only yesterday, that the Energy Committee approved our CNMI reform bill. I hope that the full Senate will act on our legislation soon.

Our bill stands for the simple proposition that America is one country and we must abide by a single, uniform immigration law. Congress must terminate an immigration system that is fundamentally wrong and incorporate the CNMI under Federal immigration law.

Common sense dictates that our country must have a single, national immigration system. If Puerto Rico, or Hawaii, or Oregon, or Washington could write their own immigration laws—and grant work visas to foreigners—the U.S. immigration system would be in chaos. That is exactly what is happening in the CNMI.

Over the past 20 years, the number of citizens in the Commonwealth doubled. During the same period, however, the population of alien workers exploded by 2,000 percent. Today, the CNMI has twice as many indentured laborers as citizens in its work force.

A decade ago, in response to a growing concern about the large number of guest workers employed in the CNMI, the Reagan administration demanded change. Since then, the Bush and Clinton administrations have repeatedly criticized CNMI immigration and demanded reform.

The Commonwealth is simply unable to control its borders. One CNMI official testified that they have “no effective control” over immigration.

The INS reports that the CNMI has no reliable records of aliens entering the Commonwealth, how long they remain, and when, if ever, they depart.

A bipartisan commission labeled the Commonwealth’s immigration system “antithetical to American values.”

It is not just the number of workers that prompt concern; alien workers in the CNMI serve as indentured laborers. In a civilized society, indentured servitude, we believe, is immoral. The United States outlawed indenture over a century ago, but it continues today in the CNMI. The Commonwealth is becoming an international embarrassment for the United States. We have received complaints from the Philippines, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh about immigration abuses and mistreatment of workers. Countries around the world watch—and wait—for Congress to act.

The CNMI system of indentured migrant labor violates basic democratic principles. It is time for Congress to enact CNMI immigration reform.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time and yield the floor.

EXHIBIT No. 1

THREE PLEAD GUILTY TO FORCING WOMEN INTO SLAVERY AND PROSTITUTION IN NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Three individuals who were indicted last November on charges that they lured women from China, held them in slavery and forced them into prostitution pled guilty today in federal district court in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, the Justice Department announced.

Soon Oh Kwon, president of Kwon Enterprises, Inc., which does business in Saipan, pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to violate rights, specifically the right to be free from involuntary servitude. Kwon’s wife, Ying Yu Meng pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to violate federal laws that prohibit involuntary servitude, extortion, and transportation for illegal sexual activity. Kwon’s son, Mo Young Kwon, who is an officer of Kwon Enterprises, also entered a

guilty plea to one count of transportation for illegal sexual activity.

“Sadly, we have seen too many cases of modern day slavery,” said Bill Lann Lee, Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. “Today’s guilty pleas, should put those who exploit workers on notice that the Justice Department will be relentless in bringing them to justice.”

The charges arose out of allegations that the three lured women from China to the CNMI and then held them in slavery and forced them to work as prostitutes in K’s Hideaway Karaoke, a bar owned by Kwon Enterprises. “This kind of abuse of guest workers is intolerable” said Frederick A. Black, U.S. Attorney for the District of the Northern Mariana Islands. “No matter where someone is from, once they come to the United States, they should be free from slavery.” As part of his guilty plea filed with the court, Soon Oh Kwon admitted that, in 1996 and 1997, Kwon Enterprises, in collaboration with Kwon’s mother-in-law, recruited and brought women from China to Saipan to work at the karaoke club, where they were forced to have sex with customers. The women were not allowed to stop working for Kwon Enterprises until they had paid debts owed to Kwon and his family for bringing them to Saipan. In order to discourage the women from leaving without permission, the women were subjected to mental and physical coercion, which included threats to their lives, and their families’ reputations in China. Soon Oh Kwon also admitted to brandishing a pistol at some of the women. Kwon and his wife also admitted that they threatened the women in order to prevent them from making complaints to the CNMI Department of Labor and Immigration.

Kwon’s wife admitted that she had general oversight responsibility for the women who were employed by Kwon Enterprises and made sure that they did not leave without permission by intimidating and instilling fear in them. Kwon’s son admitted that he made arrangements with customers of the karaoke club to have sex with the women, collected the money, and directed the women to leave with the customers in order to engage in illegal sexual activity.

Sentencing is set before Judge Alex R. Munson on January 11, 2000. Soon Oh Kwon is facing a maximum prison term of ten years; Ying Yu Meng, a maximum prison term of five years; and Mo Young Kwon, a maximum prison term of ten years.

The prosecution was the result of a cooperative investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation as part of the Clinton Administration’s CNMI Initiative on Labor, Immigration and Law Enforcement, a broad based multi-agency initiative designed to increase resources and oversight in the CNMI, a U.S. Commonwealth located in Micronesia.

RECOGNITION OF THE “WAKE UP. GET REAL.” PROGRAM

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, earlier this week, I had the pleasure of visiting twice with students, educators, and parents from the Edmonds School District. During that visit, I heard more about a community effort that demonstrates the value of local ideas and local innovation. The program is titled, Wake Up. Get Real. and is the product of Edmonds-Woodway High School students who are taking leadership roles in eliminating substance abuse and violence in their schools.

Some of those students are here this week in Washington, DC, and were able

to join me on one of my regular radio shows where they shared their creative work with members of the media from across Washington State. While they are in town, I would like to take this opportunity to present them with one of my “Innovation in Education” Awards.

Wake Up. Get Real.’s strength lies in the grassroots, community-oriented nature of its effort, led by students, to reduce the violence and substance use that can tarnish a school’s learning environment. The program is young, as it was only created this past spring, at the behest of students concerned about the perception of unsafe schools and an increasingly negative public perception of teens.

Rather than accept such a situation, the students embarked on a crusade that upholds respect, dignity, and integrity while teaching their peers that there are a vast number of students who choose not to participate in substance abuse or in violent activity. Additionally, the students are teaching educators about what is causing problems in their school and helping them to eliminate alcohol and drug use and violence in their classrooms.

All told, Wake Up. Get Real. generates increased community awareness; provides intervention and prevention from dangerous behavior at all grade levels (K-12); promotes increased educator focus on health as a factor in student learning; provides education materials for adults and students; and offers efficient access to referral resources.

For a program with such young roots, one would expect that it would still be in its infant stages. Rather, Wake Up. Get Real. already touts widespread community support from the school district, local health care providers, area law enforcement, and even the Drug Enforcement Administration. Community support has been so strong that public service announcements are currently being run on various cable channels to heighten local awareness of this important campaign.

When I began my Innovation in Education award program, my goal was to highlight the importance of local control in education. I couldn’t ask for a better example than the students who lead Wake Up. Get Real. They have rallied the support of the community behind them and I commend them for their work in changing their schools for the better.

JACOB WETTERLING FOUNDATION

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I rise today in to recognize 10th anniversary of the disappearance of one of Minnesota’s finest young men, Jacob Wetterling.

Jacob’s abduction at gun point 10 years ago today from St. Joseph, Minnesota, has profoundly affected the lives of his family, but also the lives of the people of Minnesota and the entire United States. Jacob’s family has endured a significant loss and has found