

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

REPORT ON THE KOREAN INTERN EXCHANGE PROGRAM

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 2000

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to call to the attention of our colleagues this report written by Jacqueline Hui, an intern who participated in our U.S. Congress Korean National Assembly Student Intern Exchange Program which I instituted seventeen years ago.

Jacqueline is a student at Brown University, majoring in Political Science and Economics. She was an intern in my Washington office this past summer and in my district office in 1999. She did an outstanding job. I am very proud of her, and I am happy that she was able to participate in our Korean Exchange Program. Her report underscores the importance of such exchange programs, and the valuable experiences which our students receive:

SUMMARY OF THE U.S. CONGRESS—REPUBLIC OF KOREA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

By Jacqueline Hui

One of the most important goals of our exchange program is to foster greater understanding between Korea and the United States. Although I can not speak on behalf of the Korean students, I believe that all of us American students have gained a greater understanding of Korean politics and culture through the exchange.

The time spent abroad in Korea was very well-organized and very intense. If there is any way one could experience almost every aspect of Korea in two weeks, I did. Everyday the schedule was packed from eight o'clock in the morning until ten o'clock in the evening. When I finally returned home, I would be completely exhausted and fall asleep until it was time to wake up again for another grueling day.

On the first day, I learned about the Korean language at the Seoul National University and viewed a traditional music performance. At the performance, I realized that the Korean culture was uniquely different from Asian cultures, my being Chinese.

On the other days, we went to the National Folk Museum, the Changdok Palace, visited the National Assembly, visited Samsung Electronics, did some pottery, went to a traditional Korean Spa, went to the De-Militarized Zone (Panmunjom), participated in a Taekwondo workshop, spent a day interning in the National Assembly, and did a home-stay to experience Korean life.

The single day interning in the National Assembly was insufficient to really see Korean politics. The most intense experience was definitely visiting the De-Militarized Zone. The particular area clearly depicts the tensions between North and South. Furthermore, the U.S. presence in the area also demonstrates and creates tension between the Koreans and Americans. Overall, I attended many meetings that explained different sides of issues concerning Koreans and in the end, I had a much clearer view of Korea.

Near the end of the stay, we went to Kyongju, which was the capital of the Shilla

dynasty. The place is full of history and culture. There was also the Turtle Tomb—an underwater tomb that was built by and for a king, used to protect Korea from being attacked by Japan. I also saw Buddhist temples and Confucian schools—both of which have greatly influenced the ideology and culture of Korea.

At the end of the trip, we went to Cheju Island, a resort island south of Korea. The island was beautiful. We took a boat ride to see the surrounding islands and visited the one waterfall on the island. The previous two weeks in Korea had been hectic. The time spent in Cheju was relaxing and allowed us to reflect on our stay.

When we went back to San Francisco, we had a chance to meet up with the Korean students and shared our experiences with each other. Perhaps it might have been more interesting if we had met back in Korea instead.

Overall, the Koreans showed great hospitality in all respects. Everywhere we went we were treated very well. We Americans tend to bask in our superiority over other nations. Interestingly enough, I found Korea to be highly technologically advanced. Americans should remember that other nations do have the capacity to surpass us, at least in certain respects.

I am grateful for this opportunity to experience the Korean culture first hand. The program was very successful—in my eyes—in fostering understanding between two cultures. I hope that future exchange students will continue to have the opportunity to live and learn Korean culture as I did.

THE OFFENDER REENTRY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY ACT OF 2000 OCTOBER 26, 2000

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 2000

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, today in communities all around this country, prisoners are being released back into their communities without job skills, substance abuse or mental health services, or assistance in obtaining housing and employment. In fact, the Department of Justice reports that historically, two thirds of released prisoners are rearrested for new crimes within three years.

During this year alone, a record number of over 585,000 inmates will be released from jail or prison and return to local communities. A safety threat is posed by this volume of returns and has been worsened by a declining ability by states and communities to supervise the returning offenders. This is partly due to policy shifts toward more determinate sentencing, which allow for the offenders to serve longer sentences than in the past, yet without supervisory conditions upon release. Thirteen states have abolished parole systems, thereby providing very little, if any, supervision of released inmates.

Mr. Speaker, today I have introduced "The Offender Reentry and Community Safety Act

of 2000." This legislation will help ensure that released offenders enter into a lawful, productive life when they return to their communities. Under this legislation, programs will be created to assist certain offenders who have served their prison sentences, but who pose the greatest risk to the community. This is because they lack the skills necessary to successfully reintegrate into society, such as finding housing and employment, in addition to managing substance abuse, medical and mental health problems.

These programs will use technology and traditional methods of structured supervision and services, along with a system of immediate sanctions for violations of an offender's plan. It is my belief that these programs will give the necessary tools to the returning offenders so that they can help themselves lead lawful and productive lives.

I want to thank the Attorney General and the Department of Justice for the assistance and hard work in this area. I know this is a priority of the Attorney General, and I look forward to working with her to help process this legislation next Congress. I am also submitting for the RECORD a section-by-section analysis that the Department of Justice has prepared on this legislation.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Introduction

This legislative proposal is divided into two titles: title I would create demonstration reentry programs for federal offenders, and title II would establish reentry programs for state and local prisoners. The programs are designed to assist high-risk, high-need offenders who have served their prison sentences, but who pose the greatest risk of re-offending upon release because they lack the education, job skills, stable family or living arrangements, and the substance abuse treatment and other mental and medical health services they need to successfully reintegrate into society. Both titles include provisions requiring that the funded programs be rigorously evaluated and the results widely disseminated, so that reentry programs can be modified as needed, to ensure that recidivism is reduced and public safety enhanced.

The Reentry Problem. American crime policies over the past two decades have resulted in record numbers of offenders being incarcerated. Some 1.25 million offenders are now living in prisons, and another 600,000 offenders are incarcerated in local jails. Although many offenders are serving longer sentences than they would have a decade ago, once they complete their terms, they return to the community. A record number of approximately 585,400 inmates will return to communities this year. Historically, two-thirds of returning prisoners have been rearrested for new crimes within three years.

The safety threat posed by this volume of returns has been exacerbated by reductions in the abilities of states and communities to supervise returning offenders. Parole systems have been abolished in thirteen states. Moreover, policy shifts toward more determinate sentencing have reduced the authority to impose supervisory conditions upon existing offenders. Consequently, an estimated 100,000 inmates will receive no supervision in the community. State systems have

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