

Member MATSUI. I urge my colleagues to co-sponsor this measure.

PURSUE A MULTI NATIONAL
STRATEGY TO DISARM IRAQ

HON. RICK BOUCHER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2003

Mr. BOUCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge in the strongest terms that the administration pursue a multi national strategy as it takes the necessary steps to disarm Iraq.

I share the administration's view that Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction must be removed. In his present armed condition, he poses a significant threat to our Nation and to all peace loving nations around the world. I have no doubt that he possesses highly dangerous weapons, and based upon his past conduct, I also harbor no doubt that he would use those weapons against us or against our allied nations whenever he believes that doing so serves his interests.

It is clear that Saddam Hussein must be disarmed.

However, it is essential that the disarmament take place in the proper manner. The best opportunity for obtaining the disarmament of Iraq without the necessity of armed conflict lies in the assemblage of a large group of nations who collectively will insist that the disarmament occur. If, under the auspices of the United Nations, most nations of the world are facing Saddam Hussein united in the determination to remove his arms peacefully if possible but by force if necessary, the best chance is achieved for a peaceful disarmament to occur.

Then, if conflict is necessary, a broad assemblage of nations will share responsibility for taking the necessary steps. Moreover, that same large assembly of nations with United Nations participation, can then share both the cost and the responsibility for the administration and reconstruction of post-war Iraq.

Ten years ago, under a United Nations resolution, Iraq was expelled from Kuwait. The diplomatic offices of this nation were put to good use in persuading our allies to participate with us in the exercise.

That same course must be followed again, and I urge the administration in the strongest possible terms to take the time which is necessary to assure that broad international support underlies our efforts to ensure our security and the security of other nations through the disarmament of Iraq.

TRIBUTE TO JACLYN SOBOCIENSKI

HON. DAVID R. OBEY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2003

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the outstanding efforts made by Ms. Jaclyn Sobocienski who is leaving the House Appropriations Committee this week.

Jaclyn is a native of New York. She is a Magna Cum Laude graduate of Siena College, possessing a Bachelor of Arts degree in polit-

ical science and a Bachelor of Science degree in finance. That alone made her a natural for the Appropriations Committee. She served as an intern in the New York State Assembly, and also worked for the New York Mets during summers between school years. On those few occasions where we gave her some time off, Jaclyn was active in dance, Italian language study, and travel.

She has been an administrative aide to the minority staff of the House Appropriations Committee since October 5, 2001. Just after she joined the Committee, the anthrax incident in the Longworth House Office Building occurred. Jaclyn not only was instrumental in getting our temporary alternate office up and running for the period that our Longworth office was closed, but also she reacted to the stress in a very professional and helpful manner that allowed the Members and the staff to get on with conducting the nation's business.

Jaclyn put in many long evenings in behalf of the Members of the Appropriations Committee, with direct support to the Democratic professional staff of the Committee. She tirelessly served as the liaison between the Committee and all Democratic House offices, the press, and the public. She succeeded in every task she was given.

I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank her for her outstanding efforts to me and to the Committee, and to wish her well in her new career. We will miss her, and wish her nothing but success and happiness.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FAMILY
TIME FLEXIBILITY ACT

HON. JUDY BIGGERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2003

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce The Family Time Flexibility Act, which allows employers to offer American workers the option of voluntarily taking compensatory time off in lieu of receiving overtime pay. I am pleased that 67 of my colleagues have joined me as original cosponsors of this pro-family, pro-worker, pro-women legislation.

One would think that providing working men and women with more control over their work schedules is a "no brainer", but private sector employees and employers alike are bound by the Fair Labor Standards Act of FLSA, which does not permit such flexibility. I think it's fair to say that this law, enacted during the depression, was designed for a very different workforce with very different needs.

Over the past 60-plus years, the American workplace has undergone a dramatic change in composition, character, and demands. What once was a static, agriculture- and manufacturing-based economy with a primarily male workforce has evolved into a fast-paced working environment based on global services and high technology with nearly equal numbers of women and men in the workforce.

Workers today, more than ever before, face a difficult dilemma: how to balance the demands of a job while having adequate time for family, friends and outside commitments. This situation has become even more pronounced because many American families now rely on two incomes to survive. And while this conflict weighs most heavily on women, all workers—

regardless of gender—experience conflict between work and family, between watching their child's baseball game or going through that stack of papers on their desk.

The Family Time Flexibility Act will help to ease these pressures by providing the flexibility that working parents need to spend quality time with their families. This legislation amends the FLSA to allow private sector employees to access something that their colleagues working in federal, state and local governments have had for many years—the option of choosing either cash wages or paid time off as compensation for working overtime hours.

Before I go any further, I want to stress that nothing in this legislation would require employees to take comp time instead of overtime pay. Nor could employers force employees to take comp time. Rather they now can be given the choice of compensatory time or overtime. This bill does not relieve employers of any obligation to pay overtime.

As a matter of fact, my bill contains explicit penalties if an employer "directly or indirectly intimidates, threatens or coerces" an employee into taking comp time in lieu of overtime, and the penalties are more severe than under current law. Employers who engage in such behavior will be liable for double damages plus attorney's fees and costs. In addition, the other remedies included under the FLSA—including civil and criminal penalties and injunctive relief—still will apply. The employee may respond through a private right of action, or the Labor Department may sue on behalf of the employee. I also want to stress that this bill in no way affects or changes the standard 40-hour workweek.

Here's how the bill works. If the employer and the employee agree—or in union shops, the union and the employer agree through their collective bargaining agreement—to allow the employee to start accruing overtime hours as compensatory or family time, the employee may bank overtime hours and use them at a later time as paid time off.

As is currently the case with overtime pay, comp time hours would accrue at a rate of one and one-half hours of comp time for each hour of overtime worked. Employees could accrue up to 160 hours of comp time within a 12-month period.

This legislation contains numerous safeguards to protect employees. Let me reiterate that employers are explicitly prohibited, under threat of civil and criminal penalties, from attempting to directly or indirectly intimidate, threaten, or coerce any employee to take comp-time instead of cash pay as pay for overtime.

In addition, employers must obtain prior written approval from each employee who chooses comp-time in lieu of cash pay for overtime. And employees can withdraw their request to receive comp-time and go back to receiving cash pay at any time.

The legislation requires an employer to annually pay cash wages for any unused comp time accrued by the employee. Employees may withdraw from a comp time agreement at any time and request a cash-out of any or all of his or her accrued, unused comp time. The employer has 30 days in which to comply with the request. The legislation also requires an employer to provide the employee with at least 30 days notice prior to cashing out any accrued time in excess of 80 hours or prior to discontinuing a policy of offering comp time.