

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

S. 2634, THE GARRETT LEE SMITH
ACT

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 28, 2004

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring attention to a tragic issue that faces our country today: youth suicide. On September 9th, the House of Representatives passed, with my full support, S. 2634, the Garrett Lee Smith Act. The Act was named in honor of Senator GORDON SMITH's son who committed suicide last year. This legislation establishes grants for suicide prevention efforts directed at young people, authorizes the creation of a technical assistance center to help local and state providers of suicide prevention programs; and establishes a grant program for suicide prevention programs on college campuses. I am proud to support for this bill and confident that it will make a difference in the lives of countless young people in south central Wisconsin and across our Nation.

We must do all we can to nurture and support our Nation's greatest asset—our children. Suicide is currently the third leading cause of death among teenagers in the United States. Too many young people think they are facing lives that lack hope and promise. We must do everything we can to help our youth through difficult times and teach them that life is indeed worth living. The Garrett Lee Smith Act will go a long way to help in that effort.

Youth suicide is at epidemic proportions. All youth are at risk. But I want to speak about a group of youth who are sometimes invisible, ignored, or worse—condemned for simply being who they are. I am talking about America's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth.

Allow me to tell you a true story. When the people of Wisconsin first elected me to Congress, I received a letter from an 18 year-old from a small town in southern Illinois—population forty-four hundred. This young man had a passion for public service. He wrote, "I was president of my graduating class, treasurer of the student council, and senior board member on a local community service youth group . . ." Here was a young man who cared about others, and who was already a valuable, productive member of his community. But then I read the next lines of his letter, and was devastated. It read, "I was following my dreams, until I realized that I am gay. At that point, I gave up."

Luckily, this story has a happy ending. Surfing the internet one day, this young man read an article about my being the first out lesbian elected to Congress. Thankfully he realized that he could be honest about himself as an openly gay man and still devote his life to public service. But, he went on in his letter to explain the real reason he was writing me. He told me that by reading about my story, "You not only saved my hopes and dreams, you saved my life. I have never told anyone this.

I was on the edge before I read that article. The pressures had built up in me to the point of suicide. I was going to give up, not only on my hopes and dreams, but on my life altogether." The pressures he was talking about were not only the difficulties that all American youth face today, but the steady drip, drip, drip of intolerance and discrimination he experienced as he tried to live his life honestly as a gay man.

That young man needed and did not have access to adequate suicide prevention services. According to the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth are four times more likely to report attempting suicide than their heterosexual peers. Along with the growing acceptance of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Americans, the Garrett Lee Smith Act will help ensure that all young people, including our LGBT youth, have access to high quality and effective suicide prevention services.

None of America's youth should consider suicide as an option to end pain in their lives. I am thankful for the passage of the Garrett Lee Smith Act, and am committed to doing all I can to combating youth suicide.

THANKING MS. MEMORY SHERARD
FOR HER SERVICE TO THE HOUSE

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 28, 2004

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of her retirement on September 30, 2004, we rise to thank Ms. Memory Sherard for outstanding service to the U.S. House of Representatives. For the past 28 years, Memory has served this great institution as a valuable employee of House Information Resources (HIR) within the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

While at HIR, Memory held many positions of increasing responsibility, requiring her to learn and support new and evolving computer technologies. Memory began her career in 1976 as a Production Control Specialist. She then progressed to Programmer Trainee, Coordinator for the Member Information Network (MIN) Support Team, and Messaging Systems Specialist.

As the House began to use personal computers, Memory supported the House community explaining the benefits of electronic mail and the Internet, and how these could be beneficial tools for Member and Committee offices. As technology evolved, so did Memory, mastering and supporting more than six different e-mail systems. Memory helped replace the Federal Funding Report (FFR) in 1981, now in its 24th year as Web based service.

Since 1993, Memory has been an invaluable member of HIR's Information Management directorate where she had primary re-

sponsibility for Customer Support for the mission critical E-mail, Enterprise Fax, and BlackBerry services. Memory has displayed great passion for her work and has always kept customer satisfaction as her highest priority.

On behalf of the entire House community, we extend congratulations to Memory for her many years of dedication and outstanding contributions to the U.S. House of Representatives. We wish Memory many wonderful years in fulfilling her retirement dreams.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1308,
WORKING FAMILIES TAX RELIEF
ACT OF 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 23, 2004

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the conference report for H.R. 1308, the Working Families Tax Relief Act. While I would have preferred a revenue neutral version of this bill that did not add to the national debt, this legislation does deliver continued tax relief for working families at a time when assistance is greatly needed.

Most importantly, this bill extends, through 2010, three family-friendly tax cuts scheduled to expire at the end of the year. These policies include continuation of the expanded 10 percent tax bracket, extension of marriage penalty relief, and expansion of the child tax credit. Without Congressional action, every American subject to the income tax, especially families with children, would face higher taxes next year. A tax increase is the last thing that my constituents need during these difficult economic times as Rhode Island's unemployment rate continues to hover above the national average.

This bill finally allows members of the military to use combat pay to qualify for the child tax credit. I have been pushing for this long overdue provision for more than a year, and I am pleased that Rhode Island servicemembers now will receive the credit they deserve while they risk their lives for us every day.

In addition, H.R. 1308 extends Alternative Minimum Tax relief, continues tax credits for renewable energy, and renews the Research and Development Tax Credit. These extenders serve a wide range of causes including promoting economic development and reducing our dependence on foreign oil.

The bill is far from perfect. Much of the cost of this legislation comes from the expansion of the child tax credit to those who earn more than \$200,000 per year. However, the 9.2 million children in families earning under \$11,000 will still not receive the \$1,000 child tax credit that almost every other wealthier family will receive. There is still time to include these families, and I urge my colleagues to support tax relief for all Americans.

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