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Republicans back off teen mothers

WASHINGTON (AP) — In another shift away from their original "tough-love" welfare overhaul, House Republicans on Monday night backed off plans to ban unmarried teen-age mothers from the public assistance rolls for life.

Under pressure from Republican moderates and some GOP governors, House leaders agreed to drop the lifetime ban on cash welfare to anyone who gives birth out-of-wedlock before their 18th birthday.

"Just because a woman made a mistake when she was young doesn't mean she and the child should be penalized for life," Rep. Nancy Johnson, R-Conn., said after the compromise was fleshed out in a meeting of Republican members of the House Ways and Means Committee.

States, however, still would be allowed to impose such a ban if they choose under the

GOP plan.

The ban was part of the Republican blueprint to radically reform the nation's welfare system. Monday's decision marks the second significant rejection by House leaders of key elements of the original welfare overhaul. On Friday, lawmakers decided to preserve food stamps, and not return the \$27 billion program to the states in a block grant, as first proposed.

The biggest piece of the reform legislation goes before the House Ways and Means Committee this week.

Johnson said it will be rewritten to allow states the right to decide whether to give unmarried teen-age mothers — and their families — cash benefits after they turn 18.

Until their 18th birthday, however, these mothers would still be denied cash assistance, although they and their children

would be allowed to receive food stamps and Medicaid.

The legislation will continue to include a five-year limit on cash benefits for families on welfare, and work requirements for recipients.

Conservative Republicans, who believe welfare subsidizes and encourages the rising rate of out-of-wedlock births, had proposed the ban on cash benefits to teen-age mothers.

But "a lot of people had problems" with the lifetime ban, said Rep. John Ensign, R-Nev. "This was a compromise."

Rep. Tim Hutchinson, R-Ark., said changing the bill to allow women to receive welfare after their 18th birthday "undermines the entire premise of removing the illegitimacy subsidy. It really destroys the whole premise (of the measure)."

Professor believes award recognizes group efforts

Jamie Pope

For the Oregon Daily Emerald

University professor Paul Slovic received the Outstanding Contribution Award by the Oregon Academy of Science Feb. 23 for his work in the field of decision and risk analysis.

Slovic is the president of Decision Research, which is located in Eugene. Decision Research is made up of a group of social scientists whose main

focus of research is human behavior.

Slovic said he views his most recent award as more than just an individual effort.

"It was a team effort," he said. "This award is in recognition of the various colleagues that I have worked with in the last 30 years."

Although Slovic said he thinks the OAS award was not based on individual effort, he

said he appreciated being selected as an honoree by the OAS.

Another reason why Slovic said he views the OAS award as a team effort is because he works very closely with his colleagues.

"Many of the papers that I have worked on have been co-authored by several other people," he said.

Slovic, who has been a faculty member at the University since 1986, co-founded Decision Research in 1976.

"We are a group of social scientists," Slovic said of his co-workers. "Some of us are sociologists, economists and psychologists."

Slovic has been the recipient of several other awards for the work in his field, including the John Guggenheim Fellowship in 1986-87, the Distinguished Contribution Award in 1991 and the Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award in 1993.

BOOK

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who believe in science have had personal experiences that could be called "mystical," or at least life events that cannot be explained away with cold logic alone. He said he believes that people are ready to "come out of the closet" and freely discuss the totality of their experiences without limiting themselves to the rational.

Goswami takes Descartes' famous saying that "I think therefore I am" to "I choose therefore I am," and points out that nearly all decisions that we make in our day-to-day life are due to conditioned responses given certain ideas of what is good/bad, and acceptable/unacceptable.

Goswami argues that as people become more aware of the creative possibilities, one

can begin to see how creativity and "connectedness" of all things can be witnessed in trees, rivers, books and art.

He said humans are shaped by the creative principle as well as the more recognizable concepts of nature and nurture, which gives human beings access to the timeless, boundless realm of "consciousness," which Goswami explains is not the Freudian idea of conscious and unconscious mind that are so prevalent in everyday use.

Goswami proposes in his book that by grounding all things in matter and ideas within "consciousness" — a place that is not a place — a formless realm where matter and ideas are encompassed, but being in potential, has yet to manifest.

Within this unitary approach, and with individuals choosing from creative choice instead of familiarity of known consequences,

"consciousness," with its infinite possibilities is just waiting to be chosen by humanity.

In an attempt to further convey Goswami's term "Consciousness," a passage from Eugene O'Neil's *Long Day's Journey into Night* perhaps explains it best.

"When I was on the Squarehead square rigger bound for Buenos Aires. Full moon in the Trades. The old hooker driving 14 knots. I lay on the bowsprit, facing astern, with the water foaming into spume under me. I became drunk with the beauty and singing rhythm of it and for a moment I lost myself..."

This spring, Goswami will be teaching Physicist's View of Nature, a 300-level course open to juniors and seniors that discusses his theories in *The Self Aware Universe* in more depth.

The paperback version is due in March.

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