

Packwood Pushes For Approval Of GATT

Sen. Bob Packwood, R-Ore. joined in a press conference last week with Vice President Al Gore, Sen. Daniel Moynihan, D-N.Y., several congressmen and members of the business community to push for immediate congressional approval of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

"After eight years of difficult negotiation, the Uruguay Round Agreement, which was negotiated by presidents Reagan and Bush and completed by president Clinton, is just

two weeks away from being approved by the U.S. Congress," Packwood said.

"The agreement cuts global tariffs by one third, tackles foreign agriculture subsidies that have hurt our farm exports for decades, provides greater protection for patents, copyrights and trademarks of U.S. entrepreneurs so they no longer will be ripped off by foreign competitors, and opens new markets for U.S. banks, insurance companies, engineers and accountants which export

over \$140 billion annually.

"Simply stated, this agreement is good for the United States, and is good for Oregon. Also, for those who argue that the United States is giving away its sovereignty, there is nothing in this agreement that takes away our sovereignty. If worse comes to worse, on six months notice we can get out of the World Trade Organization. So I hope that argument will be put to rest, and I am going to do everything I can to see that GATT is passed at the end of this month.

"Putting Kids First"

By KEVIN W. CONCANNON

New state laws and increased productivity have dramatically increased child support collections in Oregon. Legislators will consider new proposals to strengthen state enforcement.

The poorest people in America are children and single-parent families, their poverty often worsened by the fact that the absent parent is not providing child support.

More than \$580 million in court-ordered support is owed Oregon children. One begins to understand the challenge when it's understood that many of these parents never married and, among children born to single parents, fewer than 15 percent receive child support from the absent parent.

The lack of financial support is often mirrored by an absence of personal, social and emotional support, as well, which are vital to the healthy development of children.

Although Congress this year failed to enact welfare reform, which included stepped-up child support enforcement, Oregonians can be assured that support orders here are

being enforced as never before. Even tougher laws will be proposed to legislators.

Two new Oregon laws gave us powerful enforcement tools:

An occupational licensing law that permits the state to revoke licenses of people in selected state-licensed jobs if they are more than \$2,500 in arrears. Already, 89 Oregonians (who collectively owe \$880,000) have agreed to begin payments.

A new employee reporting law, requiring selected employers to report new hires within 14 days, resulted in collections of \$1.7 million in nine months. In the past, absent parents would move from job to job, evading child support wage attachments.

These new laws - we will ask them to be expanded to all occupations - are bolstering vigorous efforts that more than doubled collections over a five-year period.

Besides expanding Oregon's occupational laws, lawmakers are being asked to merge the two state child-support enforcement agencies - they are in the Adult and Family Services Division and Department of Justice - and to add employees.

The idea of adding employees

surprises some people, but they are even more surprised by the payoff: For every \$1 spent to enforce child-support orders, \$2.36 is returned to the state treasury. We estimate that this proposal would yield \$33.3 million in additional support for children - beyond personnel costs - while also returning \$4.5 million to the state treasury.

People often ask us about the Maine experiment in revoking drivers' licenses for nonpayment. We are watching it closely, although the number of revoked licenses is still small. Maine officials say they will also answer the question of whether the law results in more unlicensed and uninsured motorists.

Whatever the means of collection, the message must be this: If you owe support, you owe it both to the child who is your responsibility and to the taxpayer who otherwise might support your child through public assistance.

By doing so, Oregonians will be authentically "Putting Kids First" and making individual investments that will pay dividends for decades.

Kevin W. Concannon is director of the Oregon Department of Human Resources, the state's health and human services agency.

NOVEMBER IS ADOPTION MONTH

Adoption agencies are celebrating National Adoption Month in November with special activities to bring attention to the need for permanent homes for over half a million children nationally.

Give Us This Day, Inc. of Portland and Newberg is one of the agencies in Oregon certified

to place children in adoptive homes. It is the only African-American adoption service in Oregon and one of only 10 in the nation certified to place African-American children.

Churches and businesses are being asked to support the effort. There are hundreds of children in Oregon

who do not have parents or whose parents are unable to care for their children.

Give Us This Day has proven that youth can be stabilized and helped with supportive family services. The organization needs resources to increase its capacity to help youth.

Volunteers Needed As Senior Companions

If you are 60 or older, on limited income (\$767 or less) and would benefit from a meaningful experience, consider the Senior Companion Program.

Senior Companions are matched with at-risk adults in Multnomah County private homes where they may be providing home care after a hospital stay, monitoring activities of daily living on behalf of their clients or provide information and referral.

The rewards are numerous and include up to a \$200 tax-free allowance, daily meal, transportation costs, paid time off and sick leave.

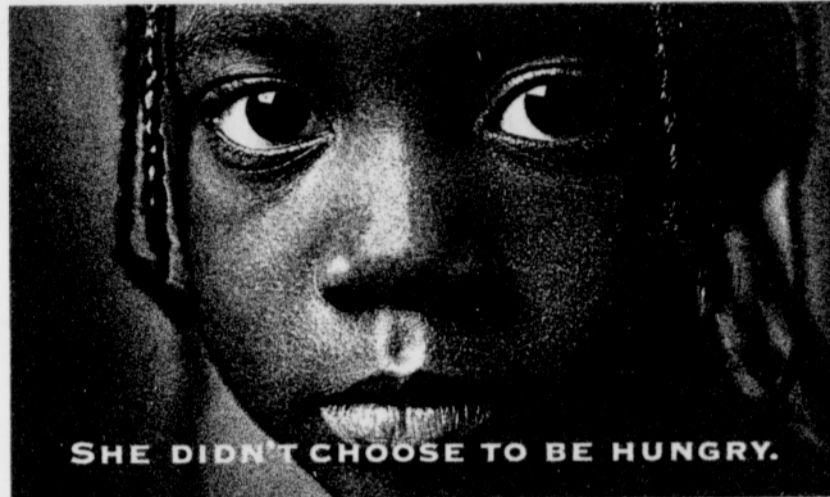
If you or someone you know is interested in devoting 20 hours per week in helping others, call Metropolitan Family Service, a non-profit, equal opportunity employer at 249-8215 and learn more about the Senior Companion Program or about other programs of the agency.

Southeast Precinct Command Change

Mariane Heisler, currently the Captain in charge of the Family Services Division, will be promoted to Commander, and will transfer to the Bureau's Southeast Precinct on Thursday November 17th.

David Butzer, who has been the Precinct Commander since July of 1992, will take over command of the Family Service Division.

There will be a promotion ceremony at 10:30 am Thursday on the 14th floor of the Justice Center.



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