

## Suspensions

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drawn into the criminal justice system — where, again, the families are not listened to, but rather disrespected and shamed.

As it happens, federal officials on Tuesday released more statistics from the data they have been gathering for years explicitly linking a student's race to suspensions, expulsions, and the criminal justice system.

But the question remains, given added urgency for families like the Tarvers: How to dismantle the school to prison pipeline — for good?

### 'Debunking,' Denial

Over the generations, finding a way to turn around zero-tolerance school discipline policies and other factors that push Black kids out of schools and into the law enforcement system has proven a tough nut to crack.

Experts say that's because each student's case is personal and schools won't always release information about their disciplinary patterns.

Another stumbling block is denial, includ-

ing the American Psychological Association's 2006 report "debunking" the link between school discipline and the eventual incarceration of students.

Meanwhile, the Obama Administration's 2011 Positive School Discipline initiative was announced last July after one of the largest studies of its kind in U.S. history showed 60 percent of nearly a million Texas school kids were suspended or expelled over a period of six years — including 83 percent of Black male students (compared to 59 percent of white male students) and 70 percent of Black female students (compared to 37 percent of white female students).

"Only 3 percent of the disciplinary actions were for conduct for which state law mandates suspensions and expulsions; the remainder of disciplinary actions was made at the discretion of school officials, primarily in response to violations of local schools' conduct codes," the study said.

Overall, virtually every study reviewed by *The Skanner News* for this series indicated

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## Norm

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much to the disappointment of lawmakers on the spending panel, who had controlled earmarks and awarded themselves an out-sized share.

Dicks earned a reputation as an inside

player, popular with Democrats and Republicans alike on the clubby panel.

Dicks said he's particularly proud of the work he's done to protect the waters of Puget Sound and Hood Canal and help restore the downtowns of Tacoma and Bremerton, the main cities in his district. And he said his most recent term has been very productive.

"We had a great year in 2011, with winning the tanker competition," Dicks said of the U.S. Air Force decision last year to have Boeing build its new fleet of aerial refueling tankers.

The \$35 billion contract was a big plus for the Seattle-area economy.

He was known not only for looking after his district's interests, but also for using his clout to benefit the rest of Washington state. Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn said Dicks was "an invaluable ally to Seattle, and he

**'I have rarely had the chance to work with someone of his decency, strong work ethic, jovial character, and honesty'**

--Rep. Harold Rogers, R-Kentucky

"Norm has never hesitated to work together

## Banks

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"We are so pleased that there is finally a regulator, the CFPB, whose primary responsibility and commitment is to ensuring that reasonable rules of the road are in place to reform harmful and reckless financial practices" said Borne. "Today's typical bank overdraft practices remain in dire need of that reform."

Sarah Ludwig, executive director of the New-York based Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project, drew a connection between costly overdraft fees and the emergence of bank payday loans. As lenders sat nearby, Ms. Ludwig presented a letter with signatures from more than 250 national, state and local organizations from across the country calling for immediate federal action to stop bank payday loans.

The list of supporters included representatives of religious, civil rights, labor, higher education, fair housing, consumers and community activists. Together, these organizations warned against the looming prospect of overdraft fees worsening con-

sumer financial circumstances once bank payday loans are made. The letter and its full list of signers is available at: <http://rsp-nsb.li/vdfUSO>

In part the letter advised, "Ultimately, payday loans erode the assets of bank cus-

**Drawing a connection between costly overdraft fees and the emergence of bank payday loans**

tomers and, rather than promote savings, make checking accounts unsafe for many customers. They lead to uncollected debt, bank account closures, and greater numbers of unbanked Americans. All of these outcomes are inconsistent with consumer protection and harm the safety and soundness of financial institutions."

The letter was also mailed to three other

## Cancer, No Insurance



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Michael Wilson, the News editor of *The Pointer*, the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point student newspaper talks with renowned journalist Amy Goodman, host of "Democracy Now!" before the Physicians for a National Healthcare Program Western Washington Chapter's 7th Annual Public Meeting March 3rd at Kane Hall on the University of Washington campus. Michael who has cancer and no insurance spoke with Ms. Goodman before her keynote address about, "What needs to be done now for health and social justice."

has left his mark across our state."

Dicks' 6th Congressional District included many blue-collar towns across Puget Sound, west of Seattle, and stretched to the Pacific Ocean. It did not significantly change after last year's redistricting process, and Dicks was expected to be easily re-elected this year.

His retirement could provide an opening for Republicans, who might have a chance in a district they haven't seriously contested for in years.

"I think it's a seat that the Democrats ought to retain. I think we're going to have to put forward a strong and credible replacement. Whoever that is, is going to have big shoes to fill," Kaushik said.

Dicks was a guard and linebacker at the University of Washington, playing on a Rose Bowl team in 1961. He graduated with a degree in political science in 1963, then got a law degree from UW in 1968.

Before being elected to the House, Dicks served for eight years on Magnuson's staff.

"Maggie was the lion of the Senate, and Norm became the lion of the House. He

fought tirelessly on issues like bringing the tanker home for the Boeing Company. He was tremendously skilled at working both sides of the aisle," said Dwight Pelz, chairman of the state Democratic Party.

Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., called Dicks an "institution in Washington politics."

Sen. Patty Murray, also a Democrat, said Dicks was "our state's quarterback here in Congress. ... Norm is the guy who loves Washington state more than life, who would do anything to defend it, and who works everyone to the bone to make sure the families he represents are taken care of."

Gov. Chris Gregoire said Dicks "will leave behind a legacy that is unmatched."

Dicks said he was ready for the change.

"I'm going to see more Husky games, basketball and football, and do a little bit more fishing."

Taylor reported from Washington.