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NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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GLASS CEILING AMENDMENT

DOLE AMENDMENT TO CIVIL RIGHTS BILL CREATES COMMISSION TO EXAMINE BARRIERS TO ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES

I AM PLEASED TO OFFER AN AMENDMENT DEALING WITH THE GLASS CEILING. WHILE THERE ARE PROBABLY AS MANY DEFINITIONS OF THE GLASS CEILING AS THERE ARE INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY IT, THE ISSUE BOILS DOWN TO ELIMINATING ARTIFICIAL BARRIERS IN THE WORKPLACE WHICH HAVE SERVED TO BLOCK THE ADVANCEMENT OF QUALIFIED WOMEN AND MINORITIES.

THE GOAL IS TO ENSURE EQUAL ACCESS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY. THESE PRINCIPLES ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS GREAT NATION AND THE CORNERSTONE OF WHAT OTHER NATIONS AND OTHER PEOPLE CONSIDER UNIQUE TO THE UNITED STATES -- NAMELY, THE POSSIBILITY FOR EVERYONE TO GO AS FAR AS THEIR TALENTS AND HARD WORK WILL TAKE THEM.

ARTIFICIAL BARRIERS EXIST

UNFORTUNATELY, THE AMERICAN DREAM MAY NOT BE AS EASY FOR SOME TO PURSUE AS FOR OTHERS. A RECENT STUDY BY THE UCLA ANDERSON GRADUATE SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND THE KORN-FERRY MANAGEMENT FIRM FOUND THAT WHILE WOMEN AND MINORITIES CURRENTLY ACCOUNT FOR OVER HALF OF THE WORK FORCE, THEY HOLD LESS THAN FIVE PERCENT OF UPPER LEVEL POSITIONS IN THE NATION'S 1,000 LARGEST CORPORATIONS. THIS REPRESENTS A MERE TWO PERCENT INCREASE SINCE 1979. IF ONE FOCUSES THE SPOTLIGHT ON THE POSITION OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE 500 LARGEST COMPANIES IN AMERICA, ONLY TWO ARE WOMEN, AND ONLY ONE IS A MINORITY.

WHILE THERE IS NO "RIGHT" OR "CORRECT" NUMBER, AND MY OPPOSITION TO ANY NOTION OF QUOTAS COULD NOT BE STRONGER AND MORE DEEPLY FELT, THE FOREGOING SUGGESTS THAT ARTIFICIAL BARRIERS EXIST WITH RESPECT TO THE UPWARD MOBILITY OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES.

THESE CONCLUSIONS ARE BOLSTERED BY A STUDY, "A REPORT ON THE GLASS CEILING INITIATIVE," PREPARED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND RELEASED THIS PAST AUGUST. I CONGRATULATE SECRETARY OF LABOR, LYNN MARTIN, ON THE COMPLETION OF THIS REPORT WHICH IS AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS ENSURING THE DEMISE OF THE GLASS CEILING. I ALSO CONGRATULATE HER PREDECESSOR -- WHOSE COMMITMENT TO THIS ISSUE I HAVE SOME FAMILIARITY WITH -- WHO INITIATED AND DIRECTED THE UNDERTAKING OF THE PROJECT.

ESTABLISH GLASS CEILING COMMISSION

THE AMENDMENT WE ARE OFFERING TODAY, THE GLASS CEILING ACT OF 1991, SEEKS TO BUILD UPON THE IMPORTANT WORK BEGUN BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND REFLECTED IN ITS REPORT.

THIS LEGISLATION ESTABLISHES THE GLASS CEILING COMMISSION WHICH IS PROVIDED WITH THE RESOURCES AND POWERS TO EXAMINE THOSE PRACTICES AND POLICIES IN CORPORATE AMERICA WHICH IMPEDE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES.

SECOND, THIS LEGISLATION SPECIFICALLY CHARGES THE COMMISSION WITH PREPARING A REPORT FOR THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS DUE 15 MONTHS AFTER ENACTMENT EXAMINING THE REASONS BEHIND THE EXISTENCE OF THE GLASS CEILING AND MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS WITH RESPECT TO POLICIES WHICH WOULD ELIMINATE ANY ARTIFICIAL BARRIERS TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES.

PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS

FINALLY, THIS LEGISLATION PROVIDES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE "NATIONAL AWARD FOR DIVERSITY AND EXCELLENCE IN AMERICAN EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT" TO BE MADE BY THE PRESIDENT ON AN ANNUAL BASIS TO A BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION WHICH HAS MADE SUBSTANTIAL EFFORTS TO PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND MINORITIES TO ADVANCE TO TOP LEVELS.

IT IS MY FIRM BELIEF AND MY FIRM COMMITMENT THAT BY RAISING THE NATIONAL AWARENESS OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE GLASS CEILING FROM THE ASSEMBLY LINE TO THE BOARD ROOM, BY STUDYING WHY THE GLASS CEILING EXISTS AND WHAT HOLDS IT UP, AND FINALLY BY HAVING RECOMMENDATIONS IN HAND AS TO HOW CORPORATE AMERICA CAN BREAK THAT CEILING, WE WILL HAVE ENSURED THAT EVERYONE HAS ACCESS TO THE SAME EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

FAIRNESS DEMANDS NO LESS; THE AMERICAN DREAM DEMANDS NO LESS.

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