

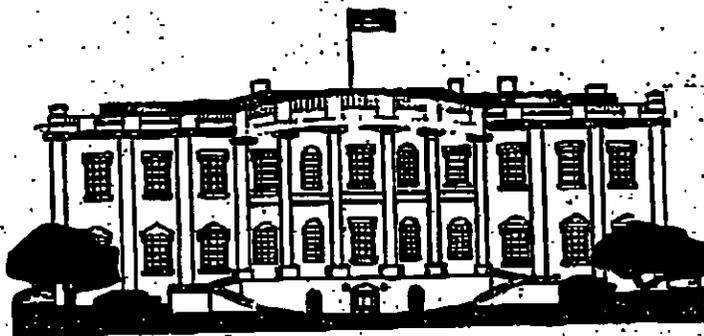
NLWJC - Kagan

DPC - Box 020 - Folder 012

Education - Parental Discrimination

Family - parental discrimination

cc: Bruce
Nicole/Neera



Let's do something for the weekly supporting another event (a radio address) surrounding introduction

WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF PUBLIC LIAISON

of the bill
Elena

Phone (202)456-2930 Fax (202)456-6218

Page: One of 2

Date:

04/20/99

To:

ELENA KAGEN

Fax

6-2878

Phone:

From:

MARY BETH CAHILL

Comments:

Podesta (cc) Penn

*Mary Beth → we need
to get this out there →*

Boz

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
4-19-99

*Copied
Mary Beth Cahill
Mack Penn
Podesta*

Clinton Seeks to Give Parents Standing To Create Basis for Discrimination Suits

By JEANNE CUMMINGS

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON—Renewing its courtship with "soccer moms" as the presidential campaign approaches, the Clinton administration will seek to create a broad new basis for job-discrimination lawsuits by classifying parents as a "protected class."

Under the proposal, parents would have the same standing to file discrimination cases as those who already fall under the legally protected classes of race, sex, age, religion or disability. Legislation will be sponsored by Democratic Sen. Christopher Dodd of Connecticut and is expected by the end of the month.

Business groups oppose the plan, arguing that it could prompt a flood of lawsuits when there is little evidence that a problem exists. They say disgruntled or poor-performing employees could exploit the new legal standing.

But White House Domestic Policy Adviser Bruce Reed says it is the product of "real cases." Among them is a New Jersey woman who claimed she was passed over for promotions because she is a mother. A New York federal judge rejected her lawsuit, saying the person who was promoted—who had no children—was of the same sex.

The White House acknowledges that its evidence is anecdotal, but Mr. Reed says that because such discrimination isn't illegal, "it is impossible to tell how many cases there will be. Like most cases of discrimination, employers don't advertise

their biases."

Mr. Clinton announced his intention to introduce such legislation in his State of the Union address; he recently expanded his fund-raising stump speech to signal that helping parents will be a major theme for Democrats in next year's elections. "We have not done enough in the U.S. to help people balance work and family," the president said Friday night at a Boston Democratic Party event.

The message dovetails with Vice President Al Gore's urban-sprawl initiative, which is aimed at reducing the time parents spend in traffic jams and creating more green space for families to enjoy.

Although the antidiscrimination proposal probably will face a frosty reception in the GOP-controlled Congress, the election-year dynamics could make opposition risky.

President Clinton's education proposals and criticism of former President Bush for vetoing the Family and Medical Leave Act helped him tap the middle-class soccer-mom vote in 1992. The Family and Medical Leave Act became the first bill signed into law by Mr. Clinton. The administration this year is expected to try to expand the now-popular law, which allows workers to take time off without pay to help sick or disabled relatives.

The White House is making no secret of its intention to make the fate of the parent antidiscrimination proposal an issue next year. "A truly pro-family Congress would pass this in a heartbeat," Mr. Reed says. "We'll see."