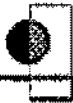


Bruce -

He's said it already! (This is what Melanne was talking about.)

Elean



Cynthia A. Rice

04/06/97 07:34:09 PM

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Subject: PDTUS Remarks Friday re: Child Care

Excerpt from Remarks by the President during Women's Economic Leadership Forum, April 4, 1997:

In addition to that, we have tried to improve, as Betsy said, the operation of the federal child care programs and how they interface with those at the local level. And in the welfare reform bill, one of the best things about it was we put up \$4 billion more for child care. But let me say, I still believe in some ways that's the most underfunded employee support program in the United States. And I urge you to take a look at that -- about the delivery system and how it works. (Applause.)

One of the things that I think should be done intensely in every state -- and I'm going around to state legislators, along with the Vice President and the First Lady, to talk to them about education reform and welfare reform -- and one of the things that I think every state should do is to target the establishment of child care centers and the training of child care workers for moving people from welfare to work and then giving people on welfare who do become certified child care workers either free or discounted service for their own children in the child care centers where their parents work.

If you look at it, we have a window here of significant opportunity, because the states got a block grant under the welfare reform bill, targeted to how much they were getting when the welfare rolls were at their highest. The welfare rolls have now dropped by about 2.5 million, the biggest drop in history. So they have some extra money here until the next economic recession comes along.

And I believe that one of the most significant things that can be done -- and I urge all of you to ask your states to consider doing this and to lobby at the state level to do this -- is to focus very sharply on the opportunity this welfare reform bill plus this extra cash the states gives up to set up for the first time a genuinely comprehensive well trained, well staffed, properly funded child care network in the country in a way that will move people from welfare to work and make child care available to lower wage working people who have never been on welfare in their lives, but can't afford decent child care for their kids. It's a terrific opportunity

and we should be doing it. (Applause.)

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