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Keith Parks agrees to lead
Fellowship's mission program

By Greg Warner

ATLANTA (ABP) -- Keith Parks said Nov. 30 he will direct the missions program of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in order to give Southern Baptists two channels for doing global missions.

Parks, who retired as president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board Oct. 31 in a dispute with trustees, ended a year of speculation by announcing he will take the post of missions coordinator for the Fellowship. The two-year-old Fellowship is an organization of Southern Baptists displeased with the current conservative direction of the Southern Baptist Convention and its agencies.

In a news conference at Fellowship headquarters in Atlanta, Parks, 65, said the organization's missions program will "supplement" and not compete with the SBC's two mission agencies, the Home and Foreign Mission boards. A second channel is needed, however, because many Southern Baptists have lost interest or faith in the work of those agencies, he said.

"I don't believe it will damage Southern Baptist missions," said Parks, who predicted many Southern Baptists will continue to support traditional SBC missions.

Leaders of the SBC and the Foreign Mission Board say competition is inevitable, however, since both the Fellowship and the SBC will be competing for the same mission contributions from churches.

For now, at least, there is no comparison between the two organizations.

The Foreign Mission Board, the largest agency of its kind, employs 3,900 missionaries worldwide and has an annual budget of \$180 million. The Fellowship's one-year-old missions program employs only 14 missionaries -- all former FMB appointees -- and has a budget of \$2.5 million for 1993.

However, Parks will give the Fellowship the expertise to build an effective missions program and the credibility to win the support of Southern Baptists, said Fellowship coordinator Cecil Sherman.

Many of the details of Parks' employment are yet to be worked out. He is expected to start Jan. 18, said Sherman. Although Parks probably will

work out of the Fellowship's Atlanta headquarters, the Parksese have not decided if or when they will move from Richmond.

The Fellowship has budgeted \$100,000 in salary and benefits for the job. But Parks, who turned down several raises at the FMB, said he will insist on a smaller figure more in line with missionary salaries.

Parks did more than change employers, however.

If he and the Fellowship succeed in attracting major Southern Baptist support, they will change the very basis of Southern Baptist missions -- from the denominational approach, in which one agency carries out the SBC's foreign missions task, to the societal approach, in which churches choose between two or more agencies pursuing different mission strategies.

Parks' decision is the latest blast -- and one of the loudest -- in the 13-year struggle for control of the 15 million-member Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest Protestant denomination.

Parks retired from the Foreign Mission Board Oct. 31 -- three years earlier than planned -- because, he said, the SBC controversy had infiltrated Baptist mission work, principally through the efforts of conservative FMB trustees to impose their theology on Baptists overseas.

The controversy also has brought the exclusion of moderate Southern Baptists from denominational life, Parks said, and left many others unenthusiastic about traditional mission efforts.

Parks told reporters he chose to accept the Fellowship's job offer -- first tendered last February -- in part so that all Southern Baptists will have a way to respond to the challenge of world evangelization.

"There is such a great need for all the world's people to hear the gospel," Parks said in a statement. "And there is also an urgent need for all Southern Baptists to have acceptable, exciting ways to be involved in meeting that need."

The decision culminated "a year of struggle and prayer and searching of Scripture," Parks said. Joining the Fellowship would allow him and his wife, Helen Jean, to continue their lifelong commitment to missions, which he said was not "cancelled" when he left the Foreign Mission Board.

"To finish the work God called me to do and fulfill the calling he's given to me, this is what his Spirit is compelling me to do," Parks said of the decision.

It is a radical departure for Parks, who devoted his entire 38-year missions career to the Foreign Mission Board -- first as a missionary in Indonesia from 1954 to 1968, then as an administrator in the board's Richmond, Va., headquarters before becoming president in 1980.

Although Parks is leaving his FMB moorings, he made it clear he is not leaving the Southern Baptist fold. "I will always be Southern Baptist," he told reporters. "That's who I am."

Critics say the Fellowship is laying the groundwork for a split from the Southern Baptist Convention and formation of a new denomination. But Parks declined to speculate on what he would do if that happens.

"Whatever anyone else does, then I'll have to make decisions in light of other people's actions. But my convictions are lifelong and too deep to play with. And I'm a Southern Baptist, however anyone wants to define it."

Some SBC leaders, including the SBC's chief executive, Morris Chapman, have encouraged the Fellowship to leave the SBC.

But Jimmy Allen, one of several Fellowship leaders who joined Parks at his Atlanta news conference, said the Fellowship is "committed to remaining within the Southern Baptist framework."

"What the future holds, none of us knows," added Allen, co-chairperson of the Fellowship's missions committee. "A lot of that depends on how other people perceive and treat you...."

"If the Fellowship members continue to feel that kind of exclusion, who knows what's going to happen down the road," Allen said. "Our intention is to be within the fellowship of Southern Baptists."

In a meeting with Allen and other Fellowship mission leaders Nov. 19, Parks said he would be interested in the missions post if the Fellowship intends to remain Southern Baptist, recruit new missionaries and target the world's populations most isolated from the gospel.

Those conditions still stand, Parks said in his news conference Nov. 30. "If you don't want me with these convictions, then you need to tell me now. If you do, then let's get on with the task and see what we can do to reach the world."

Parks said those priorities had been affirmed by Fellowship leaders. Allen agreed, noting Parks' priorities "overlay" the Fellowship's stated mission objectives.

Parks said his decision was influenced by the biblical account of Christianity's first mission team -- Paul and Barnabas -- who had a "sharp disagreement" over whether or not to let fellow Christian John Mark join them.

"So they divided and had two mission teams instead of one," Parks recalled.

Parks said that scripture and others from the book of Acts "sealed it for me," persuading him it was better for Southern Baptists to have two mission programs rather than one in which not all could or would participate.

Many Southern Baptists are worried about where such an approach will take the denomination, however.

Churches would not only have to decide whether or not to support foreign missions but also what channel of support is best. While the Foreign Mission Board almost always has been the channel of choice for Baptist churches, the FMB likely would find itself competing with the Fellowship for the loyalty of Baptist churches.

"That is a substantial, fundamental change," said Don Kammerdiener, Parks' former top assistant at the FMB and now interim president. It portends a major departure from the way Southern Baptists have done missions, he said.

"For all of his ministry, he has identified with denominational approach," Kammerdiener said of his former boss. "For whatever reason, he has abandoned that approach."

Even before Parks' announcement, John Jackson, chairman of the FMB trustees, said the former president was embarking on "a conscious or unconscious effort to destroy foreign missions as it is now known."

Parks discounted such gloomy predictions. While many Southern Baptists will continue to support traditional missions, others -- particularly younger ones -- are more inclined to a societal approach.

Parks said he expected to be blamed for his decision. He said he struggled over the Fellowship's job offer but only because of the difficulty of starting a missions program from scratch, not because he feared the inevitable criticism that would follow.

"I made a conscious decision long ago that I could never base decisions on reactions, or what might happen, or whether people like it or not," he said. "But I had to make the best judgment I felt the Lord was calling me to make and then live with the consequences."

"When I have to choose between following my convictions or compromising, I'm going to follow my convictions in spite of the controversy or unpleasantness."

Neither was he influenced by fear the decision could hurt the FMB, he said. Rather than drawing support from the FMB, he said, the Fellowship's program can encourage many Southern Baptists who "have lost their excitement

and withdrawn from involvement" to renew their commitment to missions.

"I hope he's right," said the FMB's Kammerdiener. "But my hard-nosed assessment is that the only source the Fellowship has to get money is the same source (the FMB has), and I think that's competition."

"I look upon the whole thing as an adventure that will divide the resources," continued Kammerdiener, a top candidate to succeed Parks as FMB president. "I don't think it will add much to the total."

Helen Jean Parks, who also participated in the news conference, discounted such fears.

"There's more than enough room for all of us to work and give," she said. Some Southern Baptists elected to SBC leadership -- including SBC president -- have not carried their share of the load, she added.

"My feeling is if they are going to lead it, then they need to support it and not just count on...people who will keep on giving out of inertia or commitment."

Kammerdiener and others have complained that Parks' decision and his criticism of the FMB will hurt the current Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, through which churches provide about half of the FMB's budget.

But Parks said the timing of his announcement couldn't be helped. "I really regret the coincidence," he said, but he added his decision had to wait for his October retirement but that he couldn't put the Fellowship off any longer on its long-pending offer.

Parks said he and Fellowship leaders have not talked about how long he will serve in the missions post.

"My hope would be that the Lord would give me enough time and energy to get an organization up and running and find bright, young folks to take it over. But...I don't have a time limit set."

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Leaders say SBC might replace
WMU if it supports Fellowship

By Mark Wingfield and Greg Warner

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) -- If Woman's Missionary Union offers any support to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the Southern Baptist Convention might create its own women's organization to compete with WMU, SBC leaders said Nov. 20.

WMU and SBC leaders met in Birmingham to discuss WMU's role within the convention. The meeting was held at the invitation of a 17-member committee of national and state WMU leaders studying WMU's future.

The study committee is debating whether or not WMU should establish ties with the Fellowship, a national organization of Southern Baptists who say they have been excluded from meaningful involvement in the SBC by the denomination's new more conservative leaders.

The Fellowship reportedly has asked WMU to promote the organization's new global missions program and its annual missions offering. But that would contradict the purpose for which WMU was formed, SBC leaders say, namely to support the denominations official mission programs.

WMU's promotion of the SBC two annual mission offerings is largely responsible for raising roughly half the budget of the Foreign Mission Board and Home Mission Board.

SBC leaders at the Nov. 20 meeting said the SBC Executive Committee might create its own women's organization as an agency of the SBC if WMU

offers support to the Fellowship.

Morris Chapman, who represented the Executive Committee in the meeting, later told Associated Baptist Press the suggestion of a new agency should not be taken as a threat against WMU.

"Anything that was said about the meeting could be misconstrued," said Chapman, president of the Executive Committee. "I didn't understand that to be a threat. The entire atmosphere of the discussion was cordial and Christ-like and hopefully very helpful to everyone there."

The cordial spirit of the meeting should eliminate any suggestion of a threat, Chapman said.

Chapman declined to elaborate further on the meeting, which was held under background rules that allow only the essence of the dialogue to be reported with no direct attribution. WMU reporter Susan Doyle was allowed to observe.

"That meeting is best left under the background rules (because) that's the only way open discussion could take place," said Chapman.

Jimmy Draper, who represented the Baptist Sunday School Board, agreed no threat was intended. Instead the meeting was "very congenial," said Draper, board president.

Other SBC leaders participating were Larry Lewis, Home Mission Board president; Don Kammerdiener, interim Foreign Mission Board president; and James Williams, Brotherhood Commission president. Attending with their husbands were Jodi Chapman, Carol Ann Draper, Betty Jo Lewis and Meredith Kammerdiener.

Representing WMU were members of the study committee, which includes WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien and WMU President Carolyn Miller. Other committee members include state WMU directors and presidents and WMU staff.

As an auxiliary to the SBC, WMU elects its own board of directors and raises its own financial support. Agencies of the SBC, on the other hand, are controlled by trustees appointed by the SBC and receive major funding from the convention.

Some critics of WMU have urged the auxiliary to submit to SBC control, a suggestion WMU has declined.

Several SBC leaders at the Nov. 20 meeting encouraged the WMU executive board to issue a statement regarding its relationship to the SBC and the Fellowship, according to Doyle. They reportedly told WMU any support of Fellowship missionaries would be in direct competition with the SBC missions enterprise.

WMU leaders reportedly expressed a different perspective than SBC leaders over the choices WMU has to make.

WMU leaders said they are struggling with how to be inclusive of all Southern Baptists, WMU's Doyle reported. "They told convention leaders they get comments daily from people urging WMU to continue supporting all Southern Baptist missionaries" -- including those sent by the Fellowship and those working through other non-traditional channels.

"WMU leaders reminded the SBC leaders of the diversity found among Southern Baptists," Doyle said. While in the past the majority of Southern Baptist churches supported missions through traditional SBC channels, WMU leaders said, more local churches and some state conventions are looking at other options in missions support today.

The FMB's Don Kammerdiener said he hopes WMU will continue its exclusive support of the Foreign and Home Mission boards. "If WMU weakens its support of the Foreign Mission Board for any reason, we would lose a major source (of funding)," he told ABP.

Kammerdiener said WMU support for Fellowship programs will hurt the Foreign Mission Board. "There's only so much (financial) resource to go

around, and any time it's divided it's damaging to the denominational agency."

In response, Fellowship Coordinator Cecil Sherman said the his organization's missions program exists "for reasons of conscience," to give people who are displeased with the new direction in Southern Baptist missions something they can support.

"Twelve years ago, when this mess started...we called ourselves denominational loyalists and friends of missions, and we appealed to people to stick with the denomination," he told ABP. "Fundamentalists said they could not give to that which was to them morally unconscionable.

"Twelve years have come and gone," he continued. "We no longer appeal to denominational loyalty. We appeal to principle, to conscience. Interestingly, the people who appealed to principle 12 years ago now appeal to denominational loyalty."

WMU executive O'Brien said the meeting with the SBC leaders "offered valuable information" that will be useful to the study committee.

A clearer picture of what direction WMU will take could emerge as early as January. The 17-member committee is scheduled to bring a report and recommendations to the WMU executive board Jan. 9-11.

"We needed to touch base with them (SBC leaders) one last time before the meeting of our Executive Board in January where our committee will make its report," O'Brien said.

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Conservatives in Virginia talk
of split with state association

By Mark O'Keefe

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. (ABP) -- Disillusioned over what they see as an abandonment of the Bible's teachings, conservatives in Virginia met Nov. 25 to discuss leaving their 109-year-old state Baptist association.

The informal gathering held at a Norfolk restaurant will be followed by a larger meeting Dec. 1 at Liberty Baptist Church in Hampton to discuss forming a rival organization.

While the gap between conservatives and moderates in Virginia has been widening for years, conservatives say this will be the first time they seriously discuss forming a group to counter the Baptist General Association of Virginia, which is controlled by moderates.

The potential split was triggered by a BGAV vote two weeks ago that some conservatives interpreted as explicit approval of homosexual behavior. Conservatives are also upset over what they see as a failure to condemn abortion and the funnelling of funds to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a moderate rival of the national Southern Baptist Convention controlled by conservatives.

If the plan is realized, it would be the first state in which separate conventions represent opposing Baptist factions. It is unclear how the national SBC would relate to two state organizations.

"You just reach a point where you say, 'Hey, I don't want to be involved in this further,'" said Tommy Taylor, pastor of London Bridge Baptist Church in Virginia Beach, one of the largest conservative churches in the state. "If divorce is the answer -- and I know that's a strong word -- then we need to get a divorce."

James Bradshaw, pastor of Norview Baptist Church in Norfolk, said he sent out the 102 letters inviting conservatives to attend the Nov. 25 meeting

at Shoney's restaurant.

"We're Southern Baptists," said Bradshaw. "There are certain things Southern Baptists stand for. The Baptist General Association of Virginia does not stand for certain fundamentals of the faith. The Bible tells us we should 'therefore come out from the midst and be separate, says the Lord.'"

"To me, I think the time is right. But we're not going to do anything hastily."

The Baptist General Association of Virginia is made up of 1,500 churches.

At the association's annual meeting in Virginia Beach two weeks ago, about one-fourth of the 4,200 people voted with the conservative faction.

Reginald McDonough, executive director of the Baptist General Association of Virginia, said he was sorry to hear of the conservatives' plan. "We've worked hard to try to be inclusive of all Baptists in the state."

McDonough said he does not interpret the recent votes of the BGAV concerning homosexuality "in the same way that these individuals are interpreting it."

To form a rival association, conservatives would have to file papers to legally incorporate. Churches could then determine by a vote of their members which association to join.

It is not known if the Southern Baptist Convention could relate to both Virginia organizations or be forced to choose which to recognize. But McDonough said, "I do not see our relationship with the SBC changing as a result of this potential action."

Morris Chapman, the SBC's chief executive, said it is "too early to comment" on the situation. "The issues which are raised by the possibility of two conventions in one state are complicated and will require careful study," said Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, which may be forced to address the issue.

James Guenther, the SBC's attorney, said the denomination's constitution and bylaws do not address whether two rival associations can represent the same state. "It would raise lots of questions," Guenther said. "I don't have my answers."

Walter Harrow, the newly elected and moderate-backed president of the Virginia association, said he is surprised to learn conservatives are considering a split.

"I believe I speak for most Virginia Baptists in expressing regret and sorrow that this action is taking place," said Harrow of Deltaville. "We have been very busy in the task of creating a framework in Virginia which would allow each church a place to stand."

Harrow said he may try to attend the conservative meeting Dec. 1 but "it's most possible I wouldn't be a welcome visitor."

T.C. Pinckney of Alexandria, the unsuccessful conservative candidate for state president, said the meeting will be closed "to get people to talk freely and openly about their personal feelings." The presence of outsiders would "defeat the purpose," he said.

Pinckney, a member of the SBC Executive Committee, said the chasm between moderates and conservatives has never been wider. But he said conservatives are hardly in agreement over what they should do.

"They don't all march in lock step," Pinckney said. "They react in a different way. I can't say what the outcome will be. We have to come together. We have to pray. We have to seek the Lord's will as to what we'll do."

"We would be relieved, and I suspect our moderate brothers would be relieved, if we withdrew."

In the latest edition of the Religious Herald, the official publication of Virginia Baptists, an editorial questioned whether the state could overcome "a widening rift caused by different interpretations of the action on homosexuality."

That action acknowledged a "diversity of thought" on homosexuality.

An amendment to bring the resolution in line with one passed earlier by state leaders -- which called homosexuality "sinful and unacceptable for Christians" -- was voted down.

Virginia apparently was the only state Baptist convention in the country to pass a resolution on homosexuality that did not call it sin. Some states took no action. Other state associations either condemned homosexuality as a sin or said homosexuals should not be given special civil rights.

The Southern Baptist Convention, in denouncing homosexual behavior, decided this year to exclude churches that approve it. The decision must be ratified by the convention in June.

Taylor said the Virginia resolution sent shock waves through his congregation.

"New Christians are confused and disillusioned," Taylor said. "Older, longtime members are saying, 'If this is where Virginia Baptists stand, we don't need to be a part of that.'"

Conservative pastors in the Virginia Beach area, where the recent state association meeting was held, have purchased a full-page advertisement to run in local newspapers distancing "Bible-believing churches" from the resolution. The ad does not mention a possible split.

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-- Mark O'Keefe is staff writer for the Virginia Pilot in Virginia Beach. This story, which includes information from ABP, is reprinted with permission.

Supreme Court declines to review
ruling striking Guam abortion law

By Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- Once again the U.S. Supreme Court has signaled that it will not permit states to criminalize or unduly burden a woman's right to abortion.

The high court announced Nov. 30 it will not review a federal appeals court ruling that struck down a Guam law that would have made most abortions a felony for the woman and medical personnel involved.

Guam's statute provided exceptions only for ectopic, or tubal, pregnancies and pregnancies in which two physicians agree that the woman's life is endangered or her health is gravely impaired.

The Supreme Court's action follows recent rulings that reaffirmed the constitutional right of women to choose abortion while permitting states to place some restrictions on it.

In upholding abortion restrictions in Missouri in 1989 and Pennsylvania in 1992, the high court generally reaffirmed the essential core of Roe vs. Wade, the 1973 decision that recognized the right to abortion before the fetus attains viability -- the point at which the fetus could survive outside the womb.

However, the court moved away from Roe's requirement that a state must show a compelling reason to restrict abortion as a fundamental constitutional

right.

The key factor, the court majority held, is whether a state unduly burdens a woman's right to abortion by placing a "substantial obstacle" in the path of a woman seeking an abortion before the fetus attains viability.

In striking the Guam law, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said that "surely an outright criminalization of abortion places an 'undue burden' on the exercise of the woman's right."

Three Supreme Court justices voted to hear Guam's appeal, one short of the four votes necessary to review a case. Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Justice Byron White joined Justice Antonin Scalia in dissenting from the court's decision to decline the case.

Scalia argued that before a law is struck down, courts should wait to see if all or parts of the law could be applied in constitutionally permissible ways.

"I see no reason why the Guam law would not be constitutional at least in its application to abortions performed after the point at which the child may live outside the womb," Scalia wrote.

Justice Clarence Thomas, who sided with Scalia, Rehnquist and White earlier this year in saying *Roe vs. Wade* should be reversed, did not join his conservative colleagues in the Guam case. In a dissenting opinion in the Pennsylvania case, the four had said "Roe was wrongly decided" and "it can be and should be reversed."

Pennsylvania provisions upheld included requirements for a 24-hour waiting period, parental consent and reporting by abortion providers.

The dissenting justices would have upheld all of Pennsylvania's restrictions, including the spousal notification provision rejected by the court majority.

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Bread for the World supports
UN intervention in Somalia

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- Bread for the World, a Christian coalition working to eradicate world hunger, released a statement Dec. 1 supporting the Bush administration's efforts to provide security forces to assure the delivery of food in Somalia.

Nearly 2,000 people are dying daily in that war-torn country, where many of the deaths could be avoided if food and relief workers were protected, the statement says.

While the organization noted the need for security forces, it also emphasized that the troops should serve under the auspices and leadership of the United Nations. U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said he supports an international military operation, most likely led by the United States, according to a Dec. 1 article in the *Washington Post*.

The statement also focused on the role of long-term diplomatic solutions.

"We believe that military intervention alone cannot provide a lasting solution to the troubles which plague Somalia," the statement says. "If handled the wrong way, intervention could inadvertently strengthen the power of some militia leaders and deepen the resolve of others to continue with violence.

"Bread for the World believes that if military intervention in Somalia is to be successful, it must be accompanied by long-lasting diplomatic

efforts to foster peace and democracy."

The organization advocated that the U.N. also should launch a peace process that is broadly inclusive of Somalia's clan leaders, community leaders and militia leaders.

"The process must recognize that solutions cannot be imposed from outside but must be conceived, embraced and implemented by Somalis. Intervention that merely applies a Band-Aid approach to Somalia's open sores could lead to further degeneration rather than healing."

Bread for the World, backed by several Baptist groups including the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, has supported initiatives designed to eradicate hunger and famine in Africa since 1974.

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-- By Pam Parry

Clinton, Congress urged to focus
on preventing teenage pregnancy

By Pam Parry

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- Curbing teenage pregnancy must be a national priority set by the new administration and the 103rd Congress, witnesses told a subcommittee of the Joint Economic Committee Nov. 24.

Six witnesses, including one Baptist minister, testified to the escalating, staggering social and economic costs of teens having children:

-- In the United States, more than 1 million adolescents become pregnant annually, twice the rate of any other industrialized nation. Of that number, about half give birth, and a third of those parents will have a subsequent pregnancy within two years.

-- Women who have their first child as a teenager often do not complete their education, and as a result have lower-paying jobs. Two-thirds of children under age 6 in families begun with a teen birth live below the poverty level.

-- All families begun by teenagers having their first baby in 1988 will cost the nation \$6 billion over the next 20 years, according to Joycelyn Elders, director of the Arkansas Department of Health.

"The issue of teen pregnancy is much like the chicken and the egg," she said. "I am not sure if our poverty rates are high because of the number of unwed mothers or if we have so many unwed mothers because our poverty rates are so high."

Elders said the comparatively high rate of teen pregnancy among Americans does not reflect a difference in sexual activity between teens of different countries. The difference is that Americans do not properly educate their children or make pregnancy-preventative services available to them. The abortion rate among European teenagers, she added, is lower than that of their American counterparts.

Moralizing or legislating morals will not substitute for education and family-planning services, she said. Elders, who targeted teenage pregnancy as a major health problem to battle in her state, said that the government should spend more money on prevention.

For example, federal expenditures for family-planning clinics have fallen by one-third over the past decade, adjusting for inflation, she said. Family planning saves \$3 in the following year for every \$1 spent on teenage services, she said. The overall savings for all age groups is \$2 saved for

every \$1 spent, she said.

Elders acknowledged the political problems associated with family-planning clinics in recent years but expressed optimism that the Clinton administration would be able to "break out of some of the grid-lock that has plagued reproductive health."

Responding to a question, the Arkansas health official described the federal policies of the last two administrations as "hostile" to what she was trying to accomplish at the state level. She recommended two specific actions: 1) overturning the ban on abortion counseling and referrals at federally funded clinics and 2) increasing funding of family planning services.

The only thing the ban on abortion counseling did was punish the young, poor and uneducated, she added.

Rep. Jim Scheuer, D-N.Y., and subcommittee chairman, told Elders she could bank on the ban being repealed under a new administration -- one of Clinton's campaign pledges.

Scheuer said America sits on the brink of a true revolution in reproductive rights, facilities, services and research. That revolution prompted Scheuer, who is retiring after 13 terms, to return to Washington during the recess; he was the only subcommittee member present at the hearing.

Another witness echoed Elders sentiment that the government ought to spend more on prevention. Oklahoma governor David Walters, who is the lead governor of the Southern Regional Project on Infant Mortality, said that America has been paying for a pound of cure but has only begun to invest in an ounce of prevention.

In 1991, Southern states collectively spent more than \$5.7 billion of federal and state funds to support families begun by teens, Walters said. By contrast, the South expended \$110 million to prevent the initial pregnancy. In fact, Southerners spend only 2 cents for prevention, compared with spending \$1 on supporting long-term costs of families started by teens.

Walters said that he is not asking for more money, but rather for new priorities that focus on teenage pregnancy prevention.

"I am hopeful that this new administration and new Congress will make young people a national priority," Walters said. The nation's youth must be empowered with accurate information, accessible health resources and a sense of the future, he added.

Michael Faulkner, director of youth and urban ministries at Calvary Baptist Church in New York City, said: "The debate is not over whether or not to tell young people about contraceptives or their appropriateness in the educational setting. Rather, the focus should center on how this information is communicated, when and by whom.

"We need to be willing to set standards for young people and for the expected behavior that we have of them," said Faulkner, who advocated a message of abstinence. "These standards do not have to be set by any particular religious code or dogma but by what we know as educators and health professionals as the most appropriate behavior for them."

Pointing to an Emory University study of 1,000 sexually active teens, Faulkner said that 84 percent of them said they wanted to learn how to say "no" to sex without offending their friends or partners.

"We need to support these young people before they become parents by giving them a feeling of hope, self-esteem and accomplishment," he added.