This project has been to EPA. It has been to Fish and Wildlife. I cannot name the alphabet soup of Federal agencies this project has been to. And so I would just say, the importance of corridor H, let me talk about stream crossings, for instance.

□ 1630

To avoid contaminating streams with piers supporting the highway, the State has agreed to place beams outside the streams that span the waterway. The State will develop an erosion-control process and methods to seal off acid-bearing strata. The State is going to take unprecedented action to purchase extra land and right-of-way to accommodate the environmental concerns. The State will reclaim the slopes with indigenous plant life, not just grass.

The State also, in terms of excess earth-work disposal, the State is not going to leave this up to the contractors, but in the case of corridor H will decide a detailed cleanup and disposal in the contract for each specific site.

There are going to be those gathering this weekend in West Virginia to attack corridor H again. Incidentally, I find it interesting that much of the attack on corridor H comes from outside of the State, not inside the State. I invite them to visit very many of our counties, where I am confident that 65 to 75 percent of our population strongly supports corridor H. As they gather in West Virginia, and we welcome them, of course, I urge them to drive the Elkins to Buckhannon segment to see what can be done. If they want to go further, they can go from Buckhannon to Weston, and understand the true economic significance of corridor H as well. Drive the Buckhannon to Elkins segment and see what has been accomplished, see what we have been able, working together, to achieve; experience what corridor H is bringing to central West Virginia. That is the environment that we all love. That is the environment we all want to safeguard. Corridor H can continue that process.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DIAZ-BALART). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. FRANK] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kentucky [Mr. WARD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. WARD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THE GUAM COMMONWEALTH ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Guam [Mr. UNDERWOOD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, This afternoon I want to address the current situation regarding our effort to advance the cause of a new political status for Guam as envisioned in the Guam Commonwealth Act, H.R. 1056. I introduced H.R. 1056 on February 24, 1995, as my first bill of the 104th Congress.

The Guam Commission on Self-Determination, a bipartisan commission of Government of Guam officials and citizen participants, is currently in discussions with the Clinton administration to resolve specific areas of disagreement on the specifics of the draft Guam Commonwealth Act. These discussions have been on hold for some time because of the resignation of the administration's Special Representative for Guam Commonwealth, Mr. I. Michael Heyman, earlier this year. After several months spent searching for a replacement for Mr. Heyman, the administration has appointed a very capable individual to complete the task at hand, Mr. Stanley Roth, an Assistant to the President and the Senior Director of Asian Affairs in the National Security Council. We are pleased with the selection of Mr. Roth, and we believe that he has the necessary understanding of Guam's issues and the skill to build on the progress that has been achieved by Mr. Heyman in the past year.

The Guam Commonwealth Act, H.R. 1056, would redefine the way the Federal Government relates to Guam, and would give Guam the tools we need to succeed in the next century. Guam has a robust economy fueled by its visitor industry. This year Guam expects to attract over 1.3 million visitors. Guam is relatively self-sufficient, and Guam is not seeking a new Commonwealth to get new Federal money—instead, Guam is a success story of the insular territories, and Guam's drive for a new status is motivated by a partnership that is good for America and good for Guam.

As America's westernmost soil, 10,000 miles and 15 time zones away, Guam is America's front door to Asian trade. Guam is often thought of as being strategically important to the United States in military terms. But Guam is also strategically important in projecting American influence and American democracy in our part of the world.

The new majority in Congress has undertaken to reshape the Federal relationship with the States, and has given national attention to this issue. However, there has not been very much thought given to how the new federalism would affect the insular territories. It is not an automatic assumption to say that power that is divested from the Federal Government would be given to the territories in the same way that it is given to the States. We have already seen examples in legislation affecting the territories where the empowerment of the States has not translated into an empowerment of the territories. I would point out, just as many conservative leaders have pointed out, that the 10th amendment restricts the power of the Federal Government, and reserves those powers not granted to the Federal Government to the States and the people. It may surprise some to learn that the 10th amendment does not apply to the territories. While we are not States, we are still people. But, all constitutional protections afforded to any American in any State are also afforded to the Americans in the territories.

Guam's Commonwealth Act challenges this Congress to look at the Federal relationship in this era, and offers a new relationship within our constitutional framework. We have proposed a framework that gives Guam stake in the Federal system. We have proposed a framework that is based on the American concept that power drives from the consent of the governed. And we have proposed a framework that unleashes the economic potential of Guam within the American system.

I hope that this Congress would deal with these issues in a serious and forthright manner, and that we can begin the process of shaping the new Commonwealth for Guam early in the next session. I look forward to the weeks and months ahead and to our work with Mr. Roth and the Guam Commission on Self-Determination. The Chairman of the Guam Commission, Governor Gutierrez, has signaled his eagerness to get on with the business of completing the Commonwealth discussions and bringing this issue to closure. Working together with Guam and the Federal Government, I have every confidence that the aspirations of the people of Guam for a new Commonwealth can be fulfilled.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1056, the Guam Commonwealth Act, and I challenge this Congress to find a role for the Americans in the territories as they redefine a new federalism.

LEGISLATION RESTRICTING FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS FOR ALL AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. SKAGGS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, on August 4 the majority party passed a provision in the Labor-HHS appropriations bill sponsored by the gentleman from

Oklahoma [Mr. ISTOOK] that was designed, if you can believe this, to restrict the first amendment rights of everyone in America if they receive anything of value from the Federal Government, restrict their employees and those with whom they do business.

The Istook language, however, exempts those who contract with the Federal Government, as opposed to receiving a benefit or thing of value. I watched, therefore, with great interest during the consideration of the defense appropriations bill just a week ago today when there was a discussion between the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] and the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON] about whether the political speech and activities of defense contractors should also be limited.

As the Speaker will remember, the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] offered an amendment that was a watered down version of the political activities restriction the gentleman from Oklahoma [Mr. ISTOOK] and the majority party had endorsed in August in the appropriations bill. The Schroeder amendment would have disqualified for Federal defense contracts any business that spent more than a small amount of its budget on State, local, and Federal political activity of almost any kind.

As with the Istook language, I believed the Schroeder amendment was a bad idea and I voted against it; but I describe it as a watered down version of the Istook political speech restriction amendment, because the Schroeder amendment would not have required contractors to report their political activities to the Federal Government, whereas the Istook amendment, which applies to all other groups receiving anything from the Federal Government, does require political activities reports to be sent in to the Federal Government.

I say it was a watered down version, because the Schroeder amendment would not have subjected contractors to harassing lawsuits from any citizens, whereas the Istook amendment does that, subjects all other groups to this sort of litigation. But, Mr. Speaker, even in this watered down state, most Republican Members of this body voted against any restriction on how much defense contractors can lobby the government. Those voting no included most of the leadership of the majority, folks who had previously voted, unabashedly, to restrict the ability of churches, nonprofits, individuals, and even many businesses, to speak to the public or to their elected officials at the State, Federal, or local level about important policy issues.

The majority needs to explain to the American people why they feel it is OK to muzzle ordinary citizens and organizations, but at the same time let defense contractors who take billions of dollars in Federal contracts do so without any of the same restrictions.

The inconsistency here, and that is a polite way of putting it, the inconsistency in the majority leadership and most of its members' position is made very clear by the comments of the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations who, after having voted for the Istook language, characterized the amendment of the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] last week as follows:

> * * * a denial of the privilege of the First Amendment, which is the right of speech under the Constitution of the United States, to exercise their opportunity to speak to their government, to the representatives of their choice.

Mr. Speaker, why are the first amendment rights of defense contractors to lobby the Government for more contracts and funds more protected under the Constitution than the YMCA's or the Catholic churches or the American Red Cross' first amendment rights to advise us on issues affecting kids or older Americans or the safety of the Nation's blood supply? Is it different because the YMCA receives funds to provide after school day care, instead of funds to build missiles and planes? What kind of Constitution does the majority think that we have?

Mr. Speaker, when the Istook political speech restriction amendment comes before us again for another vote, and I expect it will, please remember those words of the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, his eloquent defense of the first amendment rights of defense contractors, and for the sake of fairness, let us support the same fundamental rights for the YMCA, the Catholic Church, and the rest of this Nation.

THE MEDICARE PRESERVATION ACT OF 1995

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, today the American public was expected to receive the details of the Republicans' plan to slash Medicare, but the Republicans seems to be delaying further, and really, we do not know when the specific plans are going to be released. I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that I was outraged to find out how few details we were actually given in the document that was presented today by the Republican leadership. I have a copy of it here, the Medicare Preservation Act of 1995.

We do know that we are talking about cutting $270 billion out of Medicare, and we know that that is going to have a devastating impact on senior citizens, because it is the largest Medicare cut in the history of this country, but to this day and at this hour, with only, I think, about a week left before there is supposed to be a 1-day hearing before the Committee on Ways and Means on the Medicare changes, we still do not have the details of the plan.

I think it is really unfortunate, because the seniors that I know that are in my district are demanding to know how this cut is going to affect them. They are not buying into this Republican smokescreen about reforming Medicare. The fact of the matter is that Medicare is not broke, it has worked very well for the last 30 years in providing health care and good quality health care for most senior citizens, and all that we really have is a Republican plan to essentially take $270 billion out of the Medicare program to finance largely a tax cut for the wealthier Americans.

I do not think it is fair. I do not think it is fair that the senior citizens of this country should have to take such a large brunt, if you will, of the effort to provide a tax cut, or of the effort to provide deficit reduction.

One of the bases that the Republicans are using for saying that this large cut is necessary is that they claim that within 7 years Medicare will be insolvent. They base that on a trustees' report that came out this year, and we get trustees' reports from Medicare on an annual basis.

What they fail to point out is that historically there has not been as much as 7 years outlays, if you will, for Medicare funding. Oftentimes it has only been 1 or 2 years before Medicare is insolvent. The reason for that is because this Congress traditionally did not want to leave a lot of money available for Medicare in future years because of the fear that it would be raided by provides, and that hospitals or doctors or other health care providers would say to themselves ''Gee, there is this large pot of money out there, so we had just better charge more for our services.''

There is no reason in the world to think that because for 7 years we have enough money to pay for Medicare services and for health care for seniors, that somehow that means that the system needs to be radically changed. It does not. They are only proposing this cut, this huge cut, in Medicare because they want to use it to pay for a tax cut, again, mostly for well-to-do Americans.

This plan that was released today by the Republican leadership, and it is not a plan, it unfortunately does not provide much information at all; it does not tell us how this $270 billion is going to be implemented, this cut, cut it does have some pretty scary things in it which I would like to relate, if I could, during my time here this evening.

First of all, with regard to the part B premium, which is the part of the Medicare Program that pays for doctors' bills, essentially, the one that seniors now basically voluntarily contribute to out of their pocket, but of course most seniors use it in order to finance their payments for doctors, for their physicians, the part B premium essentially