WHITE HOUSE E-MAIL CONTROVERSY CONTINUES

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, the White House e-mail controversy continues. Five Northrop Grumman employees were so intimidated by the White House threats of jail that one was nearly fired when she refused to tell her own bosses about the administration's failure to turn over thousands of e-mail messages under subpoena.

Newly obtained information shows the White House threatened to have the five employees jailed after they found and reported a glitch in the White House computer system that prevented the discovery of more than 100,000 White House messages involving campaign finance abuses, Monica Lewinsky, Chinagate, and Filegate.

Mr. Speaker, the Justice Department does not even appear to be interested, does not want to check these e-mails for information about the campaign finance scandal.

Why has Janet Reno, the attorney general, been so silent on this matter?

GUN CONTROL IN AMERICA

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, some months ago I indicated that I would be on the floor on a regular basis bringing to the attention of this Congress and to the American people that 13 children die every day at the hands of a gun. Thirteen children die every day.

But yet this Congress, of which I am a Member, and the House Committee on the Judiciary Conference Committee on Gun Safety and Juvenile Justice, refused to meet.

On the other hand, gun-responsible legislation such as trigger locks, smart gun, and the legislation that I intend to offer that will provide educational programs and incentives to schools, hold parents and adults responsible for children that get guns has not been able to see the light of day.

But, on the other side, the National Rifle Association thinks we can save lives by ugly and undermining advertisement.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they can advertise all day long with all kinds of anecdotes, but they cannot save lives. It is time for the Conference Committee on Gun Safety and Juvenile Justice to meet and to meet now.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say to Mr. Walter Hall that I offer to his family my greatest sympathy.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1996

(Mr. WHITFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, it has been 4 years since the enactment of the Telecommunications Act of 1996; and I am pleased to report that cable companies are responding to that Act and are delivering state-of-the-art telecommunication services in Kentucky's First Congressional District, as well as throughout the country.

Charter company has wired Murray State University with cable modems, giving students and faculty high-speed access to the Internet. Charter is also deploying cable modems in the town of Murray, Kentucky, and will offer residential services there in April.

In addition, Mediacom is offering cable modems in Marshall and Calloway counties and continues to upgrade its infrastructure with interactive fiber/coaxial cable facilities.

I am pleased that cable companies throughout the country are helping to fulfill the vision of the Telecommunications Act, which was designed to bring competition, expanded investment, and the delivery of broadband services to all Americans.

□ 1015

WALTER HALL, A MAN WHO NOT ONLY TALKED THE TALK BUT WALKED THE WALK

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great sadness to honor Walter Hall of Dickinson, Texas, who passed away on Sunday at age 92. Walter Hall, known by many as ''Mr. Democrat,'' was a man who not only talked the talk but walked the walk. He was a true visionary, with a vision of a better life for all Americans.

He spent his life fighting for equality, justice, and opportunity. He led the charge to abolish the poll tax, supported equal rights for women, and worked for the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act in 1965.

He was a community activist who negotiated with the City of Houston to supply clean drinking water for Galveston County and is credited with bringing NASA to the Clear Lake area.

He was a man of humble beginnings, who became a man of great fortune and power. He served as a mentor for many young people interested in politics and was a close friend to President Lyndon Johnson and Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn. However, despite all his clout, he remained a man of the people, honest and forthright. He will be sorely missed.

EDUCATION REFORM MUST BE TOP PRIORITY

(Mr. SCHAFFER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, Alexis de Toqueville wrote in his famous work Democracy in America that in America there cannot be enough of knowledge, for all knowledge benefits both those who possess it and those who do not.

Alexis de Toqueville is quoted all the time, and there is good reason for it. His commentary here on the value of knowledge, about how education is important to everyone, is an example of his wisdom. Education is an issue that is important to those with children and to those who are not parents.

If a generation of American school children is receiving an inferior education, that is a serious concern for all of us. Of course, the reality is that our Nation's public schools include excellent schools, some that are unremarkable and others that are simply a disgrace.

It is the general trend toward mediocrity, the systematic dumbing down of curricula, textbooks, and standards, that I find most alarming.

I know that millions of parents agree, and that is why education reform must be a top priority for this Congress.

AMERICANS MANAGE TO BALANCE THEIR CHECKBOOKS EACH MONTH, AND WE SHOULD DO THE SAME

(Mr. GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to associate my remarks with the remarks of my colleague from Galveston County today with the death of Walter Hall. One, he is a great American but also a great Texan.

Let me say what I am really here for is that here we go again. It seems like Yogi Berra said, deja vu all over again. We are counting our surplus eggs before they have hatched. Like kids who have taken their parents' credit cards and are on a buying spree, my Republican colleagues are busy spending a budget surplus that does not exist yet. It is just a wish and a prayer.

Instead of paying down the $5.5 trillion national debt and securing the future of Social Security and Medicare, they want another tax cut. It is strange, for the first time this last 10 days we are actually having the Department of Treasury paying off part of our national debt, first time in recent history; but their efforts would stop this. We should be using the surplus to ensure that Social Security and Medicare will rest on a financially sound foundation well into the next century. My Republican friends, though, are proposing billions in tax cuts that would take this away. We need to do better. The American people need to do better. We need to do better.

THIS BUDGET IS A QUESTION OF VALUES

(Mr. MENENDEZ asked and was given permission to address the House