

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBERS TO  
TICKET TO WORK AND WORK IN-  
CENTIVES ADVISORY PANEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to section 101(f)(3) of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (42 U.S.C. 1320b-19), the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following members on the part of the House to the Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Advisory Panel:

Mr. Steve Start, Spokane, Wash-  
ington, to a 4-year term; and

Ms. Susan Webb, Phoenix, Arizona,  
to a 2-year term.

There was no objection.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on March 14, 2000, I was unavoidably detained in my district.

On H.R. 3699, had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall vote 46. On H.R. 3701, rollcall vote 47, had I been present, I would have voted "aye".

LET US STOP THE RHETORIC AND  
PASS REAL GUN SAFETY LEGIS-  
LATION FOR ALL OF 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, yesterday in listening to Susan Wilson, who lost her daughter, lost her child in Jonesboro, by the terrible and tragic use of a gun, it reemphasized the importance that we in this Congress lower any debate that is political and focus on getting the task done. That is why I believe the conference committee should meet; and that is why I believe the legislation that I offered last evening, the Child Gun Safety and Gun Access Prevention Act of 2000, is a comprehensive gun safety proposal that we should address.

My legislation will protect children not only by raising the age of handgun eligibility and prohibiting youth from possessing semiautomatic assault weapons but by enhancing the penalties for those adults who recklessly disregard the risk that a child is capable of gaining access to a firearm.

We did it in Houston. We did it in Texas and it works. Parents and supervising adults must be held responsible for their children when their household contains dangerous firearms. This legislation also proposes penalty for youth possession of handguns and semi-automatic assault weapons, as well as the transfer of such weapons to youth and provides school districts with incentives, Mr. Speaker, to have gun safety prevention programs.

We are losing lives. Let us stop the rhetoric and pass real gun safety legislation for all of America.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the current Juvenile Justice legislation already passed by the Senate.

The American people have waited long enough for us to act on this legislation. We can no longer delay and wait for the next tragedy in order to take action.

It is imperative that we act now and not allow Republican leaders to dismantle the vital gun safety provisions contained within the current Juvenile Justice bill.

Simply passing a bill without any gun safety provisions would be irresponsible and a terrible mistake on the part of this Congress.

We must let the American people know that we are not afraid to take the steps necessary to enact responsible legislation.

We cannot allow the NRA to determine how this Congress acts at the expense of our children.

Today, I support Senator DASCHLE's past statement that the Juvenile Justice bill, which concerns access to guns and was adopted by both the Senate and the House, should move forward.

Furthermore, I support his belief that if the Juvenile Justice bill does not go to conference; each Member of Congress should file independent bills until safe legislation is adopted.

I am taking the initiative by announcing, my legislation which would increase youth gun safety. My bill "The Child Gun Safety and Gun Access Prevention Act of 2000," is a comprehensive gun safety proposal.

My legislation will protect children not only by raising the age of handgun eligibility and prohibiting youth from possessing semiautomatic assault weapons, but by enhancing the penalties for those adults who recklessly disregards the risk a child is capable of gaining access to a firearm. Parents and supervising adults must be held responsible for their children when their household contains dangerous firearms.

This legislation also proposes an enhanced penalty for youth possession of handguns and semiautomatic assault weapons, as well as, the transfer of such weapons to youth. Furthermore, children will be required to be accomplished by a parent when attending gun shows. Finally, as a preventative measure, my legislation encourages each school district to provide or participate in a firearms safety program.

Through enhanced penalties for reckless supervising adults, gun safety education programs and limitations on the admittance of children into gun shows, my legislation seeks to prevent tragedies like the one that most recently occurred in Mount Morris Township, MI. This child shooting is the latest in a series of preventable shootings that occurred as a result of adults recklessly leaving firearms in the presence of children.

It is a shame that political maneuvering is still stalling even a nonbinding resolution like Senator BOXER's that simply supports child gun safety legislation. Yet, I would like to say how delighted I was to hear of Senator DURBIN's amendment that would offer more funding for providing gun safety education.

In the past few weeks my office has received many calls and letters from constituents who believe that we support legislation that will take away their guns.

It is obvious that the propaganda machine of the National Rifle Association is working to change our focus from the issue of children and guns and gun ownership in general. Like many of my colleagues, I do not oppose responsible gun ownership.

However, like President Clinton, I am concerned about children and their access to guns. I am concerned that guns are not regulated in the same way that toys are regulated. I am concerned that we do not have safety standards for locking devices on guns. I am concerned that we do not prohibit children from attending gun shows unsupervised. I am concerned that we have not focused on the statistics on children and guns.

This motion to instruct urges the conferees to act immediately on the Juvenile Justice bill. We cannot wait for another tragedy to occur. I urge my colleagues to support this motion.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WELDON of Florida 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 New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

AMERICA MUST DECLARE INDE-  
PENDENCE FROM FOREIGN OIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, our Nation must again declare independence, this time from dependence on foreign oil, foreign energy.

Why is this the case? Not just because our citizens are finding the prices increasing daily at the gas pump, not just because heating oil has risen in price steadily over the last several months, not because there are warning signs that the gasoline prices will continue to rise throughout the summertime, not just because we know statistically that we have 55 percent of our domestic energy needs have to come from abroad, not just because of that.

But if we find that all of these reasons are not important enough, then measure this, I ask the American public: For the sake of our national security, we must declare our independence from dependence on foreign support and imports of energy.

No more can the American people stand the spectacle of our Nation grovelling at the feet of the nations of OPEC and begging them to send us more oil, begging them to sell us more oil, to produce more oil. Please make it

possible for us to have the oil we need. Please, we are begging them.

The only superpower in the world has to depend on that kind of diplomacy, begging the nations to send us more oil?

Well, we are better than that and we have the ingenuity and the resources and the brain power and the stamina and the intent and the greatness to become self-sufficient in our country on our needs for energy.

Therefore, I am introducing today the first step towards the declaration of this new independence of the United States, a bill that would create immediately a blue ribbon commission to determine ways and means by which our Nation will become energy self-sufficient.

No more shall we depend on foreign source energies for our needs. This commission would have to look into, as I view it, the possibility of more domestic drilling in the Midwest, in the North, in the Northwest to develop fully the possibilities of Alaskan new explorations, to determine how best we can fully develop offshore drilling, all of these with due consideration for the environment but necessary for our national survival.

We must weed through these obstacles that have been placed in front of us and which we have imposed on ourselves. There is no longer time in this new century for that kind of obstacle to get in the way of our being self-sufficient as a Nation.

We are calling our bill the NRG, the National Resources Governance Act of the year 2000. NRG. Energy. Energy. Do my colleagues get it? Energy, our own energy, so that we can propel our own automobiles, our own farm equipment, our own airplanes, our own machinery of all types so that we can continue to lead the world in the development of technology and telecommunications and all the other aspects of our society in which we lead the world.

But we cannot do that by placing our hands across the ocean and saying, please send us more energy, please do not raise the prices, please do not cut your production.

I, as an American, cannot any longer stand that. And I believe that a majority of the American citizens in our country feel the same way. We want to end our enslavement to foreign imports of energy. We want to declare independence for our country on the basic needs of our society to move at will, to produce at will, to provide for all our citizens as we want to provide, and actually to help the world as the superpower by creating our own ability to produce the energy necessary to fire the engine of our Nation towards even greater prosperity.

#### REDUCING SEDIMENT AND NUTRIENT LOSSES IN UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing an important bill aimed at reducing sediment and nutrient losses in the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

Over the last 6 months, I have worked closely with many of my colleagues here in the House, farmers, the navigation industry, sporting groups, conservation groups, and government agencies, to come up with an effective, basin-wide, and non-regulatory approach to dealing with this increasingly serious problem in our Nation's heartland.

Why is this important? Run-off from the land represents one of the greatest environmental threats to the Mississippi River. Huge quantities of sediment and nutrients flow into the river, filling in backwaters, degrading the wetland habitat on the river, and cutting off vital lifelines for a wide variety of wildlife.

The Upper Mississippi River Basin is North America's largest migratory route, with more than 40 percent of the waterfowl using this area as a flyway.

□ 1830

Ongoing habitat loss and degradation threatens the river's \$1.2 billion recreation and \$6.6 billion tourism industry, and the river is the primary water drinking source for over 22 million Americans.

Impacts on the commercial navigation industry are severe, with barge traffic impeded by sediment buildup and the Corps of Engineers spending over \$100 million each year on dredging to maintain a navigable channel in the main stem of the river.

Soil erosion reduces the long-term sustainability of family farms with farmers losing more than \$300 million annually in applied nitrogen. This affects farm income at a time when we have a crisis in rural America.

As lawmakers, we must move beyond our current after-the-fact damage repair efforts and instead pass legislation that targets cost-effective measures to reduce sediment and nutrients from entering the river basin in the first place.

In order to reduce sediment and nutrient losses from the landscape, it is imperative that we develop sound scientific information from which to make our conservation decisions. My bill calls for the creation of a basin-wide sediment and nutrient monitoring system and a state-of-the-art computer modeling program to identify hot spots in the basin.

Armed with this information, we will be able to better target landowner-friendly financial and technical assistance to areas where it is most needed.

My bill calls for an expansion of four highly successful USDA conservation programs; CRP, wetland reserve, EQIP and wildlife habitat incentives program.

In addition, the bill includes strong protections for the privacy of personal data collected in connection with mon-

itoring, modeling and technical and financial assessment activities.

This legislation calls for a comprehensive consensus approach to reducing sediment and nutrient intake in order to prevent damage from occurring in the river system. This legislation is collaborative and brings together the relevant Federal agencies in a holistic and comprehensive manner.

This approach, I believe, will have the greatest positive effect for the environment, for our farmers and for our communities in the Upper Mississippi Basin and will do so without creating new Federal regulations.

In 1875, Mr. Speaker, Mark Twain wrote a series of essays that were collected and published under the title *Life on the Mississippi*. Reflecting on his experiences as a steamboat pilot, Twain penned the following words about his beloved Mississippi River, and I quote,

The face of the water in time became a wonderful book, a book that was a dead language to the uneducated passenger but which told its mind to me without reserve, delivering its most cherished secrets as clearly as if it uttered them with a voice. And it was not a book to be read once or thrown aside, for it had a new story to tell every day. Throughout the long 1,200 miles, there was never a page that was void of interest, never one that you could leave unread without loss, never one that you would want to skip thinking you could find higher enjoyment in some other thing. There never was so wonderful a book by a man.

The book of the great Mississippi River is one that I have been fortunate enough to read and reread throughout my life based on personal experience growing up on the river. For the sake of our children and for future generations, we must take measures today to ensure that a healthy and beautiful Mississippi River will be there for them to read as well.

I ask my colleagues for their support of this important legislation, and I look forward to working in this body and with my friends here to ensure passage as soon as possible.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. STARK (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of personal business.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today and through March 26 on account of official business.