



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 104th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 141

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, JULY 31, 1995

No. 125

House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. EVERETT].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 31, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable TERRY EVERETT to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of May 12, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes and each Member other than the majority and minority leader limited to 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. WYDEN] for 5 minutes.

TOBACCO AND GRIDLOCK KILL

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to talk for a few minutes about the critically important public health issue of keeping America's youngsters from beginning to smoke. This is a public health problem that is growing. Three thousand youngsters in our country every day start smoking and eventually 1,000 of those kids will die of smoking-related illnesses. Most importantly, this is a public health problem that is getting worse. Last week, we learned the tragic news based

on a study from the University of Michigan that smoking among eighth graders is up 30 percent in our country.

Until recently, there have been two options for dealing with all this. One was to regulate tobacco through the Food and Drug Administration.

Last year, I asked each of the tobacco executives whether they believed nicotine was addictive. Each one of them said, no, but they are clearly wrong. Tobacco is addictive. It has drug-like properties, and the evidence is in that the Food and Drug Administration has the legal authority to regulate the product.

Unfortunately, if this option is chosen, if the FDA chooses to regulate tobacco, what will happen is the tobacco companies will go to court, they will sue and we will lose another generation of our children to political gridlock and infighting. So I and other Members of Congress believe that it is time to explore other options. In exploring these options, let us try to set aside the politics that rage about this issue and do what is best for our children.

Some of my colleagues say that if the FDA does not regulate tobacco, that would be good for the South, particularly Democrats in the South. Other colleagues say that if the FDA regulates tobacco, even if nothing gets done, that will be good for the President because the President is taking on tobacco.

Both of those views, in my opinion, do a disservice to our Nation's children.

Tobacco kills, but gridlock kills also. So for that reason, I and Congressman ROSE of North Carolina have suggested another approach. We believe it is worth exploring the concept of the Federal Government entering into a written, binding, legal agreement between the tobacco companies and the Federal Government to take dramatic, immediate measures to stop young people from smoking.

We are talking about banning vending machines from where children congregate. We are discussing banning advertising targeted at young people, and most importantly, at a time when the Federal Government is cutting funds from health and social services, we are talking about the tobacco companies putting up at least \$100 million for the States to have tough enforcement of the laws banning sales to minors and public education efforts to stop young people from smoking.

Most particularly, I believe that this agreement cannot be voluntary. It would have to be legally binding, and if at any point the tobacco companies breached the agreement, then the Food and Drug Administration would go forward and regulate tobacco.

Mr. Speaker, the interests of children has to be our top priority. If there is more gridlock and more political infighting, the tobacco companies can surely hold off FDA regulation to the point where President Clinton is no longer in office. They have deep pockets for lawsuits, and I know personally, because they have taken me and one of our colleagues, Mr. WAXMAN to court over our efforts to make sure that the health of our young people is protected.

Now is the time to act in the interests of our children. Tobacco kills, but so does gridlock. Let us act quickly to protect our children.

ACCORD ON BOAT PEOPLE IN DANGER OF COLLAPSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, as the chairman of the Asia and Pacific Subcommittee of the House International Relations Committee, this Member has spoken several times regarding the

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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