

developments along our border known as colonias.

Throughout my tenure in the U.S. Congress, throughout my public service—I have sought to make the American people aware of the fact that, as the result of the indefensible greed of developers, these communities lack the basic necessities to sustain life—water and sewer services.

The colonias are breeding grounds for deadly diseases most of the United States never sees—cholera, typhoid, tuberculosis, and others that occur mostly in the poorest nations of the world, not, one would think, on our very own border from Texas to California. These diseases and the impoverished communities in which they fester are a threat to every American.

It is for these reasons that I have fought and even pleaded with some of you not to forsake victims of the colonias—thousands of people who risked their financial resources for a small slice of the American Dream that has, all too often, turned out to be an unsanitary patch of desert that has robbed their babies of childhood and them of their hard-earned dollars.

As a result of our efforts to give local communities and the victims of colonias the resources for the basic water and sewer services that any home requires, some \$250 million has given thousands of colonias residents not just running water and toilet facilities, but hope.

And it's been worth every penny of it and it's been worth every one of the countless hours I have spent trying to explain the need just to look in the eyes of a colonia child who is healthy today only because of Congress.

And Texas, too, has responded by enacting legislation similar to that I proposed in the Texas Legislature more than 20 years ago to make it impossible to develop more colonias that fail to offer water and sewer services.

Not one penny of America's tax dollars has gone to colonia developers. All of it has gone to help their victims and to help protect all Americans from diseases no American should be exposed to.

Although "60 Minutes" made some of these points and raised the consciousness of viewers about this issue, it made some suggestions it knew to be false—including that I threatened the attorney general of Texas.

Attorney General Morales knows that I never directly or indirectly threatened him in any fashion about this or any other issue, nor participated in any conference call with him about colonias or any other matter. The attorney general knows this and "60 Minutes" and other news media would, too, if they only bothered to investigate.

"60 Minutes" could have helped colonia residents and the public health crisis caused by colonia. Instead, it muddied the water with false charges and innuendos that careful, accurate reporting—or attention to the facts provided it—could have avoided.

Because my intentions with regard to colonias—helping the victims get water and sewer services and putting the developers out of business—has clearly been a matter of public record for 25 years, I ask you, my colleagues, and you, the American people, not to turn your backs on the children and struggling families living along our southern border in the abominations called colonias.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

#### ISTOOK AMENDMENT TO HAVE FAR-REACHING EFFECTS

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

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, today I circulated to my colleagues in the House the following document entitled "The Istook Amendment, New Regulation of Your Business."

One of the myths about the so-called Istook-McIntosh-Ehrlich proposal is that it has only to do with nonprofit organizations. In fact its reach will be much broader than that. I think my colleagues ought to be aware of exactly how extensive and pervasive and perverse that reach would be.

This fact sheet outlines what businesses could expect under the regime that would be imposed by the Istook amendment. Many people think it has only to do with grants. Of course grants do go to many businesses. Just to point out a few, Lockheed Martin gets research grants from the Defense Department; Chrysler, Ford, W.R. Grace from the Commerce Department. Thousands of others would be affected by grants.

But because of the other language in this proposal, many, many other companies would also be subjected to its extraordinary regulatory regime. That is because not only do direct payments count but also the receipt of, quote, anything of value.

So, for instance, a farming business that gets irrigation water from the Federal Government would be included, as would, in my part of Colorado, several major businesses who happen to get irrigation water from Bureau of Reclamation projects.

Farmers getting emergency livestock feed during severe weather would be affected, and some other things that you really would not think of initially as a thing of value until you examine carefully.

For instance, publishers of newspapers and magazines getting second class mailing permits, a benefit from what would otherwise be their mailing costs. Broadcasters getting television or radio licenses, companies getting patents, and so on. Many, many things that do not necessarily occur to you right off the bat as being a grant or a thing of value would suck you into the regulations.

How would that affect your business? Well, it would mean that you would be restricted from spending even your private business resources to protect your private business interests whenever the government was involved. Because anything you might do to try to change or

influence or reverse any decision by any level of government that might affect your business would be subjected to this restriction against your use of your private money, if you got any grant or thing of value from the Federal Government.

So appealing a State administrative or local administrative decision would count as political activity that would be restricted. Participating in any kind of campaign, even a local referendum affecting the business climate, would be covered.

But much more significantly than that, you would have to find out not only accounting for your own political activity, but you would have to find out about the political activity of anybody with whom you did business, your employees, your vendors and so forth. Because if they were hyperactive politically, if they happened in one year or another to exceed a 15-percent limit, then anything you spent with them would count against your own limit. If you exceeded your own limit, then you would be in violation of the law and, among other things, would be subject to a kind of vigilante lawsuit that is authorized under this bill by incorporating the Federal False Claims Act.

It is much broader, as I say, than just a regulation of the lobbying activities of nonprofits getting Federal grants. That is the mask behind which the proponents of this language wish to hide. In fact, it is entirely likely that the Istook-McIntosh-Ehrlich proposal would affect virtually all businesses in this country in one way or another.

Mr. Speaker, I include the following document for the RECORD:

#### THE ISTOOK AMENDMENT: NEW REGULATION OF YOUR BUSINESS

To stifle critics of their political agenda, House Republicans have come up with what may be the most intrusive regulatory scheme ever. Although often described as applying just to nonprofit organizations, the "Istook amendment"<sup>1</sup> is written so broadly that it would regulate many (or even all) American businesses.

#### ARE YOU REGULATED:

With few exceptions, your business will be regulated if it gets money or any "thing of value" from the federal government.

The only relevant exceptions: you wouldn't be regulated for receiving payments for property or services you provide "for the direct benefit or use of the United States," or for receiving "payments of loans, debts, or entitlements."

Does your business get federal grants? Then you're regulated.

Lockheed-Martin (Defense Department research grants); Ball Corporation (NASA); Alcoa, Amoco, Chrysler, Food, General Motors, W.R. Grace & Co., Dow Chemical, and U.S. Steel (all Commerce Department); and thousands of other companies would be regulated.

Other federal payments? You're regulated. Agricultural exporters in the Market Promotion Program, fishermen compensated

<sup>1</sup>The Istook amendment is title VI of H.R. 2127, the House-passed Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. House conferees have also proposed it as a conference-committee addition to the Treasury-Postal Service-General Government appropriations bill.