

turned over to the Federal Government through the Department of Education, and they will not only process the applications, they will become bankers collecting the money for the taxpayer, lending the money as a bank would do. I suggest to you, Mr. HOEKSTRA, that would be a disastrous event, that they have a 900,000 backlog in just processing applications.

Can you imagine if they also lent the money and had to collect the money?

And their excuse for a 900,000 backlog is it snowed and the Government shut down 21 days. Both are false. The private sector gets up and goes to work when it snows because they are in it as a way of making their living. The Government shutdown did not effect the ability to process these loans because contractors are the main source of doing the processing. It just shows how inefficient the magic bureaucrats are, and, when analyzed against the facts, they do not do very well.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. These are just 2 examples: The Corporation for National Service, the direct lending program. There are many more. Bureaucrats at the Commerce Department know another myth is that the bureaucrats at the Commerce Department know how to create high-skilled, high-paying jobs better than American entrepreneurs, that bureaucrats at the Department of Education know better than parents, and teachers, and local schools how to run a tutoring or mentoring program in their local community.

The bottom line is who pays for these magic shows? It is the American people. It is you and I. How much have we spent? Trillions.

The real question that the American people have to ask is can we afford any more of these shows. You be the judge.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. GRAHAM. While you are conducting hearings, there is another area that I would like you to look into that I have asked the GAO to investigate, and that is that there are millions of dollars of unreconciled money responsible by the Department of Education. We need to find out where the money is at.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I thank the gentleman for his suggestion. We will pursue that.

DETERMINING WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO WORK LEGALLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mrs. SEASTRAND] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, few current events affect our Nation so dramatically as does the record-breaking number of illegal aliens entering our country year after year. Illegal immigration is a national crisis. Although my State of California bears the brunt of this problem, illegal immigration is a national dilemma. It affects every hard-working, taxpaying citizen of our country.

Tomorrow, with several of my colleagues, I am going to be offering an amendment to the immigration bill, H.R. 2202. Our amendment would call for a mandatory pilot program in five of the seven States most impacted by illegal immigration. It would require that employers call a 1-800 number to check the eligibility to work of a newly hired employee. This amendment simply puts back into the bill the original language that was passed by the House Committee on the Judiciary.

The requirement that illegal aliens be verified for work eligibility is crucial to true immigration reform. Contrary to much misinformation, this amendment does not, and I repeat, does not, establish a national ID card or even a system by which a worker can be tracked throughout their career. In fact, this amendment does none of the following:

It does not require any new data to be supplied by the employee.

It does not require any new personal information of the employee.

It does not create a new Government data base.

It cannot be expanded into a national program without a specific vote by Congress.

Now those of you that know me and have followed my voting record are well aware that I am very much opposed to any more Government intrusion into our lives. I have stated time and time again that I am opposed to any sort of tracking system or national ID card, and I firmly hold these beliefs.

This amendment would simply use information that is already required by the Social Security Administration. The opportunity to work in the United States has acted like a magnet, drawing hundreds and thousands to this country. Unfortunately, many of those who have come to this country seeking employment have skirted our legal immigration system and have made a mockery of our current laws.

This amendment is about jobs, American jobs. Those that come to this country illegally should not be granted the opportunity to take the jobs of American workers, and recent studies demonstrate that illegal aliens often take jobs that could otherwise be filled by American workers. Our amendment allows an easy, reliable enforcement mechanism for verifying worker eligibility.

Now for the past decade employers have been prohibited from knowingly hiring illegal aliens. To verify new hires, current law requires employers to check the identity and work eligibility documents of all new employees. The system, the current one for verifying worker eligibility, has been a complete failure. Not only has the current system failed to discourage legal aliens from seeking jobs in America, but it also has turned employers into de facto INS agents, and without the means to effectively determine a worker's eligibility, employers have had to face a double-edged sword. If they hire an ille-

gal alien to work for them, well, employers are faced with civil penalties imposed by the Federal Government. If they question a prospective employee about their eligibility, employers face the possibility of a lawsuit charging discrimination.

Further adding to this dilemma, the easy availability of counterfeit documents has made verification of authentic documents a joke. In southern California alone, Federal agencies, 2.5 million fraudulent documents from 1989 to 1992.

Now the amendment we are offering will correct this problem. Employers would simply make a toll free inquiry through telephones or electronic means to match new employee's names, Social Security and alien identification numbers against existing Social Security Administration and INS data. This type of verification would be easy, effective since employers would already have to check for every new employee that they hire. Employers would not be tempted to hire only those who look for sound American. In addition, this type of verification would take the onus off the employer to determine who is eligible to work legally.

Now I have talked to business men and women and constituents of my district, and there is overwhelming support for this amendment. It is an effective tool. In fact, in southern California there has been a program that has been tested over the past year by 220 employers with more than 88,000 workers.

□ 2300

In more than 25 separate verifications, 99.9 percent were satisfactorily resolved within a 5- to 10-day period. So, because of this, I just would urge my colleagues to look at this amendment, and I hope that they will support this amendment tomorrow.

THE NEED TO SPEED UP THE PROCESS OF FDA REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX] is recognized for 30 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss with my colleagues some very important issues that will be facing the 104th Congress in this second session. Mr. Speaker, I speak of FDA reform, Food and Drug Administration reform.

We know that many Americans are waiting for the approval of drugs or medical devices, because FDA has been so far mired down in overregulation and delay. I believe that it is a bipartisan effort that we are undertaking here in the House to make sure we speed up the approval of medical devices and pharmaceuticals. The legislation which I have introduced, H.R. 1995 and H.R. 2290, will in fact address for the biotech and the pharmaceutical fields speeding