

I want to use this chart to talk about the battery recycling bill, which is going to come up today and is a very good bill; but many of the Republicans cannot hide, by voting for this bill today, their previous votes on issues that are related.

For example, most of them voted—if I could turn this over, Mr. Speaker—basically against protecting children from arsenic in their drinking water. They voted against adequate funding for our Nation's toxic waste cleanup programs. They voted to stop the EPA from protecting Americans from exposure to arsenic, dioxin, lead, and other cancer causing pollutants and to allow corporate polluters to dump up to 70,000 chemicals into our Nation's rivers, lakes and streams and, finally, to allow industry to pollute our drinking water.

I want to make certain that the American public knows what is going on here today on the floor of this House. I will be supporting these bills today, the Coastal Zone Management Act, the battery recycling bill, the national wildlife refuge bills, and I have supported pro-environment initiatives throughout this Congress. Unfortunately, many of my friends on the other side of the aisle cannot say the same.

For that, we are going to give them today the figleaf award. The figleaf award is given to those Republicans, the majority of them, who are essentially using Earth Day antics to try to cover up their environmental records.

Mr. Speaker, it is not fair. When I came to Congress in 1988, I came here because many of my constituents were concerned about the environment and hoped that by coming down here I could do something to turn around the dismal situation at the Jersey Shore where we had medical waste and a lot of debris washing up on our beaches and our beaches were closed. I am very proud to say that Democratic Congresses, in cooperation with Republican and Democratic Presidents over the last 8 years, have done a lot to clean up our water. But this Congress has tried to turn back the clock.

The Republican majority and its leadership should not be allowed to hide what they are doing behind a figleaf.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, the gentleman's figleaf, if they wore that figleaf in public they probably would be arrested for indecent exposure. The fact is, there is not any figleaf that is big enough to cover up the damage and the effort to undo environmental public policy that this Congress has done. In fact this Congress has not done the big things right. It is not doing the little things right.

Earth Day is not just the 26th day. Earth Day was not just yesterday. It is every day, not just 1 week but 52 weeks a year.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the gentleman from Minnesota.

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP ACT

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

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, today is the day after Earth Day, and I am one of those Members of Congress from the Republican side who feels that every day should be an Earth Day because really, if you stop and think about it, most of the rest of the world is destroying our planet.

We have taken some corrective actions in this Congress and through Republican efforts. The Environmental Protection Agency was first proposed by President Nixon in 1972. Republicans have a long history of supporting cleaning up the environment, not only in this country but also in the world. One reason I came to the floor today is to announce that I am reintroducing legislation that I introduced in my first term. I have only been here 38 months, but this was probably the first place of legislation I introduced as a new Member. It deals with cleaning up our global environment.

As a former businessman, I had a chance in the international trade field to travel the world and see the mass destruction of our planet by so many nations. What disturbed me in traveling around the world and looking at what is going on was that in fact the U.S. policy, the U.S. financial backing was supporting some of these efforts at destruction of our planet.

So one of the first bills I introduced was called the Global Environmental Cleanup Act. I introduced it; it never got a hearing with the old majority. Really never got a fair airing. I felt that it was important that the United States, through legislation and through a directive from Congress, state as a firm policy that countries who receive any type of financial assistance should in fact be obligated to clean up the environment.

That is exactly what this bill will do. And I invite my colleagues to join me in being cosponsors of the legislation this week when it is introduced. Basically what it says is if you receive U.S. financial assistance, financial aid, that a certain percent of that financial aid, and whether it is to build a dam or whether it is to create an industry or some activity in a foreign nation, that in fact that portion of those funds from the United States and the taxpayer goes to clean up the environment in these countries. It is a reasonable approach and a reasoned approach.

The other thing that I noticed is that because of the way other countries, third world countries and other competing countries compete with the United States in manufacturing and other activities, often using lower environmental standards. They bring products into the United States at a lower cost, with less environmental protection, less attention to environmental

cleanup and protection and they compete with our businessmen and women on an unfair basis. So this is a little bit of an equalizer.

This bill is also interesting because it also impacts every agency of the United States that deals in financial support or assistance or backing. The United States actually supports the finances of almost all third world nations. If we pulled out our financial backing through the United Nations, through the World Bank, through the various development banks and regional banks, many of these countries could collapse.

What this bill says, in its second part, is in fact that cleaning up the environment and environmental policy will be part of our policy and our financial backing. We will direct our representatives to these organizations to express not only by their voice but also by their vote support for environmental cleanup so our taxpayer dollars will help clean up and establish a policy for cleaning up these third world nations that abuse the world environment.

Let me provide examples. In Egypt, the second largest recipient of United States foreign assistance and we see pollution that would startle any environmentalist, and certainly should be a concern to every American. If you look in the Western Hemisphere in Mexico, a major trade recipient, a recipient of the largess of the United States, environmental pollution is a disaster. This bill and my colleagues' action in cosponsoring will help clean up that mess.

VARIOUS REFUGE BILLS ON SUSPENSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New York [Mr. HINCHEY] is recognized during morning business for 4 minutes.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I am from the State of New York where we have a long history of protecting the environment on a bipartisan basis. As a matter of fact, New York was the State that gave to the Nation Theodore Roosevelt, who more than any other person was responsible for the establishment of our system of national parks. It is also the State where Nelson Rockefeller was the Governor, a great Republican Governor, one who led the fight in the early 1960's for environmental protection and particularly in cleaning up our waterways with the New York Clean Water Act.

Unfortunately in this Congress the sense of bipartisan responsibility and protection for the environment has just flown out the window. It is completely absent. However, later on this afternoon, we will see part of what can only be described as a great American confidence game, a con game.

In a con game what happens is this, the confidence man or person tries to gain your confidence so that he can put

a fast one over on you. That is what is happening here this afternoon. The Republican majority of this Congress will try to gain the confidence of the American people with regard to the environment by passing some very simply, noncontroversial environmental bills, while all the time hiding the fact that over the course of the last year and a half throughout this Congress, they have systematically gone aggressively forward with attempts to destroy the environment. The figleaf of this confidence game that they will be promoting this afternoon, when that is taken away, shows clearly what the record is. There it is.

They voted earlier this year for including waivers of environmental laws to mandate salvage logging in the national forests. That will result in the cutting of old growth trees in national forests in the Northwest and all across the country. Fiscal year 1995 rescission bill, H.R. 1158, vote No. 204, on March 15, 1995, the Yates amendment to delete the salvage rider, the Republican vote was 208 to 17 in support of that kind of cutting, logging without laws, rollcall 204. They voted also for opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil and gas development. That was the Budget Reconciliation Act, H.R. 2491, vote No. 812 on November 17 of last year. The Republicans voted 232 to 1 in favor of the budget bill with the ANWR Act in it, oil drilling in the wildlife refuge, opening up the wildlife refuge to rapacious oil drilling. At least twice they voted for an Interior appropriations bill which guts the Endangered Species Act, increasing logging in the Tongass National Forest, allowing pesticides to be used in national wildlife refuges and undermining the Mohave National Preserve. That was the fiscal year 1996 Interior appropriations bill, H.R. 1977, vote No. 853. It occurred on December 13 of last year. And on that vote the Yates motion to recommit to conference was opposed, and the Republicans voted 229 to 3 against recommitting that measure to conference.

Also the veto override, vote No. 5 on January 4, 1996, the Republican majority in this House voted 225 to 4 in favor of overriding the President's veto; 98 percent of them voted for that veto override, which gutted the Endangered Species Act. And also they voted for slashing the Land and Water Conservation Act programs which protect fish and wildlife habitat, fiscal year 1996 Interior Appropriations Act, H.R. 1977, vote No. 502, which occurred on June 12, 1995.

The gentleman from California, GEORGE MILLER, introduced an amendment to restore the administration's \$235.1 million budget request for Land and Water Conservation Act land acquisition. The Republican majority voted 228 against that act. So they slashed the land and water conservation fund.

So let us not be conned. Let us not be conned by the figleaf of environmental

protection when what has really been happening here on a systematic and aggressive basis is an attempt by this majority to undermine every significant environmental protection law that this country has.

MEDICARE

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about Medicare, but my colleagues on the other side of the aisle keep bringing up the issue of the environment. I am glad the previous speaker talked about all the environmental Republicans from the fact that President Nixon was one that brought forth the Environmental Protection Agency. The real core difference we have, we are all for the environment. The difference is whether Washington has all the answers or we know better in Florida what to do with the Florida environment and New York knows better what to do with their environment. I do not believe that Washington is the expert on every single subject. We need to let the States have the power to make some of those decisions.

What I rise today to talk about is Medicare. There are two articles in today's papers about Medicare; one in the New York Times, the front page, and one in the Wall Street Journal.

The New York Times article talks about how Medicare is in a bigger financial problem than we realize. And the Wall Street Journal article talks about how the Democrats are making it a campaign issue, which is too bad because Medicare is far too important to play politics with and to scare seniors.

The New York Times article says that the Medicare Program is in worse than projected financial problems. They talk about the fact that last year, for example, in the Medicare Program, the part A Program, was projected to have a \$4.7 billion surplus. Instead it ran a \$35.7 million deficit. So we started the problem a year ago. In this current fiscal year, the first 6 months, during this whole year the projection has been that Medicare would have a \$4.2 billion surplus. We are losing money already this year. We are projected to have a surplus of \$45 million this year. Instead we are going to have a \$4.2 billion deficit for the first 6 months alone. Medicare is going bankrupt faster than we ever thought it was.

We said it was going to go bankrupt in 7 years. It is probably going to go bankrupt now in another 5 years or so, and we are anxious to get the trustees' report to see how serious the problem really is.

The one thing good about the New York Times article is Chris Jennings, who is a special assistant to President

Clinton, says, Republicans and Democrats should work together to address the problem. That is exactly what we need to do. This is a bipartisan problem. It is too important to demagog and scare seniors. I have an 87-year-old mother who is dependent on Medicare. In 11 years I will be on Medicare. We all have family and relatives and friends on Medicare. We cannot allow the program to go bankrupt and we are not going to. We are going to save the system. We all agree to save the system.

President Clinton, my friends on the other side of the aisle, everybody wants to keep the system alive, keep it going. We have to do that. It is too important. But we should not scare seniors. Being from Florida, we know what happens when you scare seniors, Gov. Lawton Chiles used that in his campaign back in 1994, and there were hearings in the State legislature how they had a medicare campaign in Florida. That is wrong and we should stop doing it here.

It was brought out in the Wall Street Journal article today. Let me read a couple comments from that.

Democrats and their allies are mounting an aggressive drive to paint Republicans as Medicare's undertakers, ignoring the Democrats own overhaul proposals and charging instead in a national advertising campaign that the GOP wants to savage the program.

Come on. Let us get serious about this. Medicare is too important. We agree; they agree. We have to save the program. Stop using rhetoric like that. These are ads run by, whether it is the Democratic Party or the AFL-CIO spending their \$35 million to beat up on Medicare, they say it is wrong to start cutting Medicare.

Minority Leader GEPHARDT has a quote in here, the extremist Republican Medicare cuts would destroy and devastate the program.

Again, let us get serious. That is not right. That is scaring seniors. I have more seniors in my district than anyone else. We have to take care of Medicare and we will.

Robert Reischauer is quoted in here, former head of the Congressional Budget Office, appointed by Democrats, saying, if you keep it in proper perspective, we are within striking distance of each other. We are going to spend \$1.6 trillion over the next 7 years on Medicare. The difference between the Republican proposal and the Democratic proposal is \$44 billion. We are not talking about big differences.

We have learned a great deal over the past year about what is wrong with it. It is full of waste and fraud and abuse. If we cannot find \$44 billion over 7 years, more waste, fraud, and abuse, then we are not doing a very good job.

That is what we have to focus on, the waste, fraud, and abuse. The Republicans are allowing Medicare to be the fastest growing part of our budget. If you look at it on a per person basis, we are going from \$4,800 per person on Medicare to \$7,100 per person on Medicare over the 7 years, more money every year to spend on Medicare. So we