

blocked the appointment of conferees. Since 1987, Democrats have been in the forefront of moving campaign finance reform. Here we are again today. We have toiled at bringing campaign finance reform to American politics for nearly a decade. We will not rest until we get it.

The Democrat bill which I offer contains real reform that will make real changes to the electoral process in this country. My bill seeks to reduce the power of money in elections and return that power to the people. Too much money too often decides who gets to Congress and who does not. Congress should be more reflective of the American population. Right now Congress is full of, and I must admit, white males like me. But my bill levels the playing field so that we will see more minorities, more women, more moderate income persons serving in the United States Congress, those who can run for office and be competitive.

If we do not stop the money chase, if we do not stop wealthy people from buying office, this Congress will be one big elitist white boys club. If we do not impose some limits, as my bill does, if we do not enhance disclosure requirements, as my bill does, if we do not level the playing field, as my bill does, the American people will continue to complain about the influence of money in elections, about not being able to trace where the money comes from, about Congress not doing what it is supposed to do to clean up the system.

We have a chance this week on Thursday to clean up the system. I urge Members to take a look at my bill, take a look, and I speak to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, take a look at H.R. 3505 and join me in voting for something that is really positive. Join me in showing the American people that like the gift ban, like lobbying reform, like the compliance act, this Congress can do what is right and enact serious reform to bring order out of chaos.

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

[Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

KIRBY PUCKETT

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

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, shock waves reverberated through the sports world on Friday. Kirby Puckett told us what we did not want to hear, that this was the last day that he would wear Twins uniform No. 34.

Baseball is a game for optimists. "We will get them tomorrow" and "wait

until next year" are examples created by baseball fans. We all wanted to believe that the doctors would perform magic and that Kirby would once again be patrolling the outfield and bedeviling American League pitchers. It was not to be.

If baseball is a game for optimists, Kirby Puckett was its best salesman. Maybe it was all that energy and enthusiasm trapped inside that teddy bear body that allowed him to defy the laws of gravity, the laws of physics. With leaps that would make Michael Jordan proud, Kirby robbed countless hitters of home runs.

In a sports world dominated today by megabuck contracts and even bigger egos, he was a throwback to an earlier day, to earlier day heroes. He did not believe in trash talk. He let his play speak for itself, and speak it did.

His record of excellence shouts at you. In his roughly 12 years in the major leagues, he appeared in 12 All Star games. He won six Golden Gloves. He hit 207 home runs, had a lifetime batting average of .318, and he has two World Series rings to show for it.

Not bad for a kid who almost spent his life at the Ford assembly plant on Terrance Avenue. He got laid off and returned to baseball, and we all are richer for it.

Kirby was the youngest of nine children, raised by two loving parents in the projects of Chicago's south side. We are all proud of Kirby but no one should be prouder than his mother. To paraphrase one fan, Kirby Puckett is a wonderful human being who just happened to be one of the greatest ball players of all time.

Every day he demonstrated one of the most important eternal truths, that the key to happiness is to be thankful. And so, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Twins fans in the upper Midwest and sports fans all over the world, permit me to send this personal message: Thank you, thank you, Kirby Puckett. Good luck and may God bless you.

THE KELLWOOD CO. OF WEST VIRGINIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, I first tonight want to commend the Kellwood plant in Spencer, WV. As garment manufacturers across the Nation are working to improve working conditions, I have today sent a letter to the Secretary of Labor, Robert Reich, praising the Kellwood Co. of Spencer as an innovative firm which is a step ahead in the push to eliminate abuse of labor laws.

Kellwood, which is the largest private label clothing supplier in the United States, employs 500 people at a major manufacturing and distribution facility in West Virginia. This facility has long been a stabilizing force in the community and is a respected and re-

vered employer. In the summer of 1995, Kellwood began implementing a program requiring its contractors to submit to independent audits and, if needed, follow-up remediation efforts. The company is now in the process of completing audits of its contractors nationwide to make sure they are following the rules.

I believe these voluntary efforts by Kellwood track perfectly with the Labor Department's no-sweat initiative and they are successful in correcting the contractor problems that exist in the industry.

The U.S. Department of Labor no-sweat campaign is an effort to crack down on sweatshops and clothing contractors violating the Fair Labor Standards Act by using child labor that forces workers to put in excessive hours without adequate pay or operating unsafe shops.

The Kellwood Co. has become a corporate leader in eliminating these abuses. It is my hope, Mr. Speaker, that the Labor Department will recognize the leadership role that Kellwood has taken in regard to contractor compliance, particularly as Kellwood is one of a number of companies taking part in the upcoming Fashion Industry Forum at Marymount University where various parts of the apparel industry will meet to try to continue taking on the problem of sweatshops. Kellwood is to be commended.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Mr. WISE. I had wanted to talk about reform because this is reform week here. This is when the Republican leadership is to bring to the floor its campaign finance reform bill. The problem is, this is not campaign reform, it is campaign retreat. What this does is it does not get cash out of politics. It results in cashing in.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to note that this bill that will be brought to the floor, only this week a distinguished West Virginian, Rebecca Cain, the leader, president of the National League of Women Voters, criticized this bill as not being true reform.

I think it is important to point out that most Americans, most West Virginians when they talk to me, think the problem is money needs to be taken out of politics, not put into it.

Let us look at what this bill, if it passes, would do. It would permit the maximum amount that individuals can give to a candidate to go from \$1,000 to \$2,500 per election. That does not sound like reform to me. It would permit the cumulative amount that individuals can give to candidates and to political action committees to go from \$25,000 to \$72,500 per year. Does not sound like reform to me.

It would also permit the maximum amount that individuals can give to any one political party, committee, to go from \$20,000 to \$58,000 per year. Incidentally, that is on top of the \$72,500 that is already permitted.

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Now, this is a proposal I really find fascinating. In fact, under this proposal