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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER. 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 except the majority and minority leaders limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida [Mr. CANADY] for 5 minutes.

UNFAIR TREATMENT OF U.S. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the House's attention a very serious matter faced by fruit and vegetable growers not only in my district, but also throughout the country.

When NAFTA was enacted 3 years ago, its leading proponents promised the new golden age of expanding trade opportunities with vast new markets for U.S. businesses to tap into, creating new jobs and capital and investment in our economy. When I and many other members of the Florida congressional delegation raised concerns with the administration regarding the potentially adverse impact that NAFTA would have on our State's fruit and winter vegetable growers, we were told not to worry, our farmers would be protected.

Here are two examples of the protection promised to our farmers during the debate over NAFTA's enactment: First, Mexican tomato imports were placed under a tariff rate quota, which would be phased out 10 years after enactment. Under this provision, if imports exceeded a certain amount during a fixed period of time, a tariff of 25 cents per 25-pound container would be imposed.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, thanks to the drastic devaluation of the peso this tariff has been rendered entirely useless. Given the devaluation of the peso, Mexican growers have enormous incentive to sell as much of their product in America as they possibly can, and the so-called safeguard tariff provisions have done absolutely nothing to stop the flood of Mexican produce into the United States market.

Second, protection for U.S. growers was promised through a clause placed in the NAFTA implementation bill which allowed U.S. vegetable growers to seek provisional relief from suspected dumping actions through adjudication from the International Trade Commission. Unfortunately, as we all know, the ITC not only refused to consider Florida growers' concerns, but it also failed to conduct the monitoring of trade conditions that it was mandated to do.

Once again the promise of a mechanism to ensure equitable treatment of U.S. growers proved to be nothing but an illusion. This unfair treatment of U.S. agricultural producers is very troubling, but the problems with NAFTA go beyond the injustices done to America's farmers.

The problems with NAFTA pose a direct threat to the health and well-being of Americans who consume products imported from Mexico. Mexican agricultural products are grown in circumstances that fall far below the standards that American growers are required to meet under Federal and State laws. The production and harvesting of much Mexican produce takes place under conditions that can only be described as unsanitary and unsafe.

Last week the news was filled with stories about the schoolchildren around the country who apparently contracted hepatitis A because they consumed strawberries grown in Mexico. Given the disgustingly filthy conditions on many Mexican farms, this sort of incident should come as no surprise to anyone. Daily, thousands of trucks enter our country from Mexico and our customs agents, border guards, and Food and Drug Administration officials make only token efforts to inspect the produce flooding in from Mexico.

So under NAFTA as it is now being implemented, American consumers are being exposed to unsafe produce and American farmers are denied the protection against unfair competition they were promised.

To add insult to injury, the Mexican Government has been blocking the importation of American agricultural products into Mexico. Presently, the Mexican Government has in place so-called sanitary and phytosanitary restrictions on the importation of our fruits and vegetables. It has taken 3 years for the cherry producers in Oregon and northern California to get these restrictions lifted on their crop, but despite our best efforts we have seen no movement on Florida fruit and vegetable imports into Mexico.

Why can Mexican agricultural products enter the United States with great ease while citrus produced in Florida cannot be sold in Mexico? It makes no sense. It cannot be justified, and it is time for it to end.

Mr. Speaker, the deal we are getting under NAFTA is not the deal that we were promised in 1993. This is not a level playing field. NAFTA must be made to work for everyone, for all of our industries, not just a select few, and in this fight we need the support of Congress and the administration. As Congress begins the debate over fast-track negotiations and the accession of Chile to NAFTA, we must ensure that the interest of all Americans are protected.

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RECENT FEDERAL RESERVE OPEN MARKET COMMITTEE DECISIONS RAISE SERIOUS QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. FRANK] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, the recent decision by the Federal Reserve Open Market Committee to raise interest rates in itself raises two very serious questions, one substantive and one procedural. The substantive question is will America be permitted to grow economically at a rate sufficient to overcome some of our most pressing social problems or will the Federal Reserve be allowed to snuff out that growth? And that is also the procedural question, because we have a nonelected body consisting of seven members who were at least appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate and four others, regional bank presidents who are officers of private corporations in effect, the Federal regional banks, making the single most important economic judgment that will be made in America this year, and that simply cannot be allowed to go forward.

Alan Greenspan is a man of good will, and he is doing what he thinks is right. But what he thinks right strikes many of us as profoundly wrong. When Mr. Greenspan testified before the House Committee on Banking and Financial Services we asked him, several of us, whether there was any evidence of inflation given the growth that we have seen in recent years. His answer candidly was no. I asked him if he did not agree that he had in fact himself been too pessimistic in his analysis of the ability of the economy to grow without generating inflation. He admitted that he had been too pessimistic, he has been wrong over these past years.

We reached a level of unemployment far lower than what Mr. Greenspan and others of the Federal Reserve thought we could reach without triggering inflation; the inflation did not come. Mr. Greenspan decided nevertheless, with the support of the others on that committee, to raise interest rates to slow down growth. In other words, Mr. Greenspan has told us we are creating too many jobs in America. Many of us of course feel that our problem has been that we have not created enough jobs.

We made a decision last year; I did not agree with it, but the country made it, to make drastic changes in the welfare system. Everyone agrees that that will work only if the people who have been on welfare are able to be absorbed into the work force. Mr. Greenspan and his colleagues have just taken a step which will make it very much more difficult. Obviously, the people on welfare are among the last to be hired. They are people with skill deficiencies and other problems. An economy which is not growing rapidly simply will not assimilate them.

We just heard a previous speaker complain about NAFTA. Trade is a very controversial issue in this country. There are many who believe that we ought to be increasing international trade, but increasing international trade creates both winners and losers in America. An economy which is growing, an economy in which new jobs are being created is better able to deal with the transitions of international trade. By clamping down on growth, by announcing that America simply will not be allowed to grow as rapidly as it has been growing because of his fear of an inflation which he acknowledges he cannot yet point to, Mr. Greenspan not only cuts out the benefit of that growth but exacerbates other problems.

We have a dispute over how deeply we have to cut important programs to reach a balanced budget. Those disputes turn in part on differing estimates between the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Management and Budget about the rate of growth. Again Mr. Greenspan has just said to us there will be less growth, there will therefore be less revenue and the painful decisions involved in getting the deficit to zero by 2002 will become more painful.

There is a legitimate question for this country as to what risks we want. Many of us believe that a combination of trends have made it possible for us to grow more rapidly than in the past without inflation. Mr. Greenspan and some of his colleagues in the central bank apparatus believe that the risks of inflation are so great that they do not want to find out whether or not that is true. They have decided we will not continue to see how long we can grow without inflation actually arising. He did what he said was a preemptive strike, but which looked to many of us like a self-fulfilling prophecy. Not only is that wrong it seems to be substantively, but from the standpoint of democracy that is not a decision that a handful of appointed officials and private bank officials ought to make.

So I will be working with many of my colleagues to ask this body through its Committee on Banking and Financial Services, through other committees and through the floor itself to address this issue: the question of what degree of growth we will strive for. The question of when we will choke off growth because of an anticipation of inflation that has not yet appeared must not be left to a handful of bankers or a handful of any other appointed officials. It must be done through the democratic process.

The possibility that America can increase the rate of growth that is noninflationary, which has appeared to many of us to be more and more likely over the past few years, cannot be snuffed out this easily, and I hope, through a variety of means, that we will be allowed to bring to the floor of this House, before the Federal Open Market Committee meets again, this issue so it can be debated as it ought to be in a democratic society.

THE SAFE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentlewoman from Maryland [Mrs. MORELLA] is recognized during morning hour debates for 2 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to be joining my colleagues, the gentleman from New York [Mr. ACKERMAN] and the gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. MCCARTHY], in introducing the Stop Arming Felons Act today. Today we will introduce it.

Current law bans convicted felons from owning firearms. However, felons may upon release from prison petition the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms to restore their gun ownership rights.

Congress acted in 1992 to rein in this program by denying it funds. Therefore, no funds have been appropriated since then. However, the appeals procedure itself has been maintained in law. Consequently, convicted felons are bypassing the ATF by going directly to the courts for relief.

The Stop Arming Felons Act, or we can call it the SAFE Act, using the acronym, will help to put a stop to this abuse of the court system and the evasion of the will of Congress and the people. The SAFE Act will permanently prohibit felons convicted of violent crimes from applying for restoration of gun rights, making clear to the courts that their appeals may not be considered.

So I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this SAFE Act.

NEED FOR APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT COUNSEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. BUYER] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor; I do not come here often, but I come with very deep concern. A majority of the majority party Members of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary sent a letter to the U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno. The letter that we sent was pursuant to section 592(g) of title 28, United States Code, that she apply for the appointment of an independent counsel to investigate the following matters:

□ 1245

The illegal contributions to the Democratic National Committee in connection with the 1996 elections.

No. 2, the attempted influence of the 1996 elections by foreign countries, foreign corporations, or persons representing such entities; and, No. 3, the improper fundraising conduct or practices by administration officials, the

Democratic National Committee, or individuals working on behalf of the committee in connection with the 1996 elections.

We believe that section 591(c) of the Independent Counsel Act necessitates that Attorney General Janet Reno seek the appointment of independent counsel in reference to the matters which I just listed. Accordingly, per section 591(c), the Attorney General has been authorized to initiate the preliminary investigation which is defined by the act and is distinct from the Department's current investigations into the matters.

We also believe that it is very clear that the matters referred to are an obvious political conflict of interest for the Attorney General and other political appointees within the Department of Justice.

I am well aware that she has held at bay those of us who have been asking for the appointment of special counsel by saying that there is not sufficient credible evidence. I am not so certain how much more credible evidence she needs.

Often the Washington Post it seems gets cited here on the House floor, not by Republicans but by Democrats on the House floor, and here we have now Bob Woodward, who gained national attention with regard to President Nixon some years ago, is now talking about allegations that the White House supplied top secret intelligence information to the Democratic National Committee to keep a Latvian businessman with alleged ties to organized crime, international crime, from attending a $25,000 fundraiser with President Clinton.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe anyone in this country has a problem with the National Security Agency advising the President with regard to an individual, whether they should or should not be at a Presidential dinner. It is part of their job. What is distressing, though, is when the National Security Agency leaks top secret, classified information to political operatives, that being that our intelligence architecture was monitoring the international calls of this alleged organized crime individual and syndicate, and the fact that that intelligence was leaked to someone who did not have a right to know, who did not have a security clearance, is a breach of our security at the highest levels within the White House.

Why was that done? It was information that was leaked and it was done under this guise, under the pressures of political fundraising. As a matter of fact, to quote out of this article, I guess quoting whomever Bob Woodward is using for his intelligence to write this article, he quotes a White House senior official that the information that was leaked was top secret and it further demonstrates the total politicalization of all intelligence and White House operations, anything and everything was done in the name of fundraising at the White House.

Mr. Speaker, the reason that the Committee on the Judiciary had asked for the special counsel deals with the outright admissions by the Vice President, AL GORE, and Ms. Margaret Williams having admitted engaging in fundraising activities, the propriety of which is being questioned by many within the White House itself. I have heard in their defense even the Vice President would say, well, there is no controlling legal authority, some kind of a lawyerly type of language that only lawyers can understand. But when you pull out Title XVIII of the U.S. Code it is very clear, and it being very clear for people that anywhere can understand in America, that fundraising activity is not permitted in Federal buildings.

So whether it is out of my congressional office, whether it is out of a senatorial office, whether it is a Cabinet member or the President of the United States, it is wrong, and Janet Reno as the Attorney General of the United States, we seek your appointment with due speed.

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION SHOULD COME FORWARD WITH ANSWERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BOEHNER] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, a week ago I did not think the allegations about the Clinton administration's ethics could sink any lower. I thought the stories about top administration officials arranging hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of no-show jobs for Webster Hubbell in an effort to buy his silence about Whitewater was the worst we could ever hear about an administration, much less this one.

However, with this bunch, if we want to be stung by new news of sleazy ethics, all we have to do is wait another day. Sure enough, now Bob Woodward of Watergate fame is writing in today's Washington Post about the Clinton administration's use of top secret information from the CIA for political purposes.

According to this morning's Washington Post, Bob Woodward said that the White House supplied top secret information to the Democratic National Committee to block a Latvian businessman with alleged ties to organized crime from attending a $25,000-per-person fundraising dinner with President Clinton, according to Government officials and other sources.

Now, let me say this about top secret information. There is a reason that it is top secret. Maybe it is the risk of blowing the cover of agents who risk their lives getting valuable information for our Government. Maybe it is to keep the bad guys, like international drug dealers and terrorists, from finding out about how we learn about them. But good people die to protect secret information, and if the Clinton administration truly disregarded all this just to avoid a bad headline in the next morning's paper, it is even worse than anything that we have heard yet.

But I think the bigger question is, when will it end? Every day, every week there is something new. When will this administration level with the American people? When will the President of the United States stand before the American people and tell them the truth about what has happened in his administration over the last 4-plus years?

When will the President stand before the American people and tell them the truth about the travel office firings of seven civil service employees at the White House? When will the President stand before the American people and tell them the truth about Whitewater? When will he tell them the truth about how 900 FBI files found their way into the White House, and more importantly, what was done with that information?

Why will the President not stand up and tell us about Webster Hubbell and the $400,000-plus that was paid to him after he resigned his administration position with disgrace, and before he went to jail and were hired by friends of the President? Why will the President not tell us about the orchestrated effort to subvert American laws about campaign finance and bring foreign money into our campaign system? How about White House coffees that were used for fundraising purposes, phone calls by the President and others from the White House to raise money to systematically try to buy the last election?

The American people have a right to know what happens in their Government. They have a right to know what happens in their White House. I think the American people want to have confidence that the person they selected as President of the United States is willing to stand before them and tell them the truth about what has happened in his administration.

Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, I think the American people are getting impatient. They want to know the truth and they want to know it now.

NEUTRAL MATERIALS FOR MEDICAL DEVICES SHOULD BE ABSOLVED FROM LIABILITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997 the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GEKAS] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, there are some 7.5 million fellow Americans who at this very moment are alive or are living a little better because in their bodies there is implanted a medical device that has helped to cure a particular

malady that is suffered by that individual. We are talking about brain shunts, heart valves, pacemakers, artificial hearts, knee implants, hip; we know the whole list of new and wondrous devices that have been developed over the last several years and which now become almost routine in the lifesaving capacity in which they find themselves.

Mr. Speaker, we have run into a serious problem which we have tried to address both in the last Congress, and now we are going to attempt again to do so. We came across a situation which is very serious. A supplier of materials to a company, let us say, that makes brain shunts, the supplier sends a little piece of wood, sells a little piece of wood to this brain shunt company. I am just doing a hypothetical. The brain shunt company takes this little piece of wood that is innocuous and neutral in its application and uses it as a component part of the brain shunt.

Now, something once in a while may go wrong with the brain shunt and the person who is hurt by it, if it happens that way, will sue not just the doctor, not just the hospital, not just the device-maker, not just the scientist who developed this brain shunt, but also the supplier way back here in the chain of events who supplied a little piece of material that had nothing to do with whether or not the medical device worked. In other words, this company was supplying this wood to thousands of different companies for thousands of different things; it is just that innocuous, neutral item of material.

So now what do we have? We have this scenario whereby a multimillion dollar suit is launched against this supplier back here of the wood particle, the little bitty part that went into this medical device. What has that caused? These companies have to defend these suits and they spend millions of dollars defending them, and in every single case they have been absolved from liability because all they supplied was a neutral piece of material.

However, Mr. Speaker, the cost of doing business with these medical devices, the cost of litigation, lawyers' fees, court fees and costs and so forth, has caused these companies to make a policy decision not to deliver, not to sell these materials any longer to these people who develop these medical devices. That is a tragedy. That means that new medical devices and the continued use of the ones that have been so miraculous thus far, like the brain shunt and the pacemaker and all of those things, are running short of the capacity to meet the demand and the need of the American people.

So last term I introduced a bill, the counterpart is over in the Senate, and we have done so again this year, to allow the material suppliers out here in the world, suppliers that have nothing to do with the ultimate injury if any occurs, to be absolved in the early part of a suit from the possibility of multimillion dollar lawsuits, and thus give them incentive to continue to supply these materials to the medical device companies.

What happened last year, we passed such a bill, we passed a products liability bill that contained some other features of the same type, and the President vetoed it. We were stunned because we had received signals from the White House that indeed he was going to sign this bill, that he is in favor of those kinds of concepts, yet he vetoed it. We were not able to muster enough votes then to override the veto, so we have to try again this session.

What startled me about the veto, Mr. Speaker and Members, was this: that when the President signed the welfare bill, he said there is a lot wrong with it, and he went on to outline how many things were wrong with the welfare bill, but he said there are enough good things in it that I am going to sign it and we will fix it later, or words to that effect. But on this lifesaving measure that we presented, which if he found flaws in it he could easily have said, I will sign it and we will take care of what I think is wrong with it later, but he failed to do that and vetoed the whole concept.

We are going to try again to convince the President with massive public opinion and understanding of this issue, and we hope to prevail.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the House stands in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 59 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.)

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. GOODLATTE] at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

May Your mighty hand, O gracious God, protect us all the day long and may Your providence lead us in the way of justice and peace. We place before you, O God, all the concerns of our hearts and all the petitions that move our souls, asking that You would bless us when we need blessing, that You would forgive us when we need forgiving, that You would strengthen us when we are weak and that You would open our eyes to the wonders of life and love. With gratefulness we accept the tasks of this day, and earnestly pray that we will be good custodians of the responsibilities that are before us. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. TRAFICANT] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TRAFICANT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

> I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FOR SPEAKER TO ENTERTAIN MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 1997

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that on tomorrow, Wednesday, April 9, 1997, the Speaker be authorized to entertain motions to suspend the rules and agree to the following bills:

H.R. 240, the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1997; and H.R. 757, the American Samoa Development Act of 1997.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

Mr. MILLER of California. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the right to object because I think that the schedule that once again the House is witnessing this week, in light of some very important problems that are pressing for the Nation and for this institution, first and foremost being campaign finance reform and, second, obviously for the people we represent, the health care coverage for children, I object to that request.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, would the gentleman yield?

Mr. MILLER of California. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I would just point out that we have on the schedule this week of a very, very important bill that deals with the Federal funding of assisted suicides, of which I am unalterably opposed to any kind of Federal funds being spent for that purpose. This bill has dual jurisdiction with the Committee on Ways and Means. The Committee on Ways and Means had understood that this bill would be coming up on the suspension calendar and not under a special rule that we would bring to the House. Consequently, we have been negotiating with the minority, with Minority Leader Gephardt, about bringing the bill up on suspension. We wanted to do that on Thursday. That is the reason for this request today to take up this very important measure.

But if the gentleman insists on objecting, so be it.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I insist on my objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

(Mr. SOLOMON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, because of the recent objection it is very important that we take up the prohibition against Federal funds being used for assisted suicides this week, and therefore I would announce that there is going to be a special emergency meeting of the Committee on Rules this afternoon at 5 o'clock and would urge Committee on Rules members to attend, and I will be attempting to contact the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY], the ranking minority member, to pass along this information.

THE 21ST CENTURY PATENT SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT ACT

(Mr. COBLE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 400, which will effectively end the practice of submarine patenting. A patent submariner resorts to dilatory tactics that inhibit the ability of the Patent and Trademark Office to review the application in an expedited manner.

Submariners do not invest in the economy, nor do they hire workers and they do not invent anything. They sue innocent third parties who independently develop technology, invest in the economy and do in fact hire workers.

How do we stop submariners and still guarantee 17 years of term? H.R. 400 requires an 18-month publication. The innocent third party will be served with notice that a patent is pending and be able to move on to another invention. The rights of the patent applicant are in no way compromised, since he would receive protection at the time of publication, which means longer protection than inventors currently receive.

Mr. Speaker, good patent policy concerns itself with more than the rights of the inventor. H.R. 400 improves our existing system by protecting the interests of all. I urge support of H.R. 400.

AN IMPORTANT ALLIANCE ON AN ISSUE OF GREAT CONCERN: HEALTH CARE FOR OUR CHILDREN

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, last week a remarkable thing happened. Two senior Members of the other body, representing the States of Massachusetts and Utah, forged an important alliance on an issue of great concern to the American people, health care for our children.

What makes this partnership so remarkable is not simply that these two Members represent different regions and different political parties, but that one is a respected leading liberal and the other is a respected leading conservative. And yet both men discovered something more important than regional differences, more important than partisanship and more important than political ideology.

They understand that a nation as wealthy and powerful as ours simply cannot allow 10 million of its children to go without basic health care. So they came together and they are leading an effort to do what is right for our children.

I am inspired by the bipartisan cooperation that led to the Kennedy-Hatch health care bill, and I have renewed hope that this body, the U.S. House of Representatives, can come together in a bipartisan way to guarantee that every child in America has the health coverage they need and deserve, and, Mr. Speaker, let us do it today.

ARIZONA WILDCATS BASKETBALL TEAM, 1997 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

(Mr. KOLBE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I feel a little bit like a proud parent today as I rise to congratulate Coach Lute Olsen and the University of Arizona Wildcats on winning the NCAA national basketball championship.

This marvelous achievement really was unprecedented. Never before has a collegiate basketball team defeated three No. 1 seeds in an NCAA tournament, in fact the three most successful basketball programs in the country. Pundits said it was impossible. To be victorious Arizona had to find a way to win six games in a row, something this team had not done all season. In fact, during the regular season the Wildcats lost nearly as many games as Kansas, North Carolina, and Kentucky combined. But throughout the season the Arizona Wildcats exhibited a strength of character that was truly inspiring. They prove that a good team can benefit as much, if not more, from losing as from winning.

As Mike Bibby, Arizona sensational freshman point guard, told reporters, ''I like playing against All Americans because it helps me learn,'' or as forward Michael Dickerson said, ''We don't feel we're anybody's underdogs. We have players who can match up with anybody. We did it by believing in each other.''

Indeed, at one point during the tournament Mike Bibby found himself at the free throw stripe with the game on the line. Yet after making the shots that sealed the victory, Bibby was quick to credit his teammate and freshman reserve Josh Pastner with helping him perfect his free throwing technique. Bibby wanted the world to know that although Josh Pastner did not log a minute of playing time during the tournament, the Arizona Wildcats could not have won the championship without him.

So congratulations, University of Arizona. Go, Wildcats.

HONORING CORRECTIONS OFFICER SCOTT WILLIAMS

(Mr. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Corrections Officer Scott Williams who was killed in the line of duty last Thursday at the U.S. Penitentiary in Lompoc, CA.

Courage was nothing new to Scott Williams. During his tenure at Lompoc, he was promoted from officer to senior officer specialist. A former Marine of the Year, he served with distinction and saved lives in Desert Storm. Officer Williams received no fewer than six awards for outstanding service. He was also a beloved family man who is survived by his wife Kristy and their two young daughters, Kallee and Kaitlin. His selfless dedication is a lesson to us all.

Today we also pay tribute to injured Corrections Officer Scot Elliot and Warden Dave Rardin and all those who came to the aid of a fellow officer.

Mr. Speaker, I know I speak for the entire House when I extend my condolences to the family and friends of this brave fallen soldier.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE TOASTS THE TYRANTS

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, the character of the Clinton administration was on display for the entire world to see when Vice President GORE recently clinked champagne glasses with Li Peng, the mastermind of the Tiananmen Square massacre. Fortunately, the tough and thoughtful comments made by the Speaker of this House served as a welcome contrast.

The Vice President cited that relationship between two great nations and civilizations in his tribute to the Communist dictatorship in Beijing. Well, he was half right. The United States of America is indeed a great Nation, but then our Government does not imprison priests and monks and other religious people. Our Government does not force women to have abortions against their will or sanction torture or throw in jail those who express opinions that do not reflect the official government line.

Mr. Speaker, the Vice President's remarks sent the wrong message to China, but as the Cincinnati Post editorialized last week, it was refreshing

to see the Speaker actually say face to face to the Chinese what is frequently discussed in the United States: Human rights do matter, and the truth needs to be told.

JOBS FOR OTHER COUNTRIES; ROTTEN ILLEGAL BERRIES FOR AMERICA

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, schoolchildren in Michigan got sick eating strawberries that were tainted with the hepatitis A virus. Now if that is not enough to sour your shortcake, check this out.

The strawberries were illegally imported from Mexico and sold to the school lunch program in violation of buy America laws. Unbelievable, huh? It never stops, and no one seems to care. Military boots from China, cars from Japan, beef from Australia, telephones from Singapore.

Mr. Speaker, it is all called the New World order, and here is how it works: Jobs for China, jobs for Australia, jobs for Japan, jobs for Mexico, and berries for America, rotten, illegal berries for America.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. It is time to put a few straw bosses in jail and mandate country of origin labels on all food products.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of any further disease.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would admonish the members of the gallery to please refrain from any showing of spontaneous response to any of the speeches.

COMPROMISING NATIONAL SECURITY FOR POLITICAL GAIN

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I agree with the audience. I am outraged though.

Today, every day, it is a new story about this President using taxpayer dollars, using the White House and now using classified national security information to raise money for his own reelection campaign. Today's Washington Post reveals that the White House actually gave top secret information to the Democrat National Committee.

When I was in the military, if someone failed to safeguard classified information, they were relieved from duty and court-martialed. Maybe it is time to relieve this President from his duties and court-martial him.

□ 1415

The White House has put the lives of CIA officers in jeopardy and endangered every American by compromising our national security for Clinton's own political gain. America wants, needs, and deserves to have a leader who protects this Nation instead of exploiting it.

POSTAL SERVICE SHOULD ACT AS RESPONSIBLE MEMBER OF COMMUNITY

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, for many the Postal Service indeed represents the Federal Government. Post offices are the heart and soul of many small towns across America, and they are part of the heritage of every community. Yet, in many instances, people feel victimized by the Postal Service because the post office sometimes ignores local zoning laws and building codes in making decisions about their facilities.

Additionally, citizens often feel shut out of the decision-making process, despite the massive impacts that post office closings and relocations have on our communities.

Today I am introducing legislation to change this. My bill would outline minimum citizen involvement requirements that would apply to the renovation, relocation, closing, or consolidation of post offices and require the post office to comply with any local zoning or building codes which the State and local governments themselves must comply with.

My bill is fair and does not place unnecessary burdens on the Postal Service. Instead, for the first time, the Postal Service would be treated as a responsible member of the community and not be above the local laws.

TAX RELIEF FOR AVERAGE CITIZENS

(Mr. HUTCHINSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, while I was home in Arkansas I often asked my constituents, ''Any message for Washington?'' One of the most common responses I received is ''Yes, cut my taxes.'' I have heard this response so many times that I can assure my colleagues this: I got the message.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that the special interests and the powerful lobbying groups have their tax loopholes. We all know that upper income people have the means to employ tax attorneys and accountants at tax time. But what about the forgotten little guy, the ordinary taxpayer who works for a living? What about giving the little guy a break for a change?

Mr. Speaker, it is the little guy who is at the mercy of a Federal tax system that somehow manages to increase the tax burden year after year after year. The liberal press is always asking, ''Can we afford a tax cut?'' I want to know the last time anyone asked, ''Can the little guy afford a tax increase?''

Mr. Speaker, the truth is, he cannot. I think it is high time somebody in Washington started looking after the little guy. We need tax relief now.

OPPORTUNITIES TO BOLSTER OUR COMMITMENT TO VETERANS

(Mr. REYES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, as a Vietnam veteran and a member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I rise today to talk about veterans along the border and opportunities that we have to bolster our commitment to our veterans.

This is the 105th Congress's first piece of veterans' legislation, and I am here to rise in support of this bill, because in this era of downsizing, it provides increased job opportunities and security. Let us send a strong message to our veterans by overwhelmingly passing this bill.

Furthermore, while back in the district, I invited local veterans to participate in my veterans' advisory panel, a panel that will meet regularly to advise me on ways to improve the lives of our veterans. I am proud to say that we have an overwhelming response. Already, they have expressed their concerns about our Persian Gulf war veterans and the need for continued research.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to seek similar ways to stay informed, and with tomorrow's vote, take a first step in this Congress for our veterans.

INCREASING TAXES WILL NOT HELP OUR CHILDREN

(Mr. SCARBOROUGH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, for 40 years tax-and-spend liberals have come to Washington, DC and run up a $5.6 trillion debt that is going to be passed on to our children. For 40 years, tax-and-spend liberals have increased taxes to a point that the average American is now paying 50.2 percent of every dollar they make to Washington and State levels, and yet these same tax-and-spend liberals come up talking about how they want to help children. But guess what? The way they want to help children is to increase taxes. The way they say we help children is increase spending through another Federal bureaucracy.

Mr. Speaker, if we are going to help children, we have got to make sure that taxes are reduced and Federal spending is reduced, because a bipartisan commission headed by Senator KERREY projected a few years ago that my boys are going to be paying 89 percent of every dollar they make in 30

years to the Federal Government in Washington. It is wrong, and it is immoral, and it is demagogic to suggest that we can help the children of America by raising their taxes and increasing a new layer of bureaucracy in Washington.

AMERICA NEEDS CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, a few minutes ago I objected to agreeing to taking up the Suspension Calendar for tomorrow. The reason I did so is not because I object to the bills that were on the Suspension Calendar; I did so because I object to business as usual in this House, especially when business as usual means that week after week this House comes back to little or no business that is important to the American public.

We come back not for the budget, we come back not for children's health care, and most importantly, we come back not to deal with campaign finance reform. Yet every day the American public have new revelations given to them about the White House, about Congress, about the Senate, about the House of Representatives, about people with enough money getting access that no other American can possibly conceive of having, with powerful Members of the House and powerful Members of the Senate offering access for money, offering the ability to sit on inside councils for money, offering the ability to talk to Cabinet officials for money. It has got to stop.

Today we see in The New York Times an overwhelming majority of Americans want the corrosive, corrupting campaign finance system changed, but they do not believe that Congress is serious about it. We are going to continue to object to this kind of do-nothing agenda and an agenda that fails to respond to the needs of the public on campaign finance reform.

PASS ''SAFE'' FOR A SAFER AMERICA

(Mr. ACKERMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, it seems inconceivable that convicted felons, including those who have committed violent crimes using guns, could get out of prison and could, under the law, buy guns yet again. I raise the question, who is being protected by this law, convicted felons, or law abiding citizens?

Each year since fiscal year 1993 we in Congress have stopped funding this guns for convicted felons program. However, this is insufficient, because as the law is still on the books, even unfunded, felons can go to court and regain their firearm privileges.

To stop this from happening, we should eliminate the guns for convicted felons program outright.

Today, along with the gentlewoman from Maryland [Mrs. MORELLA] and the gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. MCCARTHY], I am introducing the Stop Arming Felons Act, or the SAFE Act. The Ackerman-Morella-McCarthy legislation will eliminate guns for convicted felons altogether. It sends a clear message that we should make it harder, not easier, for criminals to have access to weapons.

The Stop Arming Felons Act is bipartisan and has 32 original cosponsors, and I urge all of my colleagues to act in the interest of this country and let us stop arming convicted felons.

CORRECTIONS CALENDAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). This is the day for the call of the Corrections Calendar.

The Clerk will call the bill on the Corrections Calendar.

CORRECTION TO NURSE AIDE TRAINING

The Clerk called the bill (H.R. 968) to amend title XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to permit a waiver of the prohibition of offering nurse aide training and competency evaluation programs in certain nursing facilities.

The Clerk read the bill, as follows:

H.R. 968

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PERMITTING WAIVER OF PROHIBITION OF OFFERING NURSE AIDE TRAINING AND COMPETENCY EVALUATION PROGRAMS IN CERTAIN FACILITIES

Section 1819(f)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i–3(f)(2)) and section 1919(f)(2) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r(f)(2)) are each amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B)(iii), by inserting ''subject to subparagraph (C),'' after ''(iii)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) WAIVER AUTOHRIZED.—Clause (iii) of subparagraph (B) shall not apply to a program offered in (but not by) a nursing facility in a State if the State—

''(i) determines that there is no other such program offered within a reasonable distance of the facility,

''(ii) assures, through an oversight effort, that an adequate environment exists for operating the program in the facility, and

''(iii) provides notice of such determination and assurances to the State long-term care ombudsman.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read for amendment.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the amendments recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means.

The Clerk read as follows:

Committee amendments, page 2, line 12, strike ''(iii)'' and insert ''(iii)(I).''

Page 2, line 14, insert ''(or skilled nursing facility for purposes of title XVIII)'' after ''nursing facility.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CAMP] and the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. KLECZKA] will each control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CAMP].

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 968, a bill introduced by the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. EHRLICH]. The gentleman's legislation would amend the Social Security Act to permit a waiver of the prohibition of offering nurse aide training and competency evaluation programs in certain facilities.

As chairman of the Speaker's Advisory Group, it was my pleasure to work with Congressman EHRLICH and the minority ranking member, the gentleman from California, Mr. WAXMAN, and the rest of the minority members and majority members of the committee to expedite consideration of this Corrections Day legislation.

This bill was favorably reviewed by the Speaker's Advisory Group and is fully supported by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. The advisory group was able to work with the Speaker and the committees of jurisdiction to bring this bill to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is particularly well suited to be considered here under the Corrections Day procedure as we are doing today. Despite the good intentions of the nurse aide training legislation of the 1980's, certain aspects have created significant problems with its implementation.

The 1987 reconciliation bill instituted training standards for nurse aids working in long-term care facilities. Under existing law, nursing facilities which are subject to an extended survey are prohibited from offering facility-based nurse aide training and competency evaluation for a period of up to 2 years.

As an unintended consequence, a nursing home that is subject to a review is not allowed to have a nurse aide training program at their facility, even if the care provided by the nurse aide is unrelated to the review itself.

This bill would waive the prohibition on nurse aide training programs if the State determines there is no other training program within a reasonable distance of the facility. The State must also assure that an adequate environment exists for operating a program.

Nurse aide training programs are vital to health care delivery. Our current law, however, is particularly burdensome in rural areas which face difficulties recruiting nurse aids. It does not make sense that these very nurse aide training programs are improving patient care as rural providers find it increasingly difficult to recruit nurse aids.

This legislation is technical in nature, has strong bipartisan support, and was scored by the Congressional Budget Office as having no budgetary impact.

Mr. Speaker, this is a straightforward, bipartisan bill that corrects an inefficient and burdensome law. This targeted bill will lead to improved health care in rural areas like the Fourth District of Michigan which I represent. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 968.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, first, let me say that the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CAMP] has adequately explained the bill. This is a correction bill.

Back in 1987, we passed the legislation on nurse aide training. I think in this one area we went too far. This bill provides States with the flexibility to continue needed nursing aide training, even though the home itself might be under some type of a review. I would ask all of my colleagues to join the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CAMP] and myself in supporting this needed legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. BURR].

Mr. BURR. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Committee on Commerce which also has jurisdiction on this bill and as a cosponsor of the bill, I am pleased to speak in support of this very important legislation.

H.R. 968 would permit the continuation of nurse aide training and the competency evaluation programs in certain nursing facilities. Under existing Federal law, a nursing facility may lose its ability to offer facility-based nurse aide training and competency evaluations for reasons that are unrelated to the quality of the program itself.

This unintended consequence of the current law arises when a facility has unrelated operational deficiencies which are being corrected by the facility. As a result, nursing facilities, particularly those in rural communities, are prevented from conducting the training and evaluation that is an integral part in providing quality nursing care and preventing staff shortages.

□ 1430

This legislation would revise the current law. The bill would permit the continuation of nurse aide training and competency evaluation programs in affected facilities under certain circumstances. In order for a facility to continue its training and evaluation programs, the State would have to, one, make a determination that no similar program is in existence within a reasonable distance of the facility; two, conduct oversight activities to ensure that an adequate environment exists for operating the program in the facility; and three, provide notice of such determination to the State long-term-care ombudsman.

This noncontroversial measure was recently reported by the Committee on Commerce on March 12 by voice vote. In addition, the Committee on Ways and Means reported the legislation by voice vote on March 13. I am pleased to say that the bill also has the support of the administration and will have no budgetary impact on the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation sends an important message to the American people that Congress is listening, listening to their concerns about burdensome Federal regulations and taking action to address their concerns. H.R. 968 achieves this objective by eliminating unnecessary and burdensome regulations, a goal that Members on both sides of the aisle have endorsed.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this important piece of legislation. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 968.

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BROWN].

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 968. The Committee on Commerce has acted on this bill twice, first in September 1996, and then in March 1997. This legislation is also supported by the administration and was proposed by the President and Vice President through the reinventing government initiative in 1995.

Nurse aide training programs play an important role, not only by preparing students to care for patients, but also by helping to meet the patient's needs in staffing health care facilities. The failure to make these changes for training programs could have dire consequences in terms of a nursing facility's ability to provide quality care for its patients. This bill will allow certain facilities to continue nurse aide training programs, particularly in rural and other areas which lack training alternatives.

Mr. Speaker, I recommend we pass this bill today.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. EHRLICH].

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise as chief sponsor of the bill. I want to thank a number of people for their support and cooperation; the gentleman from California [Mr. WAXMAN] has been wonderful to work with in respect to this piece of legislation. I also congratulate the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. CAMP], the chairman of the corrections day committee, a very important committee. I am sure we will be bringing a lot of pieces of legislation to the floor in the 105th Congress, and I thank my friend and colleague, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. BURR] from the Committee on Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. H.R. 968 prevents the termination of certain training programs where the reason for the termination is an operational deficiency unrelated to the quality of the program, and where no alternative training program exists within a reasonable distance.

In this regard it is vitally important for rural America that the nursing home provisions of the Reconciliation Act of 1987 instituted training standards for long-term facility nurse aides, requiring a minimum of 75 hours of training for these aides. These requirements, among others, must be met in order for nursing facilities to be eligible for payment by Medicare and Medicaid.

However, these current Federal nursing facility laws often deprive nursing facilities of the ability to provide in-house training. The law allows approval of these training programs to be denied due to problems in the facility unrelated to the training program, and in this regard makes no sense.

Once a program is terminated, the facility becomes ineligible as a training site for 2 years, even after the facility has corrected its alleged deficiencies. The current restriction makes it difficult to recruit nurse aides, especially in rural and other areas which lack training alternatives.

Mr. Speaker, many nursing homes rely on their own nurse aide training programs to certify nurse aides with basic nursing skills and personal care skills. Because long-term care providers are funded primarily by Medicare and Medicaid, they are at an economic disadvantage in competing for labor. On-site training programs serve as an excellent recruitment tool by providing nursing career opportunities for entry level personnel.

Finally, the presence of these nurse aides to a nursing home staff ensures that the residents receive high-quality personal care and also allows the nursing staff to focus more on the delivery of quality medical care. To compromise this ability to provide the highest level of care possible brings about the very result Congress intended to avoid: a threat to the quality of long-term care provided to our Nation's senior citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I thank everyone associated with this bill.

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the amendments recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means and on the bill.

The question is on the committee amendments.

The committee amendments were agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and (three-fifths having voted in favor thereof) the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 968, the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

SUNDRY MESSAGES FROM the PRESIDENT

Sundry messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV.

Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 5 p.m. today.

RURAL MULTIFAMILY RENTAL HOUSING LOAN GUARANTEE EXTENSION ACT OF 1997

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 28) to amend the Housing Act of 1949 to extend the loan guarantee program for multifamily rental housing in rural areas.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 28

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Rural Multifamily Rental Housing Loan Guarantee Extentions Act of 1997''.

SEC. 2. LOAN GUARANTEES FOR MULTIFAMILY RENTAL HOUSING IN RURAL AREAS.

Section 538 of the Housing Act of 1949 (42 U.S.C. 1490p–2) is amended—

(1) in subsection (q), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following new paragraph:

''(2) ANNUAL LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF LOAN GUARANTEE.—In each fiscal year, the Secretary may enter into commitments to guarantee loans under this section only to the extent that the costs of the guarantees entered into in such fiscal year do not exceed such amount as may be provided in appropriation Acts for such fiscal year.'';

(2) by striking subsection (t) and inserting the following new subsection:

''(t) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated for each fiscal year for costs (as such term is defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974) of loan guarantees made under this section such sums as may be necessary for such fiscal year.''; and

(3) by striking subsection (u).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO].

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 28, the Rural Multifamily Rental Housing Loan Guarantee Extension Act of 1997, a mouthful, but a very important program which was introduced by the gentleman from Nebraska, Mr. DOUG BEREUTER. I want to say at the outset, without the leadership of DOUG BEREUTER we would likely not be here today. This was largely his concept, a concept that he has fought hard for, and it also is a reflection of the fact that poverty does not end at the boundaries of our urban areas or even our suburban areas; that in fact poverty and substandard housing is also very much a rural issue.

I also want to thank the chairman of the full committee, the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH], who happens to be with us also here today, and the ranking member of the subcommittee, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY], for their extraordinary help and assistance to bring this bill to where we are right now.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 28 will permanently authorize a rural housing multifamily program that leverages private sector dollars with Federal loan guarantees in order to provide low-income housing in rural areas in an efficient manner. The Rural Loan Guaranty Program originated in the 103d Congress where the House passed fiscal year 1995 authorization language and appropriated $1 million in budget authority. Although the authorization bill was not enacted, the Agriculture Appropriations Act for fiscal year 1995 left the program with appropriations or budget authority without a program authorization.

During the last Congress, Mr. Speaker, Congress passed and the President signed the Housing Opportunity Program Act of 1996 which provided the fiscal year 1996 authorization of appropriations. For this year we are in a similar quandary, and in fiscal year 1997 appropriations should result in $1.2 million in budget authority, leveraging approximately $20 million in loan guarantees, with no authorization for this year unless this bill moves.

During the first year of this program, there was significant industry and public enthusiasm and support for the concept of guaranteed rental housing loans. For example, during the 30-day fiscal year 1996 open application season, there were 49 applications from 24 different States requesting a total of approximately $62.5 million in guarantees to help fund about $85 million in multifamily housing development. The need is out there, Mr. Speaker.

The Rural Housing Service approved 9 requests for about $14 million in guarantees on almost $20 million of new construction, resulting in 370 new apartment units.

Furthermore, as compared to the rural multifamily direct loan program where the Government subsidy costs are extraordinarily higher, we are getting good value. This indirect program is only a fraction of the cost. The variety of developments indicates that the program has widespread applicability and that it is flexible enough to meet the differing financing needs of eligible private and private-sector lenders and low-income housing providers.

This program is an example of the type of partnership that should exist between the Federal Government and the private sector, and is necessary to provide and expand low-income housing.

Finally, again, I want to congratulate and commend my colleague, the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] for his tireless work on this issue to ensure an effective tool and an integral part of our assisted housing mission for rural Americans.

I urge my colleagues to enthusiastically support passage of H.R. 28.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank my good friend and the chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, as well as the chairman of the full committee, and I think the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] has been working on this issue since I first got on the committee over 10 years ago, trying to reform some of the concerns about rural housing and how the Government provides the subsidies in this country.

While I rise today in support of H.R. 28, the Rural Multifamily Rental Housing Loan Guarantee Extension Act of 1997, and I want to extend my thanks to my colleagues for their efforts to deal with this issue, I do want to explain to the Members of the House just how critical the issue of providing housing programs for rural America are.

We have a situation today in this country where we have tended to focus on the issue of urban poverty, but anyone who has taken the time to visit

some of the more rural parts of America knows there are parts of this country that have terrible, terrible poverty that is in many cases swept under the rug, is not seen, because we do not have the slums and the ghettoes of urban America that are so painfully easy to view by anyone who drives through particular neighborhoods.

In rural America, much of the poverty is much more hidden. We do not see it, yet it exists. It is terrible, it is terrifying for the poor, and it is an issue that I think this act, I believe, begins to pull back the covers on to some degree.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that the basic fundamental program which serves the poorest of the poor, the section 515 program, has had enormous cutbacks associated with it over the course of the last couple of years in the Congress.

While there are the needs for some improvements in the 515 program, we should make no mistake by suggesting for a second that while the 538 program, which is the guaranteed loan program that we are acting on today, the need for the program, the 515 program, which provides the credit subsidy, is I think something that is of critical importance to the poorest of the poor. We have to make certain that we do not turn our backs continuously on the very, very poor people of this country.

While we want to provide an innovative demonstration program with the authorization that it requires in order that our appropriators can now provide the funds for this program, which is technically what all this bill is doing today, we should recognize that this is a program that will end up funding people that are slightly above the poorest of the poor.

While this is a commendable program in and of itself, we ought to be, I think, forthright with the American people that at the same time, we are really cutting significantly the amount of money that goes into the basic fundamental 515 program.

□ 1445

I would just like to read one brief statistic. According to the State of Rural Housing in 1966, a publication of the Housing Assistance Council, of the 9.1 million rural centers, 1.2 million families had severe housing cost burdens, paying more than 50 percent of their income for rent; 1.6 million renters had moderate cost burdens, paying between 30 and 50 percent of their income for rent. I do not think anybody in this Congress pays anything close to 50 percent of their income for rent. The amount of burden that that places on all the other costs in one's life is very, very significant.

With those severe cost burdens, they were concentrated amongst the poorest rural residents. The credit enhancement of the guarantee will at least make rental housing more affordable to low- and moderate-income families, if not the very low-income families. I am encouraged that the Rural Housing Service is making every effort to make this program work for rural America. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 28. Again, I want to thank the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH], and the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] for their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER].

(Mr. BEREUTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to first begin by thanking the chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development, the distinguished gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO], for his support and assistance, and that of the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH], chairman of the full committee, for his assistance in bringing this legislation to the floor. Mr. LAZIO has certainly given us the history of this legislation as it has evolved. I also appreciate his kind remarks.

I also appreciate the kind remarks of the gentleman from Massachusetts, and I would say that his description of the poverty problems and the housing problem in rural America, including our Indian reservations, is directly on the mark.

This gentleman has never contended either that this housing program, which has come to be known as the 538 program, is a replacement for reform of the 515 program. We need to proceed with reforms of that legislation which is also aimed at multiunit housing.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize a distinguished former Member of the Congress who is on the floor today, Mr. de la Garza, former chairman and then ranking member of the Committee on Agriculture. It is our responsibility on the Committee on Banking and Financial Services to work with the Committee on Agriculture on USDA housing programs. We have worked with this gentleman in the past on housing legislation for rural America and for small cities across the country. The gentleman from Texas is seated by our current distinguished Agriculture Committee chairman, the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH]. I am sure they are working on housing right now.

But Mr. Speaker, I do rise in support of this legislation and ask my colleagues for support of it. This legislation does permanently reauthorize the loan guarantee program for multifamily rental housing in nonmetropolitan areas made under section 538 of the Housing Act of 1949. Originally enacted as a demonstration program under the section 515 rural housing program during the 103d Congress, this loan guarantee program has been well received in nonmetropolitan America.

Unfortunately, the authorization for the program expired at the end of the last fiscal year, and this authorization is urgently needed to ensure the smooth operation of this important new program. Anyone familiar with America's smaller cities and communities knows that the supply of affordable rental housing is much needed but in short supply. This lack of affordable housing is one of the reasons why many small cities in nonmetropolitan areas are having a difficult time keeping their young people, and thus their future, from migrating to metropolitan areas.

Historically, it often has been difficult to entice adequate private investment into these areas. Direct Federal lending programs which have proven costly to taxpayers often have been the only source of financing in these areas. Because of the problems which plagued and still plague the section 515 direct loan program and knowing that Federal funds are likely to become increasingly scarce, this Member saw the need for a new approach that would cost taxpayers less but still provide equal or greater housing opportunities in our Nation's smaller cities.

I had good support from our chairman, the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH], and the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] and our colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle. The alternative which emerged is the section 538 loan guarantee program. It does provide affordable housing at least in part in nonmetropolitan areas for individuals with incomes ranging from low to low-moderate to moderate levels; in other words, those Americans whose incomes do not exceed 115 percent of the area median income.

Eligible lenders, which include multifamily lenders approved by HUD and Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, provide financing for projects of at least five housing units, five in a unit, developed by nonprofits, State governments or for-profit private entities. Nonprofits and State agencies are required to make a modest initial investment of 3 percent of the development costs while private for-profit entities must contribute an appropriate 10 percent of the development cost.

In return for a fee of up to 1 percent of the loan amount, the U.S. Department of Agriculture guarantees repayment of the loan. Thus projects which in the past required a dollar-for-dollar investment by the Federal Government are now financed for pennies on the dollar by the private sector.

Finally I wanted to quote from a letter received on March 18 of this year from Jan Shadburn, Acting Administrator of the Rural Housing Service of USDA.

She says as follows: ''We are very excited about the program and we believe that, once reauthorized by Congress, it will continue to grow and will prove to be an effective tool and an integral part of our assisted housing mission for rural Americans.''

Mr. Speaker, this Member again asks his colleagues to support this important alternative, a supplement to direct Federal lending in order to ensure smooth operation of a program which is working in nonmetropolitan America.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON].

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Committee on Agriculture, I want to rise in support of this initiative for rural housing and associate myself with the remarks and comments congratulating all of the persons who have been involved in bringing this to fruition.

I want to acknowledge, as has been acknowledged by the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY], that this is not a substitute for 515, which is so critically needed for the poorest of the poor. Those of us who live in rural areas know how persistent and how pervasive the poverty is and how difficult it is to bring resources and to make a difference. So this is to stretch the resources, to give more resources to rural areas so that we cannot only continue 515 in an improved way but to introduce now what we call 538, the rural rental housing guarantee program, which will allow the private sector to be partners with the Government in guaranteeing more homes. I want to say this is an addition that we welcome, but we also want to encourage further reform and the expansion of 515 because we know it is so difficult for the poorest of the poor to have housing and to say come to North Carolina, if you want to see the poorest of the poor.

However, I am pleased to note that part of the demonstration program North Carolina will have is in Clayton, NC, not my district but nevertheless it is worthy of noting. It just happened to be Clayton, and it happened to be North Carolina. And 56 persons will have apartments that they would not have unless this program was available.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH], chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, who is also a tireless advocate on behalf of our Nation's poor and those who have substandard housing.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time. Let me say, I also rise in support of this modest but very significant program and would commend the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] for introducing the original legislation, the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO], who leads housing efforts on behalf of all Americans at this time in the House of Representatives, and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY] who has always spoken so eloquently on housing issues.

I would only make two points, one that was underscored by Mr. BEREUTER; that is, this approach is a guarantee loan program. Therefore, it involves small sums of money, leveraging quite a bit larger sums of money. In addition, it is based upon a USDA model and, in fact, is USDA administered and that model has found that there is only a 3-percent default rate, which is a rather impressive number in relationship to almost every Federal program. But what is impressive in addition is 3 percent default does not mean 3 percent losses. It means that the loan went sour but there are still recoverable parts. So the total losses to the taxpayer end up being a small percentage of 3 percent.

This is, in short, one of the most extraordinary ways of leveraging housing programs in rural America. It is targeted precisely to rural America and obviously, as a representative of a rural State with a high percentage of nonurban housing stock, I am appreciative of its import.

But I would also stress that this program is intended as a tie-in to other housing programs and that in the near future significant housing reform will be the subject of a full Committee on Banking and Financial Services review. We look forward, those of us from rural areas, to working closely with the distinguished chairman of the subcommittee on the endeavors that he is leading at this time.

I simply want to stress again the innovation of this program, the leadership of my colleagues.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just like to end by pointing out that this program, as I understand, the 515 Program, I would just like to point out, used to be funded at about $690 million a year. The current 515 Program is down to $150 million a year. This program is about $1.2 million, just so Members will keep in perspective what we have done in terms of our rural housing programs.

Rural poverty is growing. We have significant numbers of very, very poor people living in rural America that have great, great housing needs. I just hope that the Congress keeps in mind the need for us to continue to support housing programs in general. We are going to have major housing problems for America's poor in the coming year as a result of some peculiarities in the budgeting process. I think that we need to continue to bring home at every possible opportunity, to recognize the significant problems that very poor people in this country have in terms of attaining reasonable shelter. I hope to work with the chairman of the full committee and the chairman of the housing committee in resolving those issues in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me again urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation. It is a complement, not a substitute, for our other tools that are available to combat poverty and substandard housing in rural America. I want to emphasize once again, because so often the illustrations that we see on the news, the shows that we see on television, the things that we talk about tend to focus on what happens in urban America, and the need is great in urban America. And the fact is that we have extraordinary needs in terms of housing and community development in both suburban and urban America. But poverty does not end at the city boundary. Nor does it end at the suburban boundary. It is a fact of life all too often in our rural areas.

In this case, we are doing what I think is an extraordinarily efficient thing, which is to leverage our dollars, making our dollars work as hard as possible. In this case, $1.2 million will leverage $20 million in construction, bringing housing to scores of Americans that would otherwise potentially be homeless or, at least, be in terribly substandard housing. As I say, it is a complement and not a substitute.

Let me also point out, in relation to the 515 Program, which has been under considerable criticism by, among other people, a former Member of this body and now a Member of the other body, Mr. DURBIN, for the fact that there have been numerous allegations of fraud, that in the 515 Program, which also has brought hope to many Americans, the Federal Government subsidy costs are approximately 49 cents for each dollar appropriated. The loan guarantee program subsidy today that we are talking about is only, the cost is only about 6.8 cents for every dollar appropriated. So again 6.8 cents for this program relative to 49 cents for every dollar appropriated in the 515 Program.

It is, in fact, a reality that we need as many tools as possible to combat poverty and substandard housing throughout America. I want also to compliment the Rural Housing Service of USDA for working with us, with the Members on the other side of the aisle, in particular the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY], for his support of our efforts to bring relief to rural areas; the support of other associations, like the National Association of Home Builders; again, the appropriators, the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. SKEEN], the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON] for their support through the appropriations process. But most importantly, I would suggest that the credit largely goes to the chairman of the full committee, the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH], and, of course, the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] for their vision and for their commitment to this very important program that is truly bringing hope for many, many Americans throughout the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the following section-by-section analysis:

H.R. 28—RURAL MULTIFAMILY RENTAL HOUSING LOAN GUARANTEE EXTENSION ACT OF 1997

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.—The title is cited as the ''Rural Multifamily Rental Housing Loan Guarantee Extension Act of 1997.''

SEC. 2. LOAN GUARANTEES FOR MULTIFAMILY RENTAL HOUSING IN RURAL AREAS.—This section amends Section 538 of the Housing Act of 1949 to provide a permanent authorization of appropriations and permanent authority to the [US Department of Agriculture] Secretary to guarantee rural housing multifamily loans.

□ 1500

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 28.

The question was taken.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 28.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

PREVENTING PRISONERS FROM BEING CONSIDERED PART OF HOUSEHOLD UNDER FOOD STAMP ACT OF 1977

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1000) to require States to establish a system to prevent prisoners from being considered part of any household for purposes of determining eligibility of the household for food stamp benefits and the amount of food stamp benefits to be provided to the household under the Food Stamp Act of 1977.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1000

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. STATES REQUIRED TO ESTABLISH SYSTEM TO PREVENT PRISONERS FROM BEING CONSIDERED PART OF ANY HOUSEHOLD UNDER THE FOOD STAMP ACT OF 1977.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 11(e)(20) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2020(e)(20)) is amended to read as follows:

''(20) that the State agency shall establish a system and take action on a periodic basis—

''(A) to verify and otherwise assure that an individual does not receive coupons in more than one jurisdiction within the State; and

''(B) to verify and otherwise assure that an individual who is officially detained in a correctional, detention, or penal facility administered under Federal or State law is not considered to be part of any household participating in the food stamp program, except to the extent that the Secretary determines that extraordinary circumstances have made it impracticable for the State agency to obtain the information necessary to do so.''.

(b) PENALTY.—Section 11(g) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 shall apply, in accordance with its terms, to any failure of a State agency to comply with section 11(e)(20)(B) of such Act.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 11(e)(8)(E) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2020(e)(8)(E)) is amended by inserting ''or (20)(B)'' after ''(16)''.

(d) APPLICATION OF AMENDMENTS.—The amendments made by this section shall not apply with respect to certification periods beginning before the end of the 1-year period that begins with the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH] and the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH].

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. SMITH of Oregon asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1000, a bill that requires States to establish a system to verify that individuals detained in Federal, State, or county penal facilities are not counted as household members for the purposes of determining eligibility of the level of benefits in the Food Stamp Program.

On March 10, 1997, the General Accounting Office released a report entitled, ''Food Stamps: Substantial Overpayments Result From Prisoners Counted as Household Members.'' As a result, the General Accounting Office estimates that $3.5 million in food stamp benefit overpayments were made in the year 1995.

The Congressional Budget Office has analyzed H.R. 1000 and has concluded requiring a verification system will reduce food stamp benefit overpayments and save an estimated $6 million by fiscal year 2003. Although States and the Federal Government will incur a slight cost to establish the verification system in fiscal year 1998, that cost will be more than offset in subsequent years.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the General Accounting Office, I believe that the verification system requirement of H.R. 1000 is a cost effective method of preventing prisoners from being counted as members of food stamp households with a minimum burden or inconvenience on food stamp recipients and States. Additionally, requiring this verification will identify and reduce program fraud and increase the collection of benefit overpayments. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1000.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I have been a tireless advocate along with many of my colleagues in fighting hunger in the United States. The bill before us today is aimed at helping to ensure that the funds allocated by the Federal Government for the food stamp program actually go to feed those who are hungry.

In fiscal year 1995, USDA issued over $22 billion in benefits. Some 26 million Americans were helped by these funds. Congress passed legislation last year to cut the food stamp program by $23 million through the year 2002. So the total appropriation for fiscal year 1997 is $23.3 billion, $1 billion less than they were in fiscal year 1996, which was $24.3 billion.

This bill, H.R. 1000, is designed to ensure that we concentrate those declining resources to make sure that those who are in actual need get that help.

Although the Food Stamp Act automatically disqualifies people who were institutionalized from inclusion in participating households because they receive meals during their sentences, oftentimes the food stamp administrative agency is not notified that a member of a household has been incarcerated.

A GAO audit recently published a report which found out of four States studied for calendar 1995, California, Florida, New York, and Texas, 12,138 inmates were included in household food stamp benefits, resulting in an estimated $3.5 million that was not directed to needy families.

H.R. 1000 will help prevent this from happening in the future as it requires States to establish a system to verify that individuals detained in Federal, State, and county penal institutions are not counted as household members for the purpose specified by the Food Stamp Program.

In fact, a database already exists for States to check. The Social Security Administration maintains such a database, as it too is required to check for inmates participation.

In addition, this legislation takes into account the needs of the various States and permits them some flexibility. Mr. Speaker, I urge every Member of this body to support this legislation as we consider it under suspension of the rules, so that limited funds that we do have allocated to the Food Stamp Program go actually to those who are eligible and to those who are hungry.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. GOODLATTE], the chief sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the committee for yielding me this time as well as for his strong support for this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1000, a bill I introduced to require States to establish a system to verify that individuals detained in Federal, State, city, or county penal facilities are not counted as household members for purposes of determining eligibility or the level of benefits in the Food Stamp Program.

The General Accounting Office recently released a report on its review of prisoners counted as household members in the Food Stamp Program. Currently, prisoners are not permitted to be included in food stamp households or receive food stamp benefits, nor should they be. Despite this prohibition, GAO's limited review discovered over 12,000 prison inmates who were included in food stamp households resulting in $3.5 million in food stamp overpayments. The bill before the House today requires States to set up a system to enforce the current prohibition in the Food Stamp Act.

I believe that the GAO report identified a problem which is a significant concern. I believe that public confidence and support of the Food Stamp Program are undermined when a household receives a higher level of food stamp benefits than an identically situated household simply because the household receiving more food stamp benefits is illegally counting an incarcerated individual as a member, who is, after all, receiving three squares a day in the slammer.

This concern is furthered by GAO's conclusion that a cost effective matching technique can be used to prevent this problem, but that many States have not done so.

H.R. 1000 requires States to establish a system to verify that individuals detained in Federal, State, or county penal facilities are not counted as household members for purposes of determining eligibility or the level of benefits in the Food Stamp Program.

H.R. 1000 allows States to avoid establishing a verification system if the Secretary of Agriculture determines that extraordinary circumstance have made it impractical for the State agency to obtain the information necessary to establish such a system. I believe that this exception should be invoked by the Secretary in rare and truly extraordinary circumstances. An extraordinary circumstance would include when a State does not have computerized records of its State or county inmate population. Under such circumstances, the State could have great difficulty establishing a verification system and the Secretary may be justified in granting an exception. I would expect, however, that in such circumstances the exception to be narrowly tailored to address the specific situation.

If a State fails to comply with the requirements of this bill, the penalty provisions of section 16(g) of the Food Stamp Act apply. This provision provides the Secretary notify the State that it is in noncompliance. If a State continues to fail to establish a verification system, the Secretary may withhold a portion of the State's administrative funds.

Under the Food Stamp Program, one-half of the State's administrative costs are paid by the Federal Government. Additionally, the Secretary may request the Attorney General to seek an injunction ordering a State to establish a verification system.

The Food Stamp Act requires that States attempt to collect overpayments made to food stamp households. As an incentive to States, each State retains a portion of the overpayments its collects. States retain 35 percent of overpayment collections resulting from intentional program violations and 20 percent of overpayment collections resulting from recipient error. By identifying overpayments that have previously gone undetected, the verification system required by H.R. 1000 will enhance each State's abilities to identify and collect overpayments. Because States retain a portion of these collections, any increase results in additional funds for the States, clearly making this not an unfunded mandate.

Finally, H.R. 1000 provides States with 1 year from the date of enactment to comply with the provisions of this bill without risk of penalty.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1000. It is an important bill that deserves their attention and full support.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, food stamp rules make quite clear that residents of most institutions are not eligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program. Yet, according to GAO, thousands of prisoners are being counted as members of food stamp households, resulting in those households receiving more food stamps than they should. GAO has recommended that the Food and Consumer Service encourage States to implement periodic computer matches of data on State and local prison inmates with data on food stamp participants.

H.R. 1000 goes several steps further than this recommendation. It requires States to perform such periodic verifications and also requires that the matches be not only of State and local prison inmates but of Federal inmates as well. It includes a provision allowing the Secretary of Agriculture to exempt from this requirement any State having circumstances making it impractical to perform the matches, such as a lack of a central computerized data base for its prison population. States will have 1 year from the date of enactment to comply with the new requirement.

Several States, such as Texas, already conduct such matches. Other States have plans to begin conducting these matches in the future. This bill will provide the impetus for most States to perform periodic matches, thereby saving the taxpayers at least $1 million a year. It is a good bill, and I urge your support of it.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1000.

The question was taken.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oregon?

There was no objection.

RELEASE OF REVERSIONARY INTEREST REGARDING CERTAIN PROPERTY IN IOSCO COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 394) to provide for the release of the reversionary interest held by the United States in certain property located in the County of Iosco, MI.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 394

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. RELEASE OF REVERSIONARY INTEREST REGARDING CERTAIN PROPERTY IN IOSCO COUNTY, MICHIGAN.

(a) RELEASE REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall release the reversionary interest of the United States in the parcel of real property described in subsection (b), which was retained by the United States when the property was conveyed to the County of Iosco, Michigan, in 1960 pursuant to a deed recorded at Liber 144, beginning page 58, in the land records of the County.

(b) DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.—The parcel of real property referred to in subsection (a) consists of 1.92 acres in the County of Iosco, Michigan, and is described as follows:

That part of the N.W. ¼ of the S.E. ¼ of Section 11, T. 22 N.R. 8 East., Baldwin Township, Iosco County, Michigan described as follows: Commencing at the Center of said Section 11, thence South 89 degrees, 15′ 41″ East, along the East-West ¼ Line of said Section 11, 102.0 feet, thence South 00 degrees 08′ 07″ East, along an existing fence line, 972.56 feet, thence North 89 degrees 07′ 13″ W. 69.70 feet to a point in the North-South ¼ Line, thence North 02 degrees 02′ 12″ West, along said North-South ¼ Line, 973.42 feet to the Point of Beginning.

(c) ADDITIONAL TERMS.—The Secretary may require such terms or conditions in connection with the release under this section as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

(d) INSTRUMENT OF RELEASE.—The Secretary shall execute and file in the appropriate office or offices a deed of release, amended deed, or other appropriate instrument effectuating the release of the reversionary interest under this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH] and the gentlewoman

from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH].

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the bill, H.R. 394, provides for the release of a reversionary interest held by the United States in 1.92 acres in real property in Iosco County, MI. The release will facilitate a land exchange under the Small Tracts Act of 1983 between Iosco County and a private party.

Mr. Speaker, Iosco County acquired property from the United States for an airport in 1960, but the Federal Government retained a reversionary interest in the event that the property should be used for a purpose other than an airport. Because of a survey error, part of the land, 1.92 acres, granted by the United States to Iosco County for the airport, has been in private use. A release of the reversionary interest held by the United States will provide the private party clear title to the 1.92 acres.

□ 1515

In exchange, the private party will provide an equal parcel of land to Iosco County. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has no objection to the enactment of this bill as introduced, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 394 which provides for the release of a Forest Service reversionary interest in 1.92 acres of land that was conveyed to the county of Iosco, MI, in 1960. The release of this reversionary interest will clear the way for an exchange by Iosco County and a private landowner. In exchange, the private landowner will provide a parcel of land of equal value. This legislation will correct a surveyor's error. It is necessary to complete this transfer. I support this legislation and urge its passage by this House.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BARCIA], the original sponsor of this bill.

(Mr. BARCIA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 394, and I want to offer a heartfelt thank-you to the chairman and the ranking minority member for their assistance in bringing this bill to the floor so quickly.

This legislation, which will allow for a like exchange of property in Iosco County, MI, in my district, in the Fifth District of Michigan, to clear title on land that was erroneously surveyed as private land, is identical to the bill that we passed in the 104th Congress, H.R. 2670. It is supported by the county, the landowner, and the Department of Agriculture. It should not be a matter of controversy with anyone. I urge its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 394, a bill I sponsored, to provide for the release of reversionary interests held by the United States in certain property located in Iosco County, MI. This bill is identical to H.R. 2670 which was approved by the House in the 104th Congress.

I want to thank the chairman of the Resource Conservation, Research and Forestry Subcommittee, chaired by the gentleman from Texas [Mr. COMBEST] and the gentleman from California, the ranking minority member [Mr. DOOLEY], for their willingness to help move this issue toward resolution.

In 1960 land was provided to Iosco County for the construction of an airport. This land was provided through the Secretary of Agriculture under the authority of section 16 of the Federal Airport Act of 1946, and in conformity with Executive Order 10536 of June 9, 1954.

Using survey lines that had been drawn at the time, one of my constituents, Mr. Otto Peppel, constructed a cabin on land that based upon the old survey he believed to be his own. A conflict in the lines of occupation with the legal boundary lines was discovered in a 1976 survey performed for airport expansion, showing that 1.9 acres that Mr. Peppel believed to be his were in fact the airport's. Efforts to eliminate the title conflict have been going on since that time, culminating in the request to me to introduce legislation to allow for the dismissal of the reverter clause in this property.

Local authorities and Mr. Peppel have agreed to exchange a like amount of property so that the title can be cleared. However, given that the land was given to the county by the Secretary of Agriculture for public purposes, a reverter clause exists that must be quieted in order to clear the title.

In consultation with local staff of the U.S. Forest Service, this bill was drafted to allow for the clearance of this title. In further consultation with the Department of Agriculture and the House Agriculture Committee, the bill was amended last year with the agreement of all parties to provide that the reversionary interest of the United States is not lost, but rather is restored on another piece of property of equal value. The bill before us today is identical to the one we passed last year.

Given the support for the land swap from the property owners, local officials, and the Forest Service, this matter should be noncontroversial. I urge its adoption.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 394.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oregon?

There was no objection.

J. PHIL CAMPBELL, SENIOR, NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION CENTER

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 785) to designate the J. Phil Campbell, Senior, Natural Resource Conservation Center.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 785

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF J. PHIL CAMPBELL, SENIOR, NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION CENTER.

The Southern Piedmont Conservation Research Center located at 1420 Experimental Station Road in Watkinsville, Georgia, shall be known and designated as the ''J. Phil Campbell, Senior, Natural Resource Conservation Center''.

SEC. 2. REFERENCE.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the building referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''J. Phil Campbell, Senior, Natural Resources Conservation Center''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH] and the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH].

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. NORWOOD], the chief sponsor, who will explain the bill.

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 785, to designate the Southern Piedmont Conservation Resource Center in Watkinsville, GA, as the J. Phil Campbell, Senior, Natural Resource Conservation Center.

H.R. 785 recognizes a true visionary in American agriculture, J. Phil Campbell, Senior. Mr. Campbell's passion for educating and training Georgia farmers, his development of some of the first agriculture extension services, and his service in President Franklin Roosevelt's Department of Agriculture are a testimony to his commitment to promoting agriculture throughout the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I introduced this legislation last year as H.R. 3387 which passed the House by unanimous consent. This year H.R. 785 passed the Committee on Agriculture and the subcommittee unanimously on a voice vote in March. In comment on H.R. 3387, the USDA has no objection to redesignating the Watkinsville facility

and, according to the CBO, H.R. 785 will have no significant impact on the Federal budget, contains no intergovernmental or private sector mandates, and has no budgetary impact on State or local governments.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Chairmen SMITH and POMBO for their help and willingness to move this legislation. I also would like to thank my eight colleagues who cosponsored this legislation, and Mr. COVERDELL and Mr. CLELAND for their help in the Senate.

I would encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 785 and help commemorate a man who dedicated his life to help farmers and farming communities throughout Georgia and the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 785 to rename the Southern Piedmont Conservation Research Center in Watkinsville, GA after a great pioneer in Georgia agriculture, J. Phil Campbell, senior.

James Philander Campbell was born in Dallas, GA on March 2, 1878. He grew up on a farm and, at the age of 17, began teaching school. At a young age, J. Phil Campbell, senior fought for and helped to secure legislation to authorize agriculture instruction in Georgia's rural schools. In 1907, he spent 6 months traveling throughout the State, advocating for the creation of district agriculture schools and a State college of agriculture. All of this was done before he turned 30.

Between 1908 and 1910, Mr. Campbell served as the first farm extension supervisor to the Southeast region. This was done before passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1915, which created the Federal extension service.

In 1910, he began a career as the Georgia State agent for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He also served on the staff of Georgia State University's College of Agriculture. During his tenure, he organized nearly 13,000 Georgia children in corn and canning clubs and 5,000 Georgia farmers into farming demonstration work. These efforts were done under the supervision of Dr. Seaman Knapp at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

During this time, Mr. Campbell also served as the Director of Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics. In 1933, he took a leave of absence to assist the agriculture adjustment administration in its cotton belt crop replenishment division. After 1935, he was elevated to a Federal position in the Roosevelt administration as Assistant Chief of the Soil Conservation Service in the USDA. He served in that capacity until he died in December 1944.

In addition to his clear record of accomplishment in education, Mr. Campbell was also extremely interested in agriculture research and maintained close ties with the agriculture experiment stations in Georgia. He was integral in the creation of the Southern Piedmont Conservation Research Center and in choosing its site just outside of Athens and the University of Georgia. When funding for the center was threatened in its first year, Phil Campbell fought to keep the center open and secure its line of funding. It exists to this day on Experimental Station Road in Watkinsville.

Mr. Speaker, given the great contribution Mr. Campbell made to Georgia and the Nation, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 785.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 785. I want to thank my colleagues from Georgia for their work in this effort. Mr. CAMPBELL was certainly a driving force in the agriculture community in their home State of Georgia, by the way it is also my home State, as well as on the national level.

With his work in extension and research activities as well as his distinguished service at the Soil Conservation Service during the Roosevelt administration, it is appropriate that this facility in Watkinsville be renamed in his honor.

Again I thank the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. NORWOOD] for his bipartisanship and his effort in bringing forth this legislation, and I urge its passage by this House.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 785.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oregon?

There was no objection.

ANNUAL REPORT OF DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, FISCAL YEAR 1995—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure:

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 308 of Public Law 97–449 (49 U.S.C. 308(a)), I transmit herewith the Annual Report of the Department of Transportation, which covers fiscal year 1995.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *April 8, 1997.*

REPORT OF DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES REGARDING RADIATION CONTROL FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT OF 1968—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Commerce:

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 540 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic (FDC) Act (21 U.S.C. 360qq) (previously section 360D of the Public Health Service Act), I am submitting the report of the Department of Health and Human Services regarding the administration of the Radiation Control for Health and Safety Act of 1968 during calendar year 1995.

The report recommends the repeal of section 540 of the FDC Act, which requires the completion of this annual report. All the information found in this report is available to the Congress on a more immediate basis through the Center for Devices and Radiological Health technical reports, the Center's Home Page Internet Site, and other publicly available sources. Agency resources devoted to the preparation of this report should be put to other, better uses.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *April 8, 1997.*

ANNUAL REPORT OF NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY, FISCAL YEAR 1996—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the provisions of section 504(h) of Public Law 98–164, as amended (22 U.S.C. 4413(i)), I transmit herewith the 13th Annual Report of the National Endowment for Democracy, which covers fiscal year 1996.

The report demonstrates the National Endowment for Democracy's unique contribution to the task of promoting democracy worldwide. The Endowment has helped consolidate emerging democracies—from South Africa to the former Soviet Union—and has lent its hand to grass-roots activists in repressive countries—such as Cuba, Burma, or Nigeria. In each instance, it has been able to act in ways that government agencies could not.

Through its everyday efforts, the Endowment provides evidence of the universality of the democratic ideal and of the benefits to our Nation of our continued international engagement. The

Endowment has received and should continue to receive strong bipartisan support.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *April 8, 1997.*

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5:15 p.m.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 24 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 5:15 p.m.

□ 1715

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. GUTKNECHT] at 5 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GUTKNECHT). Debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules.

Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, the Chair will now put the question on each motion to suspend the rules on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today, in the order in which that motion was entertained.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 28, by the yeas and the nays;

H.R. 1000, by the yeas and nays.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first such vote in this series.

RURAL MULTIFAMILY RENTAL HOUSING LOAN GUARANTEE EXTENSION ACT OF 1997

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 28.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 28, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were— yeas 397, nays 14, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 72]

YEAS—397

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Allen
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baesler
Baker
Baldacci
Barcia
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Barrett (WI)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Becerra
Bentsen
Bereuter
Berman
Berry
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop
Blagojevich
Bliley
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonior
Bono
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Capps
Cardin
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Coble
Collins
Combest
Condit
Conyers
Cook
Cooksey
Costello
Cox
Coyne
Cramer
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cummings
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Dellums
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
Engel
English
Ensign
Eshoo
Evans
Everett
Ewing
Farr
Fattah
Fawell
Fazio
Flake
Foglietta
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fowler
Fox
Frank (MA)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Furse
Gallegly
Ganske
Gejdenson
Gekas
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hamilton
Hansen
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hinojosa
Hobson
Holden
Hooley
Horn
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kanjorski
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kim
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kleczka
Klink
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
LaFalce
LaHood
Lampson
Lantos
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manton
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McDermott
McGovern
McHale
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek
Menendez
Metcalf
Mica
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Miller (FL)
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Molinari
Mollohan
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Morella
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler
Neal
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Pappas
Parker
Pascrell
Pastor
Paxon
Payne
Pease
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pickett
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Poshard
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Reyes
Riggs
Riley
Rivers
Roemer
Rogan
Rogers
Ros-Lehtinen
Rothman
Roukema
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Ryun
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Saxton
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Schumer
Scott
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Adam
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Snyder
Solomon
Spence
Spratt
Stabenow
Stearns
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stupak
Sununu
Talent
Tanner
Tauscher
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thompson
Thornberry
Thune
Thurman
Tiahrt
Tierney
Traficant
Turner
Upton
Vento
Visclosky
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Watkins
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Weygand
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wise
Wolf
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—14

Coburn
Hoekstra
Hostettler
Manzullo
Neumann
Paul
Rohrabacher
Royce
Salmon
Sanford
Scarborough
Sensenbrenner
Souder
Stump

NOT VOTING—21

Andrews
Ballenger
Bryant
Carson
Etheridge
Filner
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hefner
Hinchey
Istook
Kaptur
Kilpatrick
McCarthy (NY)
Pomeroy
Schiff
Stark
Torres
Towns
Velazquez
Watts (OK)

□ 1736

Messrs. HOEKSTRA, SCARBOROUGH, SALMON, and ROYCE changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. NETHERCUTT changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GUTKNECHT). Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I, the Chair announces that he will reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the period of time within which a vote by electronic device may be taken on each additional motion to suspend the rules on which the Chair has postponed further proceedings.

PREVENTING PRISONERS FROM BEING CONSIDERED PART OF HOUSEHOLD UNDER FOOD STAMP ACT OF 1977

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 1000.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1000, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 409, nays 0, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 73]

YEAS—409

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Allen
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baesler
Baker
Baldacci
Barcia
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Barrett (WI)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Becerra
Bentsen
Bereuter
Berry
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop
Blagojevich
Bliley
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonior
Bono
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Capps
Cardin
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Condit
Conyers
Cook
Cooksey
Costello
Cox
Coyne
Cramer
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cummings
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Dellums
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehrlich
Emerson
Engel
English
Ensign
Eshoo
Evans
Everett
Ewing
Farr
Fattah
Fawell
Fazio
Flake
Foglietta
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fowler
Fox
Frank (MA)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Furse
Gallegly
Ganske
Gejdenson
Gekas
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hamilton
Hansen
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Hooley
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kanjorski
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kim
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kleczka
Klink
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
LaFalce
LaHood
Lampson
Lantos
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Manton
Manzullo
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McDermott
McGovern
McHale
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek
Menendez
Metcalf
Mica
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Miller (FL)
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Molinari
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Morella
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler
Neal
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Pappas
Parker
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Paxon
Payne
Pease
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pickett
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Poshard
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Reyes
Riggs
Riley
Rivers
Roemer
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Rothman
Roukema
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Rush
Ryun
Sabo
Salmon
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sanford
Sawyer
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Schumer
Scott
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Adam
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Snyder
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Spratt
Stabenow
Stearns
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stump
Stupak
Sununu
Talent
Tanner
Tauscher
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thompson
Thornberry
Thune
Thurman
Tiahrt
Tierney
Torres
Traficant
Turner
Upton
Vento
Visclosky
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Watkins
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Weygand
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wise
Wolf
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—23

Andrews
Ballenger
Berman
Bryant
Carson
Ehlers
Etheridge
Filner
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hefner
Hinchey
Istook
Kaptur
Kilpatrick
McCarthy (NY)
Mollohan
Pomeroy
Schiff
Stark
Towns
Velazquez
Watts (OK)

So (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. SOLOMON, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105–45) on the resolution (H. Res. 107) providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOBSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.]

CONGRATULATING HANNIBAL, MO

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

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate a vibrant city in the Ninth Congressional District of Missouri, Hannibal, MO, for its selection to the semifinals of the National Trust for Historic Preservation 1997 Great American Main Street Awards.

The Great American Main Street Awards recognize exceptional accomplishments in revitalizing America's historic and traditional downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts.

Hannibal, MO, has demonstrated a very active public and private participation in this revitalization process. It enjoys broad-based community support, success in boosting the economy and, more importantly, preservation of the uniquely historic buildings.

Mr. Speaker, the goal of the Hannibal Main Street Program is a revitalized program area. The Hannibal Main Street Program has continued to promote economic development within the context of historic preservation. It has established a strong partnership with others in the community to create a wide range of support. The Hannibal Main Street Program has a contract with the city for professional services. In addition, both the public and private schools provide a volunteer work force for downtown cleanup days. Service clubs donate time and supplies, sponsor festivals and parades as well as providing volunteers. A number of local financial institutions participate in low-interest loan programs. This truly is, Mr. Speaker, a community that comes together.

In just 6 years, Hannibal Main Street has had a significant, positive economic impact. It has experienced a net gain of 103 new businesses as well as 414 new jobs created. Building sales have skyrocketed and the number of vacancies has plummeted just in the last couple of years.

Mr. Speaker, many of us in this Chamber might recognize Hannibal as the home of the American Classics author, Mark Twain. To some, Mark Twain and Hannibal, MO, are inseparable. To the lovers of Mark Twain, Hannibal has become a shrine. Thanks to Hannibal Main Street, all families across America will be able to continue to experience Mark Twain and his history through Hannibal's historic preservation and economic revitalization.

I am here today, Mr. Speaker, to salute the residents of Hannibal, MO. It is cities like Hannibal that represent the best that America has to offer.

Congratulations, Mr. Speaker, and to Hannibal, MO, on a job well done.

TRIBUTE TO DR. DEBRA PHILLIPS

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Debra Phillips of Golden, IL. Last month, Dr. Phillips was named the Illinois Rural Health Practitioner of the year by the Illinois Rural Health Association. Dr. Phillips received this award in recognition of her outstanding care, involvement in the community and her lasting contribution to the rural health care system in Illinois.

Raised in rural southeast Iowa, Dr. Phillips knows the benefit of rural health care providers. After finishing her undergraduate and medical education at the University of Iowa, Dr. Phillips did her residency in family practice. In the late 1980's, Dr. Phillips developed a model practice for a rural area. Working with Southern Illinois University and Blessing Hospital in Quincy, IL, which I visited last week, she helped to create the East Adams County Rural Health Clinic in May 1991. Today this clinic serves a rural population of 7,200 people. Since the nearest hospital is 30 miles away, this rural clinic is vital to the health and well-being of many people. I am very happy to report that Dr. Phillips still spends half her time caring for patients at this facility. In addition, she is the Associate Professor of Clinical Family Practice at the SIU School of Medicine, where she is also the Associate Director of the Quincy Family Practice Center residency program.

There are 15 current physicians in this residency program. Dr. Phillips also spends a considerable amount of time teaching resident physicians and medical students in the area of rural health care. She has been influential in helping to promote rural health and encouraging physicians to practice in rural areas. Additionally, Dr. Phillips is a medical director of three nursing homes in rural Adams county and even practices medicine out of her farmhouse after hours.

□ 1800

As if that was not enough, Dr. Phillips is married to Duane Phillips, and the mother of two children, 9-year-old Katherine and 6-year-old Jacob.

I would like to take this special opportunity to recognize Dr. Phillips for her tireless work and congratulate her for receiving this award. I look forward to her advice and counsel as we move forward in addressing rural health care issues. But most of all, I would like to thank Dr. Phillips for her dedication to the rural residents of Illinois.

TRIBUTE TO WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP

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

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, today I join with the people of West Windsor Township, NJ, in celebrating the township's bicentennial. It was on this day 200 years ago the New Jersey State legislature divided the township of Windsor, which was once a part of the William Penn land grant, into East and West Windsor.

At the time West Windsor was part of Middlesex County, but in the 1830's West Windsor was again divided, taking about 8 square miles away to form a part of what is now Princeton Township. After the Revolutionary War, the township became part of Mercer County, which was named in recognition of General Mercer, a Revolutionary War hero.

As we look back on the past 200 years, we discover that West Windsor has been home to some significant occurrences in our Nation's military history. The turning point in the Revolutionary War, the Battle of Princeton, which became the Battle of Trenton, was fought in West Windsor Township. Years later during World Wars I and II, it was the agricultural products of the township, its fruits and vegetables, that were sent to Fort Dix to feed our troops.

A great deal has changed in West Windsor over the past 200 years. The dreams and spirit that once fought a war are helping to lead the township into the new century. Today the township of 27 square miles is home to many high-tech businesses.

West Windsor continues to grow and thrive as a community of new residents and businesses and industry. Just recently Raytheon chose West Windsor as the location for its engineering division. Raytheon will join NycoMed, Berlitz, LogicWorks, and Bristol Myers Squibb as companies that have chosen the township as their place of business. These businesses, like its people, continue to be on the cutting edge.

But even as West Windsor continues to move toward the future and corporations continue to choose it as their home, the township remains committed to preserving its past. While many communities in America struggle between the desire to entice businesses and a willingness to preserve open space, West Windsor has certainly found a balance.

The town has worked hard to maintain the quality of life and the environment of the community. Forty percent of all the land in the township is designated as nonbuildable open space. I am told that Mayor Tom Frascella's goal is to increase the percentage of open space to 50 percent. It is the people of West Windsor over the years, its service organizations and elected officials, that have been responsible for the current growth and prosperity that the township enjoys.

It is not surprising that in all that has happened in the past, and in recognition of the positive direction that they are headed for in the future, New Jersey Monthly Magazine recognized West Windsor as one of the 15 best communities in New Jersey, and Philadelphia Magazine also recognized the township as one of the 15 best communities in suburban Philadelphia.

Over the coming months West Windsor has a number of events planned to celebrate its bicentennial. Shows, festivals, concerts, and parades will run throughout the year. I applaud the efforts of the dedicated volunteers, elected officials such as Mayor Frascella, and the local business owners that are committed to sharing the past and preserving the future of this town. Their pride and optimism for the future is what sets West Windsor apart.

I am proud to represent this community in the U.S. Congress. If the next 200 years are anything like the first 200 years, we can expect to continue to see great things from this Mercer County community. Congratulations to the people of West Windsor Township.

RAISING TAXES WILL NOT HELP AMERICA'S CHILDREN

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

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, earlier this morning I heard many floor speeches from people on the other side of the aisle talking about how much they love children and how they want to create a new layer of bureaucracy and raise more taxes on the American people to help children.

I found this to be very interesting, to say the least, considering that these same people that have been so interested in helping children across this country have over the past 40 years accumulated a $5.6 trillion debt. In the name of helping children and helping farms and helping businesses, actually what they have done is, they have put us in a position where our children's future has been mortgaged at a $5.6 trillion price tag.

A lot of people ask, in my town hall meetings, what does this really mean? How much is $5.6 trillion? And this Easter, as I was going across the district, I decided to give them this example:

If you made a million dollars every day, from the day that Jesus Christ was born 2,000 years ago, a million dollars every day for 2,000 years, you would not make enough money to pay off our Federal debt. If you made a million dollars every day for the first 2,000 years and then made a million dollars every day from today until the year 4000 A.D. and added all that up, you still would not have enough money to pay off our Federal debt. In fact, you would still be $1.6 trillion short.

Now, that is the debt that we are passing on to my 9-year-old boy, my 6-year-old boy, and to future generations, and yet we still have more liberals saying we need to tax more, we need to spend more, we need to create bureaucracies to help the children. The fact is that we are actually stealing money from their pockets.

Their argument comes down to this. They love children so much that they

are going to steal more money from children to help children. I just do not follow that.

Now, what will it mean to our children 20, 30 years from now if we continue to tax and spend just at the level that we are taxing and spending at now? Forget about new programs that they are proposing, but what if we just stay on the path that we are on right now?

Well, Senator BOB KERREY, who had a great Commission on Entitlements, ended up recognizing that our children 30 years from now would be paying a tax rate of 89 percent. Eighty-nine percent. What that means is that for every dollar my boys make 20 years from now, they are going to have to pay 89 cents of it to Washington, DC; 89 cents out of every dollar they earn will go to Washington, DC, in Federal taxes.

And yet these same people who are supposedly defenders of children are saying they are going to pay for this kiddie care, this new program, by raising taxes more. I guess the past is prologue. Tax and spend, tax and spend, tax and spend, tax and spend. It is all they know. It is all they have ever known. It is all they will ever know.

They can wear children's ties, they can come on the floor and talk about how much they love kids, they can talk about how much they love my boys and your children and your grandchildren by starting these new programs, but the one thing they cannot do is, they cannot erase the fact that they have already bankrupted future generations, and they want to come back for more and more and more and more.

We are $5.6 trillion in debt. That is an unmistakable fact. Nobody can shake their heads on that and say it is not so, because it is. We are $5.6 trillion in debt. Democratic Senator BOB KERREY tells us our children are going to be paying 89 percent in taxes 20 years from now.

We either take care of the problem today or we selfishly leave our children with an America where it is impossible to pursue the same American dream that my parents and my grandparents left for me. My late grandfather worked through the Depression to keep his family afloat. He served in World War II, the Korean War, and gave his life so I could pursue the American dream. That is the least that I can do for my children.

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA IS DECLARED A MAJOR DISASTER AREA

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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, the State of South Dakota has endured floods, we have endured blizzards, we have endured high winds, ice storms and power outages, and right now we are enduring all of the above simultaneously. It is one of the most savage and bizarre examples of bad weather that our State has ever seen, and yesterday the President declared South Dakota a disaster area.

I think everybody at home would agree with that declaration. In fact, it makes official what we in South Dakota have known for a good long time, and that is that we are facing an enormous disaster.

Now our State is eligible for individual assistance; 44 of the 66 counties are eligible for public assistance, as well. Through all this, the people in our great State of South Dakota have shown themselves to be loyal, hardy, generous, and courageous. I think it speaks well to the pioneer stock from which we come, the spirit that they have shown, neighbor helping neighbor.

I have been in my State and had the opportunity to see firsthand the devastation that has been wreaked by these storms. The city of Watertown, 50,000 people evacuated. Many homes will not receive power. The power has been shut off and the utilities have been shut off. They may not receive water for 6 weeks time.

Little town of Leola, S.D., power went out on Sunday. They have been without heat and water for 2 days and they have had to rely upon each other. Each morning they wake up praying for heat while they face another day of cold.

We have seen repeated examples, countless examples throughout our State. The little town of Lemmon, which received 24 inches of snow, and with the snow and the winds, 60-mile-an-hour winds on Saturday, lost all their power and the only way they could get around was with 4-wheel-drives.

We have seen the damage to the infrastructure in our State, the road system. Nineteen State Highways are underwater. U.S. highway 281 in the Redfield area is under 12 feet of water.

So we have some enormous challenges when it comes to repairing the damage that has been done to our infrastructure, our agricultural producers, who have already received and experienced unprecedented damages to their livestock herds. The question of spring planting is in serious doubt. Our ranchers who have gone through the blizzards of winter, now as calving season comes around have to deal with the spring weather and trying to get their calf crop to come through in spite of the conditions that surround them.

These are the types of things that have been happening in my State. In the last 2 weeks I have had the opportunity to view it firsthand, and I want to credit the administration, the President, for recognizing the needs, for declaring South Dakota, the Dakotas, a disaster area. I would hope that as we can make our way through all this, that as we look to each other, and we have seen countless examples of the Dakota experience, it has been no aberration.

I recall my father telling me as he grew up in the Depression-era days of the 1930's what it was like to have to undergo extreme weather circumstances that strike at the very heart of our livelihood. So in this particular year we hope that we can get through it. We appreciate very much those from around our country who have recognized the need, have been there to help.

I have invited the Secretary of Transportation to come out to look at our roads and our bridges, our infrastructure, and to see the destruction firsthand. The severity of the problem cannot be contained, and we have asked the rest of the Nation to recognize the need that is in my State of South Dakota, in North Dakota, surrounding States, and to help us find the resources that we need to get through this.

As we do that, I am certainly hopeful that as we go through the process of balancing the budget, and frankly, Mr. Speaker, if we were able to balance our budget, we would have about $245 billion more in interest payments that we make that we could dedicate to this important cause. So we recognize the need for fiscal responsibility in this country but also the need to help those who cannot help themselves.

We are very grateful that our Nation has banded together and has recognized the extreme circumstances and weather conditions we are having in South Dakota, and I want to credit my people, the folks in my home State who have weathered this storm, continuing to show the incredible spirit, the incredible fortitude for which we are known and for which we continue to survive.

Mr. Speaker, the great State of South Dakota has endured floods, we've endured blizzards, we're endured high winds, ice storms, and power outages. But right now we're enduring all of the above simultaneously. It's one of the most savage and bizarre example of bad weather seen in South Dakota in the last 500 years.

Yesterday, the President declared the State of a major disaster. Everyone at home agrees wholeheartedly with that assessment and I would like to thank the President at this time for recognizing the scope and severity of our problem. South Dakota is now eligible for individual assistance. The President has also made 44 of 66 counties immediately eligible for public assistance, all of which is greatly needed.

I'd like to take the next few minutes to explain why. I'd also like to take this opportunity to show the Nation the kind of people I'm here to represent.

Throughout this disaster the people of South Dakota have shown themselves to be loyal, hardy, generous, and courageous. They've shown the mettle of the pioneers stock we spring from. They've shown that it takes more than blinding snow, rising water, snapped power poles, and freezing temperature to keep neighbors from helping neighbors. So for the next few minutes, I'd like to show you all the devastation Mother Nature is creating in my State, and the courage South Dakotans are using to face her.

Places I've been and people I have seen—Mr. Speaker, on the recent 2-week break I

had an opportunity to witness firsthand the efforts South Dakotans were making in anticipation of the flood. Thanks to the spirit and fortitude of our State's leaders, important efforts to prevent serious damage were initiated weeks in advance of the terrible recent events. The Governor has done an excellent job of coordinating State, Federal, and local efforts to control flooding. Unfortunately, some of these efforts failed.

James River Valley—including dikes built in the Aberdeen area; Huron; Mitchell; Yankton. In Mitchell, I visited with Shawn and Darcie Winthers who run Sioxland Camp. And their father Don McLean. High winds had blown the roof off of a dormitory there. In Pierre, I met with city officials and with the Southeast Pierre Homeowners Association. Approximately 200 homes have experienced flooding conditions. The city has worked with the Army Corps of Engineers to build a dyke to help divert an overflow of water out of this neighborhood. Watertown—spoke with Mayor Brenda Barger today where at one point 5,000 people were forced to evacuate their homes and take up temporary residence with friends, in hotels, and in even in a public exposition building.

PEOPLE PERSEVERING

Leola—The power went out Sunday at 1:00 a.m. They lost water Sunday night at 8:30 p.m. They've been without heat and water for 2 days. They wear stocking caps, mittens, and winter jackets to bed as they try to fall asleep under the bulk of six or seven blankets. The temperature fell to 15 below last night. Every morning they wake up, praying for heat while they face another day of cold.

During the day, people gather at the local fire hall where a generator provides the communities only heat. They're pumping water from the fire truck to take care of basic needs. The local cafe is staying open during this disaster so people can eat. The cafe has a propane grill and it's the only place in town where you can get a warm meal and a hot cup of coffee.

Watertown—5,000 people were forced to evacuate their homes in the midst of a raging blizzard. It will be days or even weeks before people are able to get into their homes, look at the damage, dry things out, make repairs, and move back in. In the meantime, they're living with friends, relatives, in hotels, and in shelters set up in the local county ag building.

Lemmon—In Lemmon, SD, they got 24 inches of snow and had 60-mile-an-hour winds on Saturday. That's also the day they lost their power. Volunteers used snowmobiles, pay loaders, and four wheel drive vehicles to move the snow and move people trapped in freezing homes.

The mayor told me they came to the home of an 89-year-old woman. They asked her if she could ride a snowmobile. She said sure she could ride a snowmobile, though it would be the first time she'd ever done it. People were taken to the nursing home and the local fire hall were a generator created heat. Others were taken to private homes with wood-burning stoves. Neighbors took in neighbors to make sure everyone had shelter from the storm.

TRANSPORTATION QUICK FACTS

Yesterday, I invited USDOT Secretary Rodney Slater to survey damage to the State's transportation infrastructure. He has yet to get a response from Slater, but is hopeful that the Secretary will take him up on the invitation.

Highways—As of this morning, 19 sections of State and U.S. highways were deemed impassable and closed to traffic. Several other roads have water flowing over their surface. One stretch of U.S. 281 just south of Redfield near Tulare was under 12 feet of water.

SDDOT expects to give notice of intent to apply for Emergency Relief [ER] funds this week. Inspections by FHWA, SDDOT officials will get an assessment of damages to roads and bridges. Those surveys will be turned in to FHWA to determine the level of assistance. ER funds can be used for Federal aid highways and bridges. FEMA funds can be used for local roads and bridges that receive no Federal funds.

In Redfield, flooding has restricted access from many directions. A portion of U.S. 281 south of the town is under 12 feet of water.

The winter blizzards escalated fiscal year 1997 highway maintenance costs to $25.7 million. The State budgeted $5.2 million. FEMA thus far has provided $3 million to the State. The proposed temporary increase to the State gas tax would have generated between $15 and $16 million.

Rail, Air and Transit—DM&E and several areas of the State-owned line have been washed out by flooding. In Sioux City, State-owned line used by BNSF, 900 feet of track was buried by 20 feet of soil that slid off of a bluff. In 1993, $1.6 million was provided for rail assistance as a result of flooding. Figures for this year are not yet available. Several small airports may need assistance as a result of flooding and excessively cold temperatures.

AGRICULTURE

Ranchers are braced to take some heavy livestock losses, especially among newborn calves. This latest blizzard hit right at calving time.

Longtime rancher, Bud Jones from Caputa, SD, said he has lost an undetermined number of new calves when winds—estimated at 50 to 70 mph from Wyoming across western South Dakota—chilled calves already soaked by rain that turned to heavy wet snow.

On top of that, more than 20 yearlings died trapped in a deep snow drift along South Dakota Highway 44. That's just what shows sticking out of the snow. It could be a week or more before the drift melts and reveals what lies buried underneath.

Bitter winds have compelled some cattle to quit good shelter and drift into water holes to stand in deep slush and suffer hypothermia.

It is too early to estimate the effects this will have on spring planting, but it is safe to say our spring crops are in jeopardy—it is too wet to plant anything.

ELECTRICITY

This disaster is a giant disaster made up of many smaller catastrophes.

The storm started with rain on April 4. Late on the 5th that rain started to freeze. Then the wind started gusting to over 60 miles per hour. Mother Nature whipped the frozen lines until they swayed and snapped and poles broke in half and toppled.

To make matters worse, a blizzard blew in after the rain. It wasn't safe to stay home because there was no heat. It wasn't safe to go out because of zero visibility on every road and highway. Then the flood waters started to rise.

Given all these problems it's impossible to say when power may be restored again.

Dedication and perseverance are the only tools that work under the circumstances. The downed lines are mired in snow, mud, and water. Only four wheel drive vehicles can navigate the mud.

Some people may be waiting in the cold until this weekend before temperatures are restored. Thousand of people are waiting by their grandparents old kerosene lamps for the return of heat and light. Approximately 1,500 people lost power in the community of Wakpala; 25 South Dakotans lost electricity in the city of Cam-Wal; and 700 people were without power in the town of Long Lake.

These are just South Dakota rural electric customers. All across the State, South Dakotans are making do, waiting for the power to be restored.

CLOSING

Although flood waters continue to saturate our State with misery, our citizens are holding together. The Dakota spirit is no aberration. Though frigid and soaked to the bone it is unmistakably clear during these trying times. Every day neighbor helping neighbor endure hardship—neither knowing which needs help the most.

I think of the stories I've been told about the Dirty Thirties—about the devastation the drought unleashed upon the Midwest. People who had lost all hope found that it was faith that would get them through. Many South Dakotans find themselves in similar situations today. They are finding their faith provides the only solid foundation to be found.

I have witnessed the destruction first hand. I have observed children and grandparents working side-by-side attempting to restrain the forces of nature. They are doing everything they can, but those efforts haven't always been enough. The severity of the problem cannot be contained. That is why South Dakota and our neighbors must come to the rest of the Nation—to ask them to do for us, that which we cannot do for ourselves. It is our job here in Washington to look at our resources and find a way to meet those most urgent needs.

The Federal Government has limited resources. I am convinced we can find the means to address our most urgent spending priorities.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO BALANCE ITS BUDGET

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I drove over to Cousin Artie and Rebecca's house to pick up my daughter Anne, who had walked to their house after ballet. Anne's first cousin and best friend is Arabella Hadwin. And Arabella came out; she was wearing an Indian costume. Kind of leather. Actually, fake leather with frills on it. It had Pocahontas's picture on it.

So I said to 6-year-old Arabella, ''Arabella, do you know today is Pocahontas's wedding day?''

□ 1815

She looked at me, and I could tell in that little 6-year-old mind she was

thinking, and she said, ''She's dead.'' And I said, ''Well, you're right, Pocahontas is dead, but this is the day that she got married on a long, long time ago, many years ago.'' Then Arabella said, ''Oh, you mean she got married on Monday?'' And I said, ''Well, no, she really got married on April 7.''

But it is funny how kids interpret things when we talk to them. You never quite know when they are listening or how they are listening and so forth. But I enjoy talking to children, I enjoy talking to small kids and to seniors in high school and college kids and so forth. One of the things I often ask small kids in schools, ''How many of you have an allowance?'' Inevitably half the class has an allowance. ''What do you make?'' Two or three dollars a week. Some of them make $5. Some of them are well-heeled, I guess, they make $10 a week. I said, ''Let me ask you this. You make $10 a week, how much do you spend?'' And they always kind of giggle, ''Well, I spend a little bit of it but my dad and mom like me to save some so I don't spend all of it.''

''Let me ask you this. You make $2 a week; do you ever spend $2.10?'' They look at me like I am crazy. ''Do you ever spend $2.25?'' ''No.'' ''Do you ever spend $2.50?'' At this point they know I am crazy, and they are wondering what the heck is this guy talking about. I say, I am your Member of the U.S. Congress. Did you know that the U.S. Congress also has an allowance? We call it tax revenue, and we get a certain amount a year; sometimes it is about $1.3 trillion. But do you know what we do? We grownups, we professional men and women who are paid to represent you and spend your money, we spend more of that allowance than we make. You send us $1.3 trillion and we spend $1.5 trillion. It seems to be the case, Democrats or Republicans, we overspend.

These kids cannot believe it. These kids, who have such innocent faces and such belief in mom and dad and the United States of America look at me in disbelief. Why would you spend more money than you bring in? Why would you spend more than your allowance? How can you spend that? And then we talk about the national debt and it is a very real problem. It is not something that, well, this is an amusing story to talk about my niece Arabella. This is truth. This is reality. When Members of Congress go out and they try to be the big mom or dad spending all the money, expanding social programs, talking about we need this for the United States of America, they are not spending their own money, they are spending little children's money. I see today in the gallery some children. Guess whose tab they will be picking up in the future?

Our debt, Mr. Speaker, right now is $5.1 trillion. Let me give the definition of $1 trillion. Shaq, the famous basketball player, Shaquille O'Neal, makes $30 million a year. Do you know how many years he would have to play to make $1 trillion? Thirty-three thousand years, just to make $1 trillion.

Another definition. If you have a boxcar full of thousands of dollar bills crammed to the top, you have $65 million in the boxcar. Do you know how long the train would have to be, Mr. Speaker, to get to $1 trillion? The train, with boxcars of $65 million each, would have to be 240 miles long to get to $1 trillion. And we, the big spenders in Congress, have left a debt, are looking at a debt right now of $5.1 trillion. Yet the sad thing is we still have deficit spending. We still are spending more of our allowance money than we bring in. The children of America will be picking up this money. It will take years and years to pay down this debt.

But the first step is to balance the budget. We have not had a balanced budget since 1969, which, as you remember, was when Woodstock was the big thing and everybody wanted to get out of Vietnam and Richard Nixon was President and the ''Mod Squad'' was on TV. That is how long it has been, Mr. Speaker. The time is now to stop this. This Congress, this year, let us pass a balanced budget and get on to save the United States of America for our children.

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

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

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

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

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

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

TAX EQUITY FOR INDIVIDUALS AND CORPORATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from New York [Mr. OWENS] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, today is April 8. We are just 1 week away from April 15, the tax day that is dreaded by most Americans. In the past, my colleagues on the other side have talked about taxes and the need to lower taxes for American families. I am one Democrat on this side of the aisle that agrees with those who want to lower taxes for American families. I agree with any of my colleagues, whether they are Republicans or Democrats, if they want to lower taxes for families and for individuals. We need to lower taxes for families and individuals in the United States. At the same time, we need to have a fair taxation policy which balances off our revenue-gathering operation by raising the taxes on corporations that have had their taxes lowered a great deal.

The problem is that we are taxing families and individuals too harshly. Families and individuals are paying too much because corporations are paying too little. We need to maintain certain services. We need to maintain certain functions of Government. I am all in favor of downsizing Government, I am in favor of Government getting smaller, but there are certain basics that must be paid for and we must tax in order to do that. So let us not oversimplify and determine that we can lower taxes all over the place. We need to balance off our revenue-gathering operation by guaranteeing that corporations pay their fair share.

For example, in 1943, and I have said this before, corporations were paying almost 40 percent of the total income tax burden in this country, in 1943. Twenty-seven percent of the total income tax burden in 1943 was paid by individuals and families. That is quite a difference. Corporations, as we see, were paying the greater amount. In 1983, however, the amount of taxes being paid by corporations under Ronald Reagan's administration fell to as low as 6 percent, from 1943's high of 40 percent to 6 percent in 1983. That is what happened to corporations in terms of their share of the income tax. At the same time that corporations fell, went down from this 40 to 6 percent, individual and family taxes rose from 27 to 48 percent. There was a swindle there somewhere that the American people really were not aware of. Corporations went as low as 6 percent. Today corporations are still paying only 11 percent of the total tax burden.

Individuals went as high as 48 percent in 1983. Individuals and family taxes are still up there at 45 percent. We have a gross inequity. The share of taxes paid by corporations is only 11 percent while the share paid by individuals and families is over four times that amount, 45 percent.

U.S. tax policy must be reset. Corporations must pay their fair share. And the special interest tax loopholes must be closed. In America, the richest country in the world, it is unspeakable that our families are forced to bear the brunt of the burden of taxation.

What we need to take a close look at is how corporations got from 40 percent of the income tax burden down to 6 percent, and now are at 8 percent. What happened? Public policy made by Members of Congress. The Members of Congress did that to individuals and to

families. They raised the taxes on individuals and families while they were lowering the taxes on corporations.

Some people, of course, will contend that corporations should not pay any taxes or that rich people should not pay taxes greater than poor people or corporations or entities which generate profits for rich people; therefore, we are only persecuting the rich. Well, I am not going to get into all the theories of taxation, but I think that those who have the most benefit the most from Government, those that have the most gain the most from our military, our Army, our Navy, our Marines. It is all there to defend what we have, and those that have the most to defend certainly ought not be reluctant to pay a greater share of the tax burden: Those who own the most, those who have most at stake.

If our society were to collapse, let us say we are not facing any threat from any outside force, we do not need the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force to protect us, the danger is not there. The danger may come from somewhere within. If the society structure collapsed, if there were no law and order, no rules and regulations, then who would lose the most? The people who are the greatest beneficiaries of law and order, of Government, of codes, of laws, they are the ones who are the richest, they would lose the most. This is not a far-fetched example or not a far-fetched statement. Take a look at the Soviet Union if you want to see a failed society. In modern times you had a society totally collapse, not as a result of any outside force. The Soviet Union was not conquered by an outside power. The Soviet Union collapsed from within. And the total of that society, the great majority of the people were losers as a result of a collapse of what they had and the failure to rebuild anything else even until today.

One of the big problems in the Soviet Union right now is that they cannot collect taxes. The big problem right now is that the Government makes a budget, the Government makes policies, and the Government cannot pay the pensions of the people who deserve pensions, the old folks who I guess they would be receiving it in the Soviet Union, it is not the Soviet Union now, it is Russia; in Russia they will be receiving the equivalent of Social Security. They do not make the Social Security payments on time. In fact, they are 3 and 4 months behind on making Social Security payments and pensions to workers and other equivalents of Social Security payments. The amounts are very small, so you have people literally starve as a result of not being able to receive their money that is due them from the government because the government is collapsed.

Despite the fact that they have a semblance of a government, one of the big things they have not been able to do is to collect taxes. The reason they cannot pay workers who have government jobs on time, they cannot pay the army, even their military is paid late, they cannot pay the people who are due their pensions, they cannot maintain their public facilities like hospitals, because in the collapse of the society, they have not been able to get back to the point where they can generate enough revenue to pay for the cost of running the society. It would be a terrible thing if in America we suddenly could not collect taxes, if people just decided they are not going to pay their taxes, the government cannot go and collect taxes. That would be a terrible thing, I think we would all agree.

I suppose that most of the people listening to me think that is an absurd notion. How could that ever happen? Americans are obedient people who care about their government and they care about the law. We do not care about the IRS. Nobody likes to pay taxes, nobody is going to pretend that they enjoy paying taxes, but by and large Americans pay their taxes, especially middle-class Americans, especially low-income Americans. I would suggest to anybody who wants to see who the IRS works with most, go to any tax office in the area where people have been summoned down, summoned down to negotiate or discuss or to be told about the need for them to pay some more taxes, something was wrong or something is being challenged. I have been to those offices a few times and I am always surprised that they are filled up with people who are obviously poor. The poorest people are always in the Internal Revenue offices waiting to have something ajusted, waiting to have the summons explained to them, and they usually end up having to find some way to pay the small amount of taxes that they owe, relatively speaking, sometimes quite small in terms of our global economy, in terms of the income made by middle-class people, but it is a large amount for a poor person to have to pay; but they are there, and they comply with the law. The middle class complies with the law.

I do not know which President said it, whether it was Nixon or Reagan, but there was a memo issued by one of the Presidents at the time when the Internal Revenue was having some problems with the staff and they wanted to show that they did not need more staff, I think, they said that Internal Revenue should not waste so much time with corporations and the very rich.

□ 1830

They required a lot of time. You have to negotiate with them. You have to chase them down. You have to figure out very complex sets of books and records.

They said, ''Go after the middle class. You ought to improve tax collection, going to bring the money in. Go after the middle class. They are obedient, they are compliant, they are patriotic.''

So the middle class pays its taxes, and I am sure that the same thing applies to poor people.

You know, my father very seldom had to pay taxes. He always filed the form though. My father never worked on the job where he earned more than minimum wage, and he had eight children. So eight children and the deductions for that plus minimum wage, and often he was laid off during the year. It was a very difficult life, I assure you. Minimum wage at that time was quite low and still is relatively speaking. So we never had to pay taxes. We had to file a form. He was always terrified to make certain that the form got filed on time.

The law impresses poor people, uneducated people, a great deal. They do not want to disobey the law no matter what the stereotypes might lead you to believe. The people who have most respect for the law, and there is fear involved in respect too, you know, are the poorest people. So they never disobey. If you go to one of those tax offices where people are sitting waiting to deal with their tax problems, you will see not the wretched of the Earth, but the anxious of the Earth. Some of the most anxious people in our society will be there and they are not middle-class professionals and they are not rich people, but they are poor people.

So it is a serious matter. April 15, a serious matter in 80 percent of the American households, taken very seriously.

I am sure that any American citizen would be appalled at the notion that there are certain people who blatantly refuse to pay their taxes, certain powerful people in powerful places in powerful institutions who just refuse to pay their taxes. They disobey the Internal Revenue Code. I think most Americans would be appalled if I said that they do it and nobody challenges them. IRS, that pursues some of my poor constituents for a few hundred dollars, has not bothered to pursue certain corporations that blatantly refuse to obey the Tax Code.

What am I talking about? Well, I was here a few weeks ago to introduce a letter that I had written to the Internal Revenue Commissioner. I wrote this letter and I circulated it and I talked to my colleagues about it, and I think we have about 30 Members of Congress who have signed this letter to the Internal Revenue Commissioner, the Honorable Margaret Milner Richardson.

Now I heard Ms. Richardson is leaving after the tax season is over. She is resigning, but she is still there. So we addressed the letter to Commissioner Richardson.

Now that was February 12, 1997. You know March 12 has come and gone. That is a month. Now April 12 is approaching. That will be 2 months, and the Commissioner of Internal Revenue Service has not bothered to answer 30 Members of Congress. We sent her a letter which reads as follows, and I will just tell you what it is about. It is about sections 531 to 537 of the Internal Revenue Code. We want to know from

the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, who will not let most Americans get away with more than a single dime out there—they will chase down people who owe taxes, and that is the way it should be. I mean we got a law, obey the law. It generates the revenue that runs the country. Nobody wants to be in a position where we contribute to the collapse of our country by disobeying the laws and having widespread disobedience that leads to the failure to collect the revenue we need to run the country.

So why does Commissioner Richardson allow certain corporations to disobey the law? Section 531 to 537, Internal Revenue Code, says simply that corporations in America are not allowed to buy back their own stock except for certain stipulated purposes. If they do not use it for reinvestment, to give stock options and certain things, they just buy back their stock and store it away, hoard it. It is illegal. The corporations are supposed to distribute the dividends of their profits and not use their profits to buy their own stock.

Now, they say that this originated because there were certain closely held corporations, family corporations, and they were avoiding the payment of taxes by buying back their own stock. That was where the idea originated, and for that reason the notion has been generated that this only applies to family corporations, closely held corporations, but it does not.

Congress made that clear in 1984. In 1984 Congress wrote in a statement in the Internal Revenue Code which says that this provision applies to all corporations. This provision applies to all corporations. Section 531 and 537 of the Internal Revenue Code applies to all corporations. It is very interesting that Congress said you cannot do this, it is against the law. But they did not say anybody would be put in jail. After all, you are dealing with America's powerful corporations, I guess, and they are not like the little guy out there who can go to jail for not paying his taxes. Corporations will not be put in jail; there is no penalty written into law. The law says they will be penalized though; the penalty will be a stiff one: 39.6 percent of the amount that you illegally buy back you must pay to the Government. That is a pretty stiff penalty; 39.6 percent is the penalty for buying back your own stock illegally.

Have they invoked that penalty? It could be that they have and we know nothing about it because the negotiations and the workings of the Internal Revenue Service are secret. They are confidential. So there may be corporations that have violated this law and been penalized and we do not know about it.

But we find a pattern, a pattern in corporate America, which says to us that they are not being penalized because many, many large corporations are buying back their own stock illegally instead of distributing them as dividends to the shareholders. They are buying back their own stock. The pattern is such that we know they are not being penalized. Why would they ask for a 39.6-percent penalty?

So we asked the Commissioner of Internal Revenue to tell us what is happening with section 531, 537.

Dear Commissioner Richardson: My colleagues in Congress who have joined me in signing this letter are very much concerned about a major loss of Federal tax revenues resulting from the failure of the Internal Revenue Service to apply against giant corporations the unreasonable accumulation of surplus provisions of sections 531 to 537 of the Internal Revenue Code. We believe that the IRS could and should immediately assess section 531 penalties on the more than $275 billion that America's largest corporations have spent to buy their own stock in 1994, 1995, and 1996. These penalties at 39.6 percent would total over $100 billion. Total buybacks by corporations are reported to have risen from $20 to $35 billion per year in 1990 to 1993 to $70 billion a year in 1994, just under $100 billion in 1995, and probably over $110 billion in 1996.

Stock buybacks by America's largest public corporations are all the rage these days according to the financial media. These enormous buybacks demonstrate that America's largest corporations are accumulating profits and earned surplus far beyond the reasonable needs of their businesses and in virtually every case they are paying dividends that are a small fraction of their earnings, often less than 20 percent.

For example, in the 2 years, 1955 to 1956, IBM earned about $9 billion or $21 plus per share. Now this amount is paid out in common dividends of only $1.4 billion, which is $2.80 per share instead of $21 per share. All of the rest of what IBM profited and then some went to buy its own stock back. In 1995, $5.5 billion was bought back, $4.6 billion common, and $870 million for preferred stock, and $2.3 billion in the first half of 1996, with a 2-year total probably of $10 to $11 billion. And it is true IBM has a multibillion dollar capital spending program, but this is much more than amply covered by its huge additional cash-flow of $10 to $12 billion for that same 2 years from sale of capital assets and from items that are deducted on the earnings statement but do not involve cash outlays, principal depreciation, amortization, and deferral of income taxes.

Now if you are getting bored then I can understand that, but we are talking to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, and these are statements that are simplified about as much as you can simplify it in order to explain what we are talking about, and we also at the same time have to make the Commissioner of Internal Revenue understand we are serious, we have done our home work, we have done the research. This is part of a larger program of the Progressive Caucus and the Congressional Black Caucus of trying to pinpoint corporate welfare.

We have a lot of talk about welfare for poor children and welfare for poor mothers, and we have been outraged at the pennies that they might have misspent and we have done something about that. A lot of people feel happy about it. A lot of people out there are suffering needlessly because we recklessly wiped out the entitlement for needy children in the process, and I will not go into that in great detail. Let us just talk about what corporations are getting away with, what corporate welfare is all about, and this is just one piece in the corporate welfare setup.

This is the most outrageous piece because this is a situation where you do not need any new laws. Congress does not have to go back and close some loopholes that it made. No, the law already says they have to pay a penalty if they violate the law, but they are not doing that.

So we asked the Internal Revenue Commissioner, getting back to the letter, and I quote the letter:

We ask you this: Is there not here and in dozens of similar cases a clear-cut case for immediate assessment of the 39.6-percent penalty on all amounts used for stock buybacks? Is there any need to get into an elaborate discussion of reasonable needs of businesses as envisioned by sections 533 and 537? To be specific, these corporations are paying very small dividends amounting to a small fraction of their earnings. Their capital spending and other cash requirements are amply covered by their nonearnings cash flow. They are spending a substantial part of their earnings, in some cases all or more than all, to buy back their own stock. Therefore, since prima facie, the surplus they have used to buy their own stock has been accumulated beyond the reasonable needs of the business, the 39.6-percent penalty should be assessed. Our study of earnings statements, cash-flow statements and balance sheets leads us to conclude that in many cases the 39.6-percent penalty might reasonably be applied to even larger amounts than the stock buyback amounts, but that would trigger an extended discussion of needs of business and other considerations.

It seems to us that our suggestion has the virtue of elegant simplicity. You spend a billion dollars on stock buybacks, your penalty is 39.6 percent or $396 million. It is that simple. We expect the Commissioner could do this in a 1-page notice or a 2-page notice. It is up to the businesses to prove that they have not violated sections 531 to 537. We suggest penalties for 1994 to 1996 because it was during this period that public company stock buybacks exploded to 12 figure totals. You know, in 1984 the law was amended and made clear that you cannot do this. So we had a long period where corporations—I am sure they have the best legal advice in the world—when they looked at

the law and then decided we better not touch this—and that is true now of many, many corporations. Many of the Fortune 500 are not buying back their stock, and many corporations are not buying back their stock.

The question is, If it is such a lucrative, desirable venture for some, why have they not all done it and why are they not all doing it? My speculated answer is that their legal advisers tell them it is against the law, you are going to be penalized, and they are watching to see over the years as they go by whether any of their fellow corporations, and some cases they are competitors, are going to be penalized. There is a great, great benefit to the corporation in accumulating vast hordes of cash.

□ 1845

One of the things they do, that may also be illegal, because in the process of buying back their own stock, one could argue that they are manipulating the market. One could argue that when you buy back your own stock, you are raising the price, keeping the price artificially high, and therefore you are manipulating the market, but I will not get into that. I will leave that for others.

Mr. Speaker, to get back to the letter to the Commissioner, a letter to the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, we suggest penalties for 1994 to 1996, because it was during this period that public company stock buybacks exploded to 12-figure totals. In addition, we are not clear as to whether the statute of limitations would bar these penalties for 1993 and earlier years. Even if it does, we suspect that many 1993 and earlier corporate returns are still open while other issues are being discussed and negotiated. In this connection we ask that you take note of the fact that while the dramatic surge in stock buy-backs began in late 1994, some very large amounts were spent many years earlier.

Several giant corporations have been buying back their stocks for 10 years or more, over the last 10 years or more. As you know, the unreasonable accumulation of service penalties provisions have been in the income tax law since it was adopted in 1913. It was first put into law in 1913. Despite the fact that the statute as originally enacted, and reenacted a couple of dozen times in successive revenue acts, made absolutely no distinction between publicly owned and private companies, the practice and the general understanding was otherwise.

As Mr. Justice Harlan put it in 1969, paraphrasing Bittker and Eustice, and I quote from the decision, in practice, the provisions are applied only to closely held corporations controlled by relatively few shareholders. This was a decision that was rendered by a regional court way back in 1969, which noted that in practice that is what happened. However, this de facto moratorium, and that decision was never challenged in the Supreme Court, by the way, but it is of no consequence now because this de facto moratorium on applications to public companies ended abruptly in 1985.

Congress, in the Revenue Act of 1984, amended the statute by adding section 532(c), and I quote section 532(c), which was added in 1984 by this body. Quote, the application of this part to a corporation shall be determined without regard to the number of shareholders of such corporation, end of quote.

Please understand, Commissioner, that this is a simple request from elected representatives of the American people that your office immediately take steps to enforce the law. We look forward to an early response from the Internal Revenue Service. And it is signed by 30 Members of Congress.

Now, if the Internal Revenue Service Commissioner feels she can do nothing to enforce the law, the least she can do is respond to the Members of Congress and say, ''I cannot do anything to enforce the law.''

We have gotten absolutely no response, 30 Members of Congress, in 2 months. We have gotten absolutely no response. We want to put the Commissioner on notice that we will not accept that, and I want to submit this letter again in its entirety for the RECORD:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 12, 1997.

Hon. MARGARET MILNER RICHARDSON,
Commissioner,
Internal Revenue Service,
Washington, DC.

DEAR COMMISSIONER RICHARDSON: My colleagues in Congress who have joined me in signing this letter are very much concerned about a major loss of federal tax revenue resulting from the failure of the Internal Revenue Service to apply against giant corporations the unreasonable-accumulation-of-surplus provisions of sections 531–537 of the Internal Revenue Code.

We believe that the IRS could—and should—immediately assess section 531 penalties on the more than $275 billion that America's largest corporations have spent to buy their own stock in 1994, 1995, and 1996. These penalties at 39.6% would total over 100 billion dollars. Stock buybacks by America's great public corporations are all the rage these days, according to the financial media. Total buybacks by corporations are reported to have risen from $20–35 billion per year in 1990–93 to $70 billion in 1994, just under $100 billion in 1995 and probably over $110 billion in 1996.

These enormous buybacks demonstrate clearly that America's largest corporations are accumulating profits and earned surplus far beyond the reasonable needs of their businesses, and in virtually every case they are paying dividends that are a very small fraction of their earnings, often less than 20%. For example, in the two years 1955–56, IBM earned about $9 billion, or $21.00 plus per share. Of this amount, it paid out common dividends of only about $1.4 billion (2.80 per share). All of the rest—and then some—went to buy its own stock, $5.5 billion in 1995 ($4.6 billion common and $870 million Preferred) and $2.3 billion in the first half of 1996, with the two-year total probably $10–11 billion. (True, IBM has a multi-billion dollar capital spending program, but this is much more than amply covered by its huge additional cash flow of $10–12 billion for the two years, from sale of capital assets and from items that are deducted on the earnings statement but do not involve cash outlays, principally depreciation, amortization and deferral of income taxes.)

We ask you this. Is there not here, and in dozens of similar cases, a clear cut case for immediate assessment of the 39.6% penalty on all amounts used for stock buybacks? Is there any need to get into an elaborate discussion of reasonable needs of the business as envisioned by sections 533 and 537?

To be specific: (1) These corporations are paying very small dividends, amounting to a small fraction of their earnings. (2) Their capital spending and other cash requirements are amply covered by their non-earnings cash flow. (3) They are spending a substantial part of their earnings (in some cases, all, or more than all) to buy their own stock.

Therefore, since prima facie the surplus they have used to buy their own stock has been accumulated beyond the reasonable needs of the business, the 39.6% penalty should be assessed. Our study of earnings statements, cash flow statements, and balance sheets leads us to conclude that in many cases the 39.6% penalty might reasonably be applied to even larger amounts than the stock buyback amounts. But that would trigger an extended discussion of needs of the business and other considerations.

It seems to us that our suggestion has the virtue of elegant simplicity: ''You spent a billion dollars on stock buybacks. Your penalty is 39.6% or $396 million.'' We suspect that the Commissioner could do this in a one-page notice—or two pages at most.

We suggest penalties for 1994–96 because it was during this period that public company stock buybacks exploded to 12-figure totals. In addition, we are not clear as to whether the statute of limitations would bar these penalties for 1993 and earlier years. Even if it does, we suspect that many 1993-and-earlier corporate returns are still open while other issues are being discussed and negotiated. In this connection, we ask you to take note of the fact that, while the dramatic surge in stock buybacks began in late 1994, some very large amounts were spent many years earlier.

Several giant corporations have been buying back their stock for ten years or more.

As you know, the unreasonable-accumulation-of-surplus penalty provisions have been in the income tax law since it was adopted in 1913. Despite the fact that the statute as originally enacted (and re-enacted a couple of dozen times in successive revenue acts) made absolutely no distinction between publicly-owned and private companies, the practice and the general understanding was otherwise. As Mr. Justice Harlan put it in 1969, quoting (or paraphrasing) Bittker and Eustice, ''In practice, the provisions are applied only to closely-held corporations, controlled by relatively few shareholders.'' (U.S. v Donruss, 393 U.S. 297).

However, this de facto moratorium on application to public companies ended abruptly in 1985. Congress in the Revenue Act of 1984 amended the statute by adding section 532(c), ''The application of this part to a corporation shall be determined without regard to the number of shareholders of such corporation.''

Please understand, Commissioner, that this is a simple request from elected representatives of the American people that your office immediately take steps to enforce the law.

We look forward to an early response from the Internal Revenue Service.

Sincerely Yours,

MAJOR R. OWENS,
Member of Congress.

And the following additional Members of Congress:

George E. Brown, Bernie Sanders, Donald Payne, Peter A. DeFazio, Maurice Hinchey, Matthew g. Martinez, Sheila Jackson-Lee, Juanita Millender McDonald, Lynn C. Woolsey, Eleanor Holmes Norton, Maxine Waters, Corrine Brown, Dennis J. Kucinich, Carrie R. Meek, Cynthia McKinney, John Lewis, John Conyers, Jr., Lane Evans, James E. Clyburn, Melvin Watt, Ronald V. Dellums, Bennie Thompson, Patsy T. Mink, Alcee L. Hastings, Earl F. Hilliard, Elijah Cummings, Danny K. Davis, Chaka Fattah, Louis Stokes, Eni Faleomavaega,

Mr. Speaker, I want to go a little further today, however, than just what we did before. We submitted this letter; we submitted a ''Dear Colleague'' letter before; we also submitted a statement which gives all the legal background for our contention that section 531 to 537 is not being enforced. All that has gone before. Now I want to go one step further and submit for the RECORD a list of corporations that are in violation of section 531 to 537:

MANY CORPORATIONS ARE USING ACCUMULATED PROFITS TO BUY BACK STOCK RATHER THAN TO PAY DIVIDENDS TO STOCKHOLDERS

Hundreds of American corporations are using their accumulated profits, which apparently are not needed in their businesses, to buy back their shares rather than to pay dividends. It is estimated that buybacks in three years 1994, 1995 and 1996 may have totalled $300 billion or more.

Many of these corporations have issued statements indicating that the purpose of the buybacks was and is to have shares available for issuance under employee stock purchase plans, executive stock options, stockholder dividend reinvestment plans and for conversion of convertible securities. This is an appropriate and valid reason for stock buybacks, but many corporations have bought back two times, or three times, or five times as many shares as they needed for these purposes. (In one case, 16 times.)

We have not been able to find an authoritative and accurate tabulation of stock buyback activity, which is being conducted by hundreds of publicly-owned American corporations. Reports in the financial media indicate that buybacks may have totalled $300 billion or more for the three years 1994–1996.

When the total buyback amount is reduced by subtracting issuance of shares under option and other programs, it would appear that net buybacks totalled $150 billion to $250 billion in the three years 1994–96.

If the Internal Revenue Service assessed the 39.6% penalty (on accumulation of corporate profits beyond the reasonable needs of the business, as mandated by Sections 531–537 of the Internal Revenue Code) on this $150–250 billion of net buybacks, it could produce $60 billion to $100 billion of additional Federal tax revenue in 1997.

The table that follows shows buyback activity by 40 large corporations, but note that these are not the 40 largest U.S. corporations. At the top of the Fortune 500 as published in April, 1996 are a number that have apparently not bought stock back yet: Exxon (#3) AT & T (#5), Mobil (#8), Texaco (#14), and Sears (#15) for example. Ford (#2) is expected to start this year according to Wall Street rumor.

These figures were generally obtained from each corporation's published annual and quarterly earnings reports covering 1994, 1995 and 1996. Figures marked ''EST.'' were estimated by taking the actual reported figures for 1994, 1995 and the first half or three quarters of 1996 and adding an estimate for the rest of 1996. The figures are net buybacks; that is, the dollar amount of total buybacks has been reduced by the dollar amount of shares issued in the same year under option and similar programs.

STOCK BUYBACKS BY 40 LARGE CORPORATIONS IN 3 YEARS 1994–96

	Net buybacks	IRS penalties @ 39.6 percent
General Motors [1]—initiated buybacks in 1997.	.....	
IBM	$9.0–9.5 billion est	$3.6–3.8 billion est.
duPont	5.408 billion	2.141 billion.
General Electric [2]	5.193 billion	2.056 billion.
Philip Morris	5.0–5.4 billion est	2.0–2.16 billion est.
Coca Cola [3]	3.8–4.0 billion est and an additional $6.0 billion est in 1984–93.	1.5–1.6 billion est.
Wells Fargo Bank	3.1–3.3 billion est	1.2–1.3 billion est.
BankAmerica	3.0 billion est	1.2 billion est.
Chrysler [4]	2.930 billion	1.16 million est.
Dow Chemical	2.8–3.0 billion est	1.1–1.2 billion est.
Citicorp	2.0–2.4 billion est	800–960 million est.
Intel	1.856 billion	735 million.
Merrill Lynch	2.0–2.4 billion est	800–960 million est.
Pepsico	1.4–1.7 billion est	560–680 million est.
Anheuser Busch	1.5–1.6 billion est	600–640 million est.
Merck	1.2–1.6 billion est	480–640 million est.
Disney	1.0–1.5 billion est	400–600 million est.
Microsoft [5]	1,162 billion	460 million.
Hewlett Packard	1,076 billion	426 million.
Kellogg	1.1–1.3 billion est	440–520 million est.
J.P. Morgan	1.0–1.2 billion est	400–480 million est.
3M	1.0–1.1 billion est	400–440 million est.
Reebok	1.0–1.1 billion est	400–440 million est.
American Express [6]	1.0–1.1 billion est	400–440 million est.
Amoco	800–950 million est	320–360 million est.
Bank of New York	800–900 million est	320–360 million est.
Norfolk Southern	800–900 million est	320–360 million est.
Eastman Kodak	800–900 million est	320–360 million est.
Caterpillar	700–900 million est	280–360 million est.
McDonalds	600–800 million est	240–320 million est.
Hershey	400–500 million est	160–200 million est.
Keycorp	400–500 million est	160–200 million est.
Coca Cola Enterprises	400–450 million est	160–180 million est.
Campbell Soup	296 million	117 million.
Kimberly Clark	200–300 million est	80–120 million est.
Weyerhauser	200–300 million est	80–120 million est.
Xerox	200–300 million est	80–120 million est.
Wal-Mart	200 million + est	80 million + est.
General Mills	187 million	74 million.

[1] General Motors, which had severe financial problems in the early 1990s, has recently seen some improvement. On January 27, 1997, the GM board authorized a buyback totalling $2.5 billion.

''Some analysts had expected a bigger buyback, but Mr. J. Michael Losh, [executive vice president and chief financial officer] argued that GM wanted to carry out its buyback program quickly, and that $2.5 billion was the biggest buyback it thought it could complete in 12 months or less.'' (Wall Street Journal, 1/29/97.)

On March 13, 1997, the Wall Street Journal reported, ''. . . Mr. Losh told analysts that GM was halfway through at $2.5 billion stock repurchase program. . . . The rapid pace of the stock buyback left some speculating that GM might announce an additional buyback by the end of the year.''

According to the New York Times of January 28, 1997, ''While GM occasionally purchased slightly more shares in the late 1980s than it reissued, today marks the first time that GM has announced a program to buy back stock so as to reduce the number of outstanding shares, said James J. Finn, a GM spokesman. Back in the 1950s and 1960s, when GM held half the American auto market and was strongly profitable, the company chose to share the proceeds with shareholders through special dividends rather than repurchase shares.

[2] GE said, in its 1996 annual report, ''Record cash flow allowed us to return more than $6 billion to shareowners: $3.1 billion dividends and $3.3 billion in the repurchase of GE stock.''

[3] This company is separate from the Coca Cola Company; although Coca Cola owns 44% of its stock. This company is a major Coke bottler accounting for just over 50% of all Coke product sales in the U.S.

[4] Chrysler said, in its 1995 annual report, ''We're even prouder of what we've been doing to increase the long-term value of your investment in Chrysler. After all, as one of our shareholders told us recently, 'We didn't give you our money to have you simply turn around and give it back to us.'''

[5] William H. Gates owns about 24% of Microsoft. The corporation projected future capital expenditures, as of June 30, 1996, of $293 million. Its net income was $2.2 billion in fiscal 1996 ending June 30, and $1.36 billion in the six months ending December 30, 1996. Its cash and equivalents increased from $4.75 billion on June 30, 1995 to $6.94 billion on June 30, 1996 and $9.16 billion on December 31, 1996. The last figure amounted to 71.6% of assets.

Although it did not need capital, the corporation raised $980 million in late 1996 through the sale of convertible preferred stock, and it said that ''proceeds from the offering are expected to be used to repurchase common shares.'' Wall Street analysts expressed the view that the real purpose of the offering was to provide a dividend-paying security for some investors who want dividends, since Microsoft paid no common dividend.

[6] In its 1995 annual report, American Express said, ''Some shareholders have asked why we are repurchasing shares rather than increasing our dividend as we did in years past. We believe that most shareholders prefer gains in stock price to receiving dividends because those payments are taxable annually.

We are coming close to April 15 when all Americans have to pay their taxes. It is time to take a look at which Americans, which institutions, which organizations are so powerful that they thumb their nose at the tax law. Where will this take us if other organizations and other entities decide they are just not going to obey some provision in the Tax Code?

There are those who disagree with me, of course. They have the obvious course of action, asking Congress to change the Tax Code. The Committee on Ways and Means could go to work and change the Tax Code tomorrow, next week. If the Tax Code does not make sense, that item in there which has been in there since 1913, which was revised and made clear in 1984, it does not make sense, take it out.

Do not ask the American people, 80 percent who are not part of the corporate elite, to pay their taxes, obey the Code, suffer all kinds of harassments, in their opinion, and have to deal with living up to the letter of the law, because if you have an Internal Revenue audit, they will tell you, the guy sitting there will tell you, ''It is my job to enforce the law. I do not have any discretion. You can weep if you wish, but I have to enforce the law. You have to go out and get a third job? But I have to enforce the law. You cannot pay your mortgage? I am sorry, I have to enforce the law.''

So what we are talking about here as we approach April 15, tax day, is a situation where there are several sets of corporations that in finite, dollar and cents terms, are not obeying the law, are not obeying the law.

IBM is a major offender. IBM is a major offender. Most of the figures I am going to quote cover 3 years, 1996, 1995, and 1994. The IBM figures that we have cover only 2 years because IBM in one year just decided they would not do it any more. They would not do it, they skipped a year, so there are no 1995 buy-backs. They resumed in 1996.

So the figures for IBM are 2-year figures. These are net figures. When I say net figures, I mean a corporation can buy back its stock for certain purposes. They can distribute stock options. There are certain things they can do. When we take away those purposes, they have an amount left that just goes into the treasury of the corporation. It is hoarded. It is hoarded money that was not distributed to the shareholders.

I also want to point out, some might have surmised that in our economy, we talk about the engine of our economy are small businesses, the engine of our economy are consumers. If the corporations distributed all of their different dividends as they should to the shareholders, you would have a much more prosperous economy. You would have more dynamism in the economy. All of

those people out there who did not get back their dividends would have their dividends, and they would either reinvest them themselves or invest them in some other business or go and spend it.

Our economy is driven by consumer spending, so let us not look down our noses at consumer spending, but we suspect that people who have large amounts of dividend returns coming will then reinvest it in some way, but they will reinvest it in their own way. A monolithic corporation should not sit there and hold the money, hoard it, hold it in their treasury chest.

So IBM is a major offender. More than $9 billion, close to $10 billion, $9.9 billion in a 2-year period. That is what their net is. After you take away the legitimate buy-backs, you have almost $10 billion which yields, in terms of penalties, $3.8 billion, almost $4 billion. The penalties, when you are assessing penalties at the rate of 36.9 percent, that means a lot of money. If the law was enforced, IBM would owe $3.8 billion or more to the Government, to the taxpayers, back to the coffers.

Mr. Speaker, think of all of the things we could do in terms of building schools, putting people to work, building roads, meeting the needs of our medical community, getting a health care plan that covers everybody. Think of all of the money, if we collect the total that is presented here which totals about, conservatively, $70 billion. The conservative total here is $70 billion. If we let our imaginations go in terms of corporations that we do not have records on, we are talking about $100 billion, collecting over a 3-year period, which means if you collected them all in 1 year or 2 years you would have a windfall revenue.

We would have, according to our coffers, an unexpected amount of revenue that could be used for capital expenditures, one-time expenditures. We could take half of $70 billion and give it over to the reduction of the deficit. The deficit could be reduced by $35 billion. We take the other half and put it in projects which relate to education. Let us have a one-shot deal where we spend a capital budget expenditure that does not recur to modernize all of the schools that need to be modernized, to get rid of the lead poisoning, to get rid of the asbestos, to build new schools so that in a place like New York City and other inner-city communities you do not have crowding to the point where 90,000 children last fall had no desks, no place to sit in New York City schools, 91,000. Ninety-one thousand children had no place to sit.

This is even after we improvise and we have hallway classes and we have classes in closets, and we get rid of the library and make it a classroom, and we have classes in the cafeteria, and we have some classes, a few classes, in the bathrooms. New York City had 91,000 children that did not have places for them. Now, they got embarrassed by that, and as we ask questions and time goes on, they claimed well, that was a statistical mistake or some aberration. They have all kinds of explanations.

So I have had some colleagues of mine, members of the central Brooklyn Martin Luther King Commission, which is an organization dedicated to improving education in central Brooklyn, to go out to the central Brooklyn schools where my district is located and actually go around to the schools and check on overcrowding, and they found some interesting things. The overcrowding is definitely there, but the principals have been brainwashed into believing it is not there.

They will tell you the school is not overcrowded. Then you ask a question: ''When this school was built, what was the capacity?'' And they will give you a figure that is one-half of the number of enrollment. A school built for 900 youngsters has 2,000, and they say there is no overcrowding. Well, what kind of arithmetic is that?

They say there is no overcrowding, but if you ask them, ''How many lunch periods do you have?'' they will tell you they have three lunch periods. In many New York City schools, elementary schools, children start to eat lunch at 10:30. They just had breakfast, but they have to eat lunch at 10:30. Why? Because the lunch rooms are too small for the large numbers of children and they have to have three lunch periods. The lunch period begins at 10:30 for one crew and does not end until 2:30, so the last crew eats too late and the first crew eats too early. The last crew, I am sure the children are really quite hungry, and I am sure something is being done to their metabolism and their nutrition and their bodies. This condition exists because there is rampant overcrowding.

So we need to build new schools. We need to put laboratories in schools. We need to do a lot of things that you can do with $70 billion.

IBM could cough up $3.8 billion. DuPont, buy-backs, the net buy-backs, $5.4 billion. Penalties would equal $2.1 billion. General Electric, $5.1 billion, personalities would equal $5 billion. General Electric said in its 1996 annual report, ''record cash-flow allowed us to return more than $6 billion to shareholders, $3.1 billion in dividends and $3.3 billion in the repurchase of GE stocks.'' They are saying that the repurchase of stocks is returning the money to shareholders, so they are aware of the fact that they are doing something wrong and they need to sort of explain something. Philip Morris, $5 billion. The penalties would be more than $2 billion.

□ 1900

Coca-Cola, $3.8 to $4 billion, the penalties would be $1.5 to $1.6 billion.

Wells Fargo Bank, $3.1 to $3.3 billion, the penalties would be $1.2 to $1.3 billion.

BankAmerica, $3 billion, the penalties would be $1.2 billion.

Chrysler, $2.9 billion, the penalties would be $1.1 billion.

Chrysler had a quote in its 1995 annual report. Chrysler said, ''We're even prouder of what we've been doing to increase the long-term value of your investment in Chrysler. After all, as one of our shareholders told us recently, 'We didn't give you our money to have you simply turn around and give it back to us.''' That is an interesting shareholder that does not want the money back. They do not want a return on their investment.

Dow Chemical, $2.8 to $3 billion in buybacks, $1.1 to $1.2 billion would be the penalties.

Citicorp, $2 to $2.4. billion, $800 to $960 million would be the penalty.

Intel, $1.856 billion, the penalty would be $735 million.

Merrill Lynch, $2 billion, the penalty would be $800 million.

Pepsico, $1.4 to $1.7 billion, the penalty would be $560 to $680 million.

Anheuser-Busch, $1.5 to $1.6 billion, the penalty would be $600 to $640 million.

Merck, $1.2 to $1.6 billion, the penalty would be $480 to $640 million.

Disney, $1 billion to $1.5 billion, the penalty would be $400 to $600 million.

Microsoft, $1.1 billion, the penalty would be $460 million.

Mr. William Gates owns about 24 percent of Microsoft's stock. The corporation projected future capital expenditures as of June 30 of 1996 of $293 million. Its net income was $2.2 billion in fiscal 1996 ending June 30 and $1.36 billion in the 6 months ending December 30, 1996.

Its cash and equivalents increased from $4.75 billion on June 30, 1995, to $6.94 billion on June 30, 1996, and $9.16 billion on December 31, 1996. The last figure amounted to 71.6 percent of assets.

Although it did not need capital, Microsoft raised $980 million in late 1996 through the sale of convertible preferred stock. It said that proceeds from the offering were expected to be used to repurchase common shares. They raised the capital to repurchase common shares. Wall Street analysts expressed the view that the real purpose of the offering was to provide a dividend-paying security for some investors who want dividends, since Microsoft had paid no common dividend.

Let us move on to Hewlett Packard, $1 billion, $426 million would be the penalty.

Kellogg, $1.1 billion to $1.3 billion, the penalty would be $440 to $520 million.

J.P. Morgan, $1 billion to $1.2 billion, the penalty would be $400 to $480 million.

I am reading the figures of how much was spent to illegally buy back stock. They legally bought back stock, but these are the nets, the illegal amounts that I am quoting.

J.P. Morgan, and 3M, $1 billion to $1.1 billion, the penalty would be $400 to $440 million.

Reebok, $1 billion to $1.1 billion, the penalty would be $400 to $440 million.

American Express, $1 billion to $1.1 billion, the penalty would be $400 to $440 million.

In its 1995 annual report, American Express said and I quote: ''Some shareholders have asked why we are repurchasing shares rather than increasing our dividends, as we did in years past. We believe that most shareholders prefer gains in stock price to receiving dividends because those payments are taxable annually.''

That is an interesting quote, because that is exactly what Congress said they did not want to do. They put the provision in there to prevent people from avoiding the payment of taxes. Here it is in the statement, they have said we are doing this so you do not have to pay taxes on the amount we give back to you.

Amoco, $800 to $950 million, estimated, and $320 million would be the estimated penalty.

The Bank of New York, $800 to $900 million, $320 to $360 million would be the penalty they would pay.

Norfolk Southern, $800 to $900 million, $320 to $360 million would be what they would have to pay.

Eastman Kodak, $800 to $900 million, $320 to $360 million would be the penalty.

Caterpillar, $700 to $900 million, estimated, $280 to $360 million.

McDonalds, $600 to $800 million, buybacks, and $240 to $320 million would be the amount of penalty they would pay.

Hershey, $400 to $500 million, they would pay $160 to $200 million.

Keycorp, $400 to $500 million, they would pay $160 to $200 million.

Coca-Cola Enterprises, different from the other Coca-Cola, $400 to $450 million, they would have to pay $160 to $180 million as a penalty.

This company is separate from the Coca-Cola Co., although Coca-Cola owns 44 percent of the stock. It is a major Coke bottler, accounting for just over 50 percent of all Coke product sales in the United States.

Campbell Soup, $296 million in buybacks, they would have to pay a penalty of $117 million.

Kimberly Clark, $200 to $300 million, they would have to pay $80 to $120 million.

Weyerhauser, $200 to $300 million, they would have to pay $80 to $120 million.

Xerox, $200 to $300 million, $80 to $120 million.

Wal-Mart, $200 million, they would pay $80 million in penalties.

General Mills, $187 million, they would have to pay $74 million in penalties.

Why am I bothering to read this list? Because the Internal Revenue Commission has ignored us. Thirty Members of Congress wrote and they asked, why are you not enforcing the Code? I would like for other Americans to hear how the Internal Revenue Code is being blatantly disobeyed, ignored, and I would like you to know that we cannot get a response when we ask the Commissioner of Internal Revenue why.

Thirty Members of Congress cannot get a response. Maybe we are stupid. Maybe we do not understand the technicalities. Maybe we need to bring our brothers and sisters on the Committee on Ways and Means to a session and they will explain all this to us, and we will not have a Member of Congress stand here making a fool of himself about an issue that is moot, of no consequence.

Maybe there is not a great injustice being done here, and all those people out there who anxiously are sitting in the offices of the Internal Revenue Service to deal with their taxes, all those people who are being forced to go to extraordinary means to pay up what they owe, according to the law, all of them need not feel that they are being singled out unjustly. No taxpayer in America should feel that we live in a society where there is unequal treatment of taxpayers.

We can debate as much as we want the question of whether corporations should pay any taxes, and that is an esoteric argument among economists and Members of Congress, but the law is there at this point. It says you cannot buy back your own stock. If you do this, you have to pay a penalty of 39.6 percent. The reasoning of the law is that when people, when corporations buy back their own stock, they are avoiding taxes. They are helping individuals who get the dividends, who would receive the income, avoid paying taxes.

I suppose many of those individuals are grateful, but if I was in their shoes, if I was a shareholder, I would want to have the choice of give me back my dividends, I might choose to buy back, buy some of your stock. They rob the shareholders of the choice. They avoid the payment of taxes in the process.

There is a danger that they are also manipulating the stock market. This is a form of manipulation, in the final analysis. You keep the prices artificially high when large amounts of profit from the corporation are used to buy back the stock. But that is for the lawyers to take a look at.

I hope you are not bored. I hope that you understand that I am not on the Committee on Ways and Means. I am just a lowly Member of Congress, a member of the Progressive Caucus, a member of the Congressional Black Caucus. Last year, I developed an alternative budget. The year before that, I developed an alternative budget for the Progressive and the Congressional Black Caucus.

In the process of doing research for our budget, our aim was to meet a requirement that was made by the Speaker, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. GINGRICH], and the Republican majority. Speaker GINGRICH and the Republican majority said to the members of the Black Caucus and the members of the Progressive Caucus, you cannot bring a budget to the floor unless you show a balanced budget by the year 2002. That is a requirement. You must balance the budget by the year 2002.

I think they assumed that we would go away and stop being a nuisance by bringing an alternative budget to the floor, because we could never balance the budget by the year 2002 and at the same time maintain the level of expenditures for programs that are most important to the poorest people in America, and a lot of the not-too-poor people, education programs, environmental programs. They thought we could not do it.

In the process of doing our research, we found that we had the option in preparing an alternative budget of raising taxes. If you can show a credible way to increase the taxes, it is acceptable in the budgeting process. We used only the figures that the Congressional Budget Office had already certified. We looked at the corporate loopholes. We said, if you take away this loophole, that loophole, you will raise money. If you bring corporations up to a level from 11 percent of the total tax burden, income tax burden, to 16 percent, they would still be way below the individual tax burden, which is 44 percent.

We learned a great deal. It was a very informative experience, because liberals and progressives, people who belong to what I call the caring majority, who care about America and who care about all the people in America, people who want to see our great wealth and riches divided in some way which benefits every sector of society, the people who want to see the best schools in the world, who want world-class hospitals and who want to see our children grow up in a world where everybody has a reasonable opportunity to fully develop themselves, all those people out there we think have ignored studying the revenue side of the budget.

For years we have let the Committee on Ways and Means dominate the discussion. For years we have let the lobbyists who line up when the Committee on Ways and Means meets, there are long lines of people out there to get in and the Committee on Ways and Means has a major bill revising the Tax Code.

I remember they revised it under Ronald Reagan and they did some later correction. In the time that I have been here, 14 years, there have been two major corrections and revisions of the Internal Revenue. I watched the PAC contributions of every member on the Committee on Ways and Means. I sat and heard them talk about how the money was flowing in. I heard a few say, let us keep the suspense on longer, more will come in.

This is not to in any way put down my colleagues, but it is a phenomenon which is in motion and we know it. We have to be naive not to believe there is a correlation between the fact that this sector of society has gotten the biggest tax breaks since 1943. They were paying 40 percent of the tax burden in 1943. Now they are paying 11 percent, so the biggest tax breaks have gone to corporate America.

There is a correlation between the tax breaks corporate America has received and the kind of money they contribute. I do not want to get into a long discussion of the present campaign contribution scandal. There is enough being said on television, radio, cable television, all across the board, there is a lot of discussion about the great scandal of 1996 where more money was raised and spent on political campaigns than ever before in the history of the Nation. Very interesting. More money was raised, but we only had 49 percent, less than 49 percent of the people who came out and voted. It was a record low vote, despite the fact that large amounts of money were raised.

Mr. Speaker, I assure you, people who were contributing the money, they all came out and voted. Their friends voted. There is a correlation between wealth in America and voting. The richest people in America always vote. Always. Come down the line, the middle class, they hesitate sometimes. They do not come out large enough. When you get to the very bottom, they are the ones who do not vote at all. The people who need government most do not vote. Those who need government are willing to pay. The Center for Responsive Politics has a chart here in a report they issued on the PAC, Political Action Committee, expenditures for the Clinton-Dole campaign and the soft money.

Where did the contributions come from? It is very informative. If you want to know why one sector of our society feels that they do not have to, they pay less taxes now than they used to pay, and they do not have to obey a certain part of the Internal Revenue Code. They are so powerful, they are going to be taken care of. They have gotten the green light from somebody, but they do not have to obey the law.

Yeltsin has a problem with the Mafia in Russia. They go to collect taxes, they are just maybe gunned down. The Mafia has killed members of the legislature, they have threatened high-ranking officials. Things are totally out of hand in Russia, so they do not try to collect the taxes with too much zeal. The people who really have the money also have the muscle.

That is very crude, that is very savage. That is a failed society. We are not a failed society. If we allow this to go on, however, if they get away with disobeying the Code in this case, they will do it somewhere else. We will have a pattern that will lead other people at lower levels to say, we are not going to obey the law also.

□ 1915

We had a savings and loan swindle. They called it the savings and loan swindle, but it was the banking industrial complex of America swindle because the amounts of money that regular banks that were not savings and loans banks lost was pretty great also. The savings and loans swindle, it is estimated, will cost American taxpayers $500 billion before it is all over.

There was a Stanford University report that I read some time ago. I do not have the documentation here. But it said that, when you get through paying back the money through the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the money that was appropriated directly by Congress to make up for what had been stolen and you get through with the administrative costs of all the various bodies we set up to recover the money, the American taxpayers are going to be out $500 billion.

They got away with that basically. The number of people who went to jail, the number of people who spent any reasonable time in prison is minuscule. The amount of money recovered is a tiny amount, a very tiny amount compared to the amount that was stolen. The biggest thief who was actually pinpointed and convicted, he became a personification for the rest, Charles Keating. Charles Keating in California was recently released on a technicality. They said, we made a mistake. Yes, you did cost the taxpayers $2 billion. Your Lincoln Savings Bank, your bank, your operation did cost us $2 billion. That we can document. But on some technicality, rich Mr. Keating is out. He claims he is penniless, but none of us were born yesterday. We are certain that a multimillionaire did not go to jail penniless and he did not come out penniless, but he is out. Charles Keating is out. And he was the most celebrated, the most highly publicized.

If he is out, then you know all those other folks that we did not even know about, they are out, too. Some high placed officials and their relatives, they were involved. So the savings and loan swindle was the biggest swindle in the history of mankind of its kind. And large amounts of people got away with it, became rich, stayed rich.

So you had a precedent there. Do not allow too many of these precedents to develop, Americans; you are on the road to a collapsed society. It is possible, if you keep doing this, to have no faith in law and order, certainly no faith in the regulations of our financial institutions.

Banks were closely regulated by the Government. They could not have done this without collusion from public officials, the savings and loan swindle.

In this chart, the financial sector, they have different sectors here. For the school children of America, you need to know that our laws are made by various complexes, industrial complexes. Do not believe what you read. The simple thing about the House of Representatives and the Senate and they get together. The most important thing is not discussed. The various complexes, the defense industrial, military industrial complex we all know about. President Eisenhower, when he left office, shook us and woke us up and said be aware. There is a military industrial complex which will drain large amounts of money away from the American taxpayers, and it has.

It has a record that keeps going on and on, the war is over, the excuse for it. The evil empire is defeated but the military industrial complex is still effective. They do not make the biggest contributions anymore. It is the financial industrial complex that makes the largest contributions. Close to $40 million for the Clinton-Dole soft money campaigns and the regular campaigns, close to $40 million went to the Republicans. Half that amount went to the Democrats from the financial sector.

In every other category, except labor, about twice as much was spent for the party in power in Congress, majority party, than for the Democrats or for the Republican candidate because these great industrial complexes, the financial industrial complex, the agricultural industrial complex, there is the construction industrial complex, the defense industrial complex, energy industrial complex, the health industrial complex, the transportation industrial complex.

Only organized labor, which is considered not a business complex, but it is listed here because it gave large amounts of money, only organized labor contributed more money to Democrats than to Republicans. That is interesting. And then of course there are others. The pattern is pretty clear that the buying of a point of view, the people advocating cutting corporations even further, they wanted capital gains cuts, people are advocating a huge tax cut for the richest Americans, the people who are advocating that we cut only those programs that go to the poorest people, the people who turned their back on the welfare, the corporate welfare, those are the people who get the largest amount of money from the various complexes and the financial complex where the corporations and the brokers and the whole set of people who make the most money, they give the most.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, we will hear more about corporate welfare. The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. KASICH] and the Republicans are also interested in cutting corporate welfare. But here is a piece all we need to do is tell the Internal Revenue to enforce the law. You could realize a large amount of money, take some of the burden off other taxpayers and have the result of making every American institution as well as individual pay their taxes, April 15 is coming. We should all pay for taxes.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND BALANCING THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MANZULLO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. NEUMANN] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. NEUMANN. Mr. Speaker, in the interest of bipartisanship, I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. MINGE].

FLOODING IN MINNESOTA

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to first thank the gentleman from

Wisconsin for yielding to me and indicate that I dearly appreciate the strong and cordial bipartisan working relationship that we are trying to establish in the House. Almost 200 of us went to Hershey, PA, the sweetest place on Earth for a bipartisan retreat to work on building civility and strong, positive working relationships in this Chamber on both sides of the aisle. This is a task I think that all of us need to continue to address.

Mr. Speaker, this evening I wish to address the House with respect to a matter of great concern and interest to me. The Minnesota River, the Red River of the North and several other streams and rivers in the upper Midwest are experiencing flooding problems on a scale that has never before occurred in the recorded history of this region of the country.

The impact that this is having on dozens of communities is overwhelming. However, through a coordinated effort of State, local, and Federal officials, what appeared to be the impossible is being achieved in many of these communities. I have lived just outside the city of Montevideo, MN, for the last 20 years.

I have members of my family in a community downstream called Granite Falls, MN. Never before have these communities received national attention. But now in April 1997, they have been the initial stories on network news, evening after evening. And why? It is because of the harrowing battle that is being waged. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has come in and helped build dikes on streets and highways. Hundreds of volunteers have come from as many as 150 miles away with trucks and strong backs to load and place sandbags to fight the river.

The river is like a raging bull. It is coursing down a narrow channel in one of these communities, and you look at that raging stream and you wonder, is that going to jump the banks. How can we control it. Thanks only to the strength of these levees that have been constructed by the Corps and the force of gravity is this river as a threat contained.

Local residents of these communities have been working, toiling for as much as 20 hours a day constructing these dikes and levees and protecting property. In some cases residents have been forced to evacuate their homes with as little as 5 minutes notice. Yet they are succeeding.

I am also pleased to report that the Federal Emergency Management Agency, working with the Governor of our State and the President, has already released the report that these communities and these areas have been designated as Presidential disaster areas and that FEMA will be quickly moving into the region along with other agencies to provide the type of assistance that is necessary to enable them to both clean up and recover.

This is not a handout. These are programs that we have established over many decades. They are programs which the Federal Emergency Management Agency has earned a reputation, a well-deserved reputation in the last 5 years, of very capably administering. I think that we can all be proud as Americans of what this agency is doing and what it is contributing to the well-being of small communities who have been afflicted by these natural disasters.

Mr. Speaker, I would like again to express the appreciation that all of us in Congress have for the volunteerism, for the hard work and the sacrifice and the community spirit that is alive and well in America and what this is doing to renew the faith of people in our ability to respond to the challenges that face us in pulling together and pulling ahead.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND BALANCING THE BUDGET

Mr. NEUMANN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. GUTKNECHT]. May I say it was a pleasure to visit Winona at Winona State and have the privilege of joining you at a town hall meeting.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. It was our privilege to host the gentleman in Winona.

If I could just say that we want to do a special order tonight and talk about Social Security and balancing the budget. And my colleague from Minnesota and our fellow Committee on the Budget member [Mr. MINGE] recently just alluded to the unbelievable problems being faced, especially in western Minnesota and the Dakotas. I would just like to say that on behalf of all Members of Congress, particularly this one from Minnesota, I want to make certain that we here at the Federal level are doing all that we possibly can for those people.

It is really hard for some of us to imagine what it must have been like to wake up and find that much water on your streets and in your neighborhoods and then have 40- to 50-degree-below wind chill factors blowing ice and water and then on top of that many of the homes being without electrical power. So we really cannot imagine how tough it has been on some of the people in those communities. The only thing I guess we can say to them is that we are going to do everything we can here at the Federal level to make certain that we get things right.

I might also mention though that when we talk about floods, what we want to talk about tonight is this flood of red ink which threatens not only to drown us but, worse than that, to drown our children. And I am going to yield back to the gentleman so we can have a discussion about really the size, dimensions, and ultimately what the implications are of this debt and of the deficit spending that has been going on in this body and in this Congress for most of the last 40 years.

Mr. NEUMANN. Mr. Speaker, I also want to talk about the budget process and that debt that is drowning us as a nation.

Before I get into that this evening I would like to recognize a very special group of people that are out here in Washington this week. We talk so much about education and we hear so many cases where education is not working the way it should be working. But I would like to just recognize a good friend of mine, John Eyster, a teacher from Janesville Parker High School who is out here with a group of students illustrating just how education does work and setting an example for young people all across America, showing us how education can and does work in Janesville, WI. He brought these students out here. I had the chance to spend about an hour with them today. And I have got to say, they are some of the best educated students that I have ever talked to.

John consistently brings his class out here every year and it is just a privilege to meet and talk with these folks and to see how far along they are in the educational process and, in all fairness, how well versed they are on the issues facing this great Nation of ours.

□ 1930

With that, I will start into why I came to Washington and what I think the budget process needs to get back to. I start by referring to this chart I brought with me because it is about the best chart I have ever seen in terms of talking about that debt that we are all drowning in as a nation.

What it shows is the growth of the Federal debt facing this Nation and it shows, starting in 1960 all the way to the year 2000, where we are at in this growth in debt. It is important to note that from 1960 to 1980 we have a relatively flat line. There has been very little growth in debt. But in 1980, from there forward, this thing has grown and grown and grown.

And you know, what really bothers me about this is when I hear all of the Democrats in America say that was the year Ronald Reagan took office and all the Republicans say, well, that was the year the Democrats in Congress could not control spending. But the bottom line is if we are really going to solve this problem we will have to accept and recognize it as an American problem and that we as the American people have to solve it, not as Democrats and Republicans but as Americans.

I want to point out that as we look from here forward we are no longer in a position where we can fight about Democrats and Republicans. We are all the way up here on this chart right now. And when we think about what that is doing to our Nation, we need to understand that it is not just about this chart, it is about the fact that the government goes into the private sector and borrows that money out.

Because that is what is happening with this, this is what the deficit spending leads to. When the government goes into the private sector and borrows the money out to pay for its

deficit spending, that makes for a tighter money supply. Government borrowing out of the private sector tightens the money supply and raises interest rates. And when you raise interest rates it hits home quickly, because it means many Americans cannot afford to buy houses or cars.

And that is really a problem in this Nation. That is why in the past years, here, as the deficit has come down until this year, for the first time in 4 years, as the deficit has been coming down, the interest rates have held steady and we have literally been in a position where the economy has boomed. And it has boomed because of the fact if interest rates are steady, the government is not confiscating as much of the private people's money out of the private sector, there is more money available and lower interest rates, which keeps the home building business going strong, the auto industry going strong, and a lot of people able to borrow money to buy things.

And of course when people buy houses and cars, that means other people go to work to build the houses and cars and that really, folks, is what this budget battle is all about, about getting the government to stop borrowing the money out of the private sector so it stays out there and the interest rates stay down and people can afford to buy houses and cars.

I have a son, currently a sophomore in college, and my good friend from Minnesota, I believe he is going to school in his district, as a matter of fact, and I think about the young people like Andy and all the others like him across this country as he graduates from college, takes his first job, starts his own family, starts thinking about buying a house and a car, and I think about how important the interest rate is to him in terms of being able to afford that house and car.

There is another issue that most people do not relate to the young people in this country and that is Social Security. Most people think the Social Security discussion is about just the senior citizens. It is not. It is about the people in their 40's and 50's hoping to get Social Security, and it is about the young people who are paying $15 out of every $100 they earn into the Social Security System with literally no hope of getting any of that money back.

So I want to talk about Social Security as it relates to the overall budget process. And I have noticed, and the gentleman from Minnesota, [Mr. GUTKNECHT], I think maybe he has too this week, that as we look at the budget proposals currently in Washington, none of them deal with the fact that Washington is currently spending the Social Security Trust Fund's money.

The Social Security System is taking money out of every paycheck in America today. As a matter of fact, if you look at all the money being collected by the Social Security Trust Fund today, they are collecting $418 billion. This is pretty straightforward. They are writing checks back out to our senior citizens in the amount of $353 billion. Well, it is much like a checkbook. If you take $418 in and spend $353 out, you are in pretty good shape, and that is good news for the Social Security System today.

But that $65 billion is supposed to be set aside in a savings account. The idea is this. Everybody sees the baby boom generation headed toward retirement. So the idea was to collect extra money now, put it into a savings account, and when these two numbers turn around, they are no longer collecting enough to make good on the Social Security checks, at that point in time they would go into the savings account, get the money out, and fulfill our commitment and make good on the Social Security checks.

The problem we have is that is not what Washington is doing with the money. When Washington saw this $65 billion sitting there, Washington did the Washington thing and they spent it. As a matter of fact, that $65 billion today is going directly into the big government checkbook. It is called the General Fund. But you can think about it like the big government checkbook. When they are done writing out checks in this government, of course, the checkbook is overdrawn and that is what we call the deficit. So they are taking the $65 billion, they are putting it in the big government checkbook, and when they are all done writing checks out of the big government checkbook there is no money left. So they put an IOU in the trust fund. They do not count that IOU toward the deficit.

This is a huge problem as we move forward. We have proposed legislation in our office, and I am happy to say we have bipartisan support for this legislation at this point in time. The legislation is very straightforward. It simply says that the $65 billion it has collected from the Social Security Trust Fund should simply be put down in the Social Security Trust Fund.

It is straightforward, the legislation, and I am happy to say we have bipartisan support for it and we now have 60 cosponsors on the Social Security Preservation Act.

This week we are out here talking about budgeting. It is real important to understand how this Social Security System issue affects the overall budgeting process. This picture really kind of says it all. When the Federal Government, when Washington, talks about the deficit, they talk about this blue area. They talk about how much they have overdrawn their checkbook and they forget to tell you in addition to the amount they overdrew their checkbook they have also taken that $65 billion out of the Social Security trust fund.

So the deficit, when they talk about it being $107 billion, the reality is the deficit is in fact $107 plus 65, or $172 billion overall.

I think it is real important to look at how that affects the overall budget process and what we are talking about when we say we are going to balance the budget by the year 2002. When we talk about balancing the budget by the year 2002, virtually every budget plan out here, President Clinton, the Republican plans in some cases, they all talk about getting rid of this blue area. But what they actually mean when they say they are going to balance the budget in the year 2002, what they mean is they are going to go into the Social Security trust fund, pull out $104 billion, put it in their checkbook and say their checkbook is balanced.

So when the people in Washington talk about balancing the budget, they are not telling you that when they say they are going to balance the budget they are still going to be going into that Social Security trust fund taking the money out, putting it in their checkbook and saying my checkbook is now balanced. That is ridiculous, and if it was done in the private sector they would be arrested for it. It is that simple; that cut and dried.

The answer is the Social Security Preservation Act needs to be passed. And to my colleagues who might be watching this evening, the important thing is when we pass a budget plan this year, we must address the fact that balance means balance without using the Social Security trust fund's money. When we say we are going to balance the budget to the American people, we should go about balancing the budget, not balancing the budget by stealing the money out of the Social Security trust fund.

What does this mean to the people of this Nation? Well, if we do not fix this problem, by the year 2005, 2006, maybe 2012, if we are very, very lucky, when there is not enough money coming into the Social Security trust fund, we will have to either tell our senior citizens they cannot have the benefits they have been promised, and the likelihood of that happening in Washington, DC, is near zero, or we will have to go to young people, like my Andy in college in your district, or my Tricia, a high school senior, or my younger son, who will then be in the work force, and all the other kids like them, we will have to go to them when they are just beginning to form their families, and say to them we could not do this right in 1997 when we were in Congress. We just could not get the job done. We could not put the Social Security trust fund's money aside, so now we have a shortfall in Social Security and we only have one choice, young people, we are coming into your paychecks to take more money out to make good on our promises to our seniors.

That is a sad situation and not right for the future of our country. We need to pass the Social Security Preservation Act as soon as possible.

We have expanded what has been talked about in the budget process, and I think this is real important, because even if we do get to a balance, and even if we do not spend the Social Security

trust fund's money by the year 2002, we still have a $6.5 trillion debt hanging over our heads, a debt that is costing our children and young people, a family of five in America, $600 a month to do nothing but pay the interest on the Federal debt.

In the budget plan that we have put together we go a step further. I want to expand the vision of this Congress and expand the vision for America over what we can actually do. I want to show very simply how we can pay off the Federal debt, restore the Social Security trust fund money and, most important of all, pass this Nation on to our children debt free instead of under the burden of a debt that costs our families $600 a month to do nothing but pay the interest on the Federal debt.

Our plan is really pretty straightforward and simple. After we get to balance in the year 2002, we take a look at how much revenues are going out to the Federal Government. Now, revenues to the Federal Government go up for two reasons: They go up because of inflation and because of real growth in the economy. Now, currently we have an inflation rate of roughly 3 percent and real growth of roughly 2 percent. That means we would expect revenues to go up by 5 percent total next year.

Our plan is very simple. It says that if revenues are going to go up by 5 percent, we only let spending go up by 4 percent. So spending is allowed to go up at a rate 1 percent slower than the rate of revenue growth to the Federal Government.

I might add, and much to the chagrin of some of the folks listening this evening, that is still faster than the rate of inflation. So spending at the Federal Government level going up faster than the rate of inflation, but 1 percent slower than the rate of revenue growth puts us in a position where we could literally pay off the Federal debt by the year 2023.

This is important for a whole bunch of reasons. No. 1, it frees our young people to raise their families without this tax burden. No. 2, and equally important, is it restores the money that is supposed to be in the Social Security trust fund. So instead of the Social Security trust fund being out of the money in the year 2005, 2006 maybe 2012, it extends the Social Security trust fund to the year 2029 so our senior citizens can count on their money. And our people in their forties and fifties can count on getting their money out of the Social Security System also because the trust fund has been restored.

This is a plan that we need to embrace in this Congress. I understand the Speaker has started talking about this. NEWT GINGRICH has started presenting some of these ideas in some of his speeches, and it is an idea we need to embrace, to expand our horizons beyond just balancing the budget, beyond 2002, and into the years 2010, 2020 so we can give this Nation to our children debt free.

I see my good friend, the gentleman from Michigan, has joined us, Mr. HOEKSTRA.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding. I am encouraged by the work my colleague has done and that he has completed on working toward, not a balanced budget but actually working toward a surplus budget as soon as possible, and actually developing a plan to pay off the national debt so that our children can look to a much brighter future.

I would like to just refer my colleagues to an article that was in USA Today on Monday, April 7. It talked about what we in the Committee on the Budget have discussed as a vision, where a one-income family is where we want to get to, where a one-income family can derive enough income to support a family and support government, and where a two-income family becomes an option.

It is kind of interesting. In USA Today yesterday they cited that the number of two-parent working families in 1995 has increased to 64 percent of the population. They then took a look at what we get with 64 percent of our families having two incomes. The second wage earner basically ends up working, as our majority leader would say, we have one person working for the government and one person working to support the family.

Mr. NEUMANN. If the gentleman would yield, I would point out that if we were to enact this and we were to actually carry this plan out, if the people in Washington were to do what is right for the future of America, we would be looking at $600 a month that would not have to be collected from a family of five. That goes a long ways toward that second wage earner's income.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. That is right and provides them with either the opportunity to take the income to improve the quality of life for their family or to take that time away from working and invest it in the family.

I would yield to my colleague from Minnesota.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. You gentlemen are right on the money. I want to point out a couple of things, and I want to congratulate both of you. I do not know of any members of the Committee on the Budget who have worked harder to try to preserve the American dream and guaranteeing that we pass on to our kids a legacy of hope and opportunity rather than a legacy of debt and dependency.

I want to point out something that I think is important, that Mr. NEUMANN suggested earlier. There was a famous architect from Chicago, and he once said ''Make no small plans.'' I think the beauty and the simplicity of what we are talking about tonight is that if we have the discipline as a Congress to embrace a plan which actually will allow Federal spending to increase at greater than what we project the inflation rate to be but less than what we think the total growth in revenues will be, if we have the courage to do that, say, all right, we will let government grow, slightly, but not as fast, not nearly as fast as it has grown over the last 40 years, we can literally create a system that will guarantee that our seniors are protected, that will guarantee stronger economic growth for people our age, but more important than that, we can give our kids a debt free future.

□ 1945

I cannot think of anything more compelling, a bigger vision, something that is worth fighting for than what I call a generational fairness plan, that protects the seniors, that protects working people today, and protects our children's future. I think those are the kinds of things that, if we can work together and if we have the discipline here in Congress, it can clearly happen.

Mr. Speaker, if I could just make one additional point. Sometimes when we start talking about the budget, we throw around terms and there are all kinds of CBO and OMB and a lot of things that I think most Americans really have a hard time staying with. I think we sometimes have to get back to the big picture. Ultimately in the end I think we have to say to ourselves and to the American people that balancing the budget and stopping this deficit spending really are moral issues, because I think we all know down in our bones that it is morally wrong to continue to borrow against our kids and our grandkids. And so I think we have got to stop that.

We are making progress but, as you suggested, we are still using that Social Security trust fund to sort of mask the size of the deficit. I think in this process we have got to expose that, we have got to deal with that. Clearly the time to deal with it is now, before it turns around, before we have a situation where Social Security is actually paying out more than it is taking in.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman is absolutely right, it is a moral issue. Saddling our kids with $100 billion, $200 billion of additional debt each and every year is the wrong thing to do. The other thing, I came out of the business world, as I know my colleague from Wisconsin did, and I am not sure, you were in the legislature and before that maybe had a real job.

Mr. NEUMANN. Auctioneer.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Auctioneer. The other thing we look at in business is the value you get for your dollar, and the problems we were trying to solve for our customers in the business world. We have to take a look as we go through this process and take a look at some of the things that taxpayers are sending money to Washington for and asking, is that really the best place to solve these problems.

Every day when we cross the street, we come over a street that is called Independence Avenue. Me and my staff,

we have talked about it, we kind of think that maybe we could rename the street into Dependence Avenue because that street is littered with bureaucracies that we have moved responsibilities from families, from local and State government, from churches and nonprofit institutions and said we really do not think that you are the most effective place to handle these issues and we are going to have bureaucrats in Washington address these problems.

I think my colleague will remember the discussion that we had last year during welfare reform where we said, just send the money to Wisconsin and let the people in Wisconsin decide how best to help those on welfare in Wisconsin and how to escape the welfare trap because there are probably people in Washington here who, I think, were we not talking about that my colleague had a bunch of waivers from Wisconsin that he could not get approved?

Mr. NEUMANN. Mr. Speaker, we were simply requesting that the people in Wisconsin who had already passed a welfare reform bill, passed the State assembly and the Senate by a wide majority including both Democrats and Republicans, but after we debated this bill for 18 months in Wisconsin, reflected welfare the way the people of Wisconsin wanted to do it with both Democrats and Republicans agreeing, we had to come down here to Washington and ask for permission from a bunch of bureaucrats out here, 900 miles from Wisconsin, ask for their permission to implement what the people of Wisconsin already wanted. What in the world is there that would make us think that the people sitting out here in an office know better than the people in Wisconsin what is right for them? It just does not make sense.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, we are going to have to go through that process. I think that is an exciting debate and discussion to have. I know that one of the things that we are spending a tremendous amount of time on is an oversight subcommittee that I chair and we absolutely agree with the President. The President in March 1996 said, ''We cannot ask the American people to spend more on education until we do a better job with the money we've got now.'' What was he referring to? He was referring to the bureaucracy of education that we currently have, which is 760 programs in 39 different agencies spending $120 billion per year.

Mr. NEUMANN. I would just like to point out that during the past week in my district back in Wisconsin, they have started running a new commercial from our friends at the AFL–CIO, attacking me, and demanding that we implement program No. 761. I would just like to warn the chairman of the Education Subcommittee that they are going to be getting some requests from some folks that think we should have another Washington program and another Washington bureaucracy to tell our people back in Wisconsin how they should educate their own children.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. When this President gets done, if he gets this approved, he will be building our schools, he will be teaching our teachers, certifying our teachers, putting in the technology, feeding them lunch, feeding them breakfast.

Mr. NEUMANN. And doing it with our money.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Teaching them about sex education, giving them national tests, doing after-school programs, maybe even midnight basketball and a couple of other things. Other than that, it is your local school.

Now, the President has moved away from this. He has now proposed a whole new set of programs spending $55 billion more. What we are doing in our committees, we are urging this Congress to say before we spend another dollar, because we think when we spend a dollar in education today, only 65 cents gets to the classroom, gets to your children in Wisconsin, gets to my kids in Michigan. Thirty-five cents gets eaten up by the bureaucracy.

Mr. Speaker, before we spend more on education and ask the American taxpayers to send more to Washington, we ought to be taking a look at what we are doing with that dollar. Instead of saying, let us spend $1.10, we ought to be saying instead of 65 cents getting to the classroom, let us see if we cannot get it up to 85, 90, 95 cents of every dollar, because for bureaucrats to take 10, 15, 35 cents of every dollar before it gets to our kids, that might be another moral issue.

Mr. NEUMANN. I would like to point out it is not only education where we are looking at this problem. Our President has looked at this growing debt, and he has looked at us near the top of this debt chart. Here is what he has concluded in his budget plan because I took it apart myself personally and I found out what is in his budget plan. In Medicaid alone we are proposing $4 billion in new spending in 1 year alone. It is a total of roughly $15 billion over 5 years. In Medicare spending, we are proposing $5 billion in 2002 alone, a total of roughly $15 billion more.

Mr. Speaker, these are not like: We have got this in the Medicare Program and how are we going to pay the bills of the current Medicare Program. These are: Hey, I have got a new idea, and we do not have enough Washington programs already, so the President says we need some more new Washington spending programs.

That is where the Social Security trust fund money is going. They are taking that money out of the trust fund and spending it on these new Washington programs. It is not just education.

Let me go on one more.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will just yield for a second, I have to take leave. I appreciate the gentleman for sharing his time and the gentleman from Minnesota for sharing his time. I am sure we will be back at this, and I am confident we will present a budget that we can be proud of.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. I think just once more for our colleagues who may be watching on C–SPAN in their offices, what was the total number of dollars being spent currently on education programs and how many various Federal programs are we currently operating?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. We are operating at least 760 programs through 39 different agencies. They are not all in the Department of Education. They are in 39 different, distinct agencies, and they spend $120 billion per year.

Mr. NEUMANN. Mr. Speaker, how much of that gets to the students?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. We estimate that for the dollar that goes for K through 12, about 65 cents gets to the children, gets to the classroom. Thirty-five cents gets eaten up in the bureaucracy and the paperwork. Those are not impressive numbers. We can do significantly better than that.

Mr. NEUMANN. So what my colleague is really telling me is, out of the $122 billion we are currently spending on education, only $79 billion is actually getting out there to help the students; and the other $45 billion roughly is going to bureaucracy?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. We know that in the K through 12, which is a portion of that $120 billion, that is what we are seeing. In some of those other programs, it may be better, it may be worse, but it is not a pretty picture.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlemen for allowing me to participate.

Mr. NEUMANN. To get back a little more on the debt discussion, I held 20 town hall meetings in addition to the one over in Winona with my colleague. At one of the meetings a gentleman, George Wundsam of Salem, WI, handed me this thing, and I think it really hits the nail on the head as we are talking here this evening. Here is what it says. He handed me this quotation:

> I place economy among the first and most important virtues, and public debt as the greatest of dangers to be feared. To preserve our independence, we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. If we run into such debts, we must be taxed in our meat and drink, in our necessities and in our comforts, in our labor and in our amusements. If we can prevent our government from wasting the labor of the people, under the pretense of caring for them, they will be happy.

Would you like to take a shot at who said that?

Mr. GUTKNECHT. I think I know who said that, and I think he served in the Continental Congress, and I think he helped draft our Declaration of Independence. That was the ethic in those particular days. I believe his name was Thomas Jefferson.

Mr. NEUMANN. Thomas Jefferson said that. That is not today. Can you imagine if Thomas Jefferson, one of our Founding Fathers, was standing here with us today and we were showing him this debt chart, $5.3 trillion facing the American people, $20,000 for every man, woman, and child in the United States of America, $100,000 that our Federal Government has borrowed on behalf of a family of five like mine?

Each month $600 to do nothing but pay the interest on the Federal debt. Can we imagine what our Founding Fathers would say? This is what they thought. They recognized that the debt was a huge burden.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. It is interesting that some of our colleagues, who like to quote our Founding Fathers when it fits their purposes, tend to forget that when Jefferson said that, he did not just mean it for those people in those times. He meant it for all people and for all times. I think he understood the corrosive effect that the debt would have. I think your chart is instructive. The unfortunate thing is, particularly when we add in what is going to happen with the demographic change, and I have told people this story. I was born in 1951. When I graduated from college, the speaker at our commencement address was the Director of the U.S. Census. Most people do not remember their college commencement addresses and I do not remember all of it, either, but I do remember some of the points that were made that day. He said that there were more kids born in 1951 than any other single year. I represent the peak of the baby boomers. What is going to happen when we start to retire makes that chart look like a day at the park, because as the baby boomers start to retire, all of a sudden Medicare expenses go up dramatically, Social Security goes from a significant surplus to huge deficits, and what it is saying, this should be a siren song for all of us, that we have got to do something now. If we take modest action now, if we take responsible action now, we can save the budget, we can save our children, we can save Social Security, we can save Medicare, and yet unfortunately there are people in this town who would prefer to put their head in the sand and pretend that it is not real, that those numbers are not real and that somehow there is a tooth fairy out there that is going to save us. The only thing that will save us is responsible action. Jefferson was correct. This is a moral issue, and the public debt is the greatest of evils to be feared.

What we are trying to do is awaken some of our colleagues here and awaken the American people to say, this has got to stop. All it takes is some moral courage to say this is wrong. And we are going to have to say no.

I was so delighted that the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. HOEKSTRA] was with us and talked a little about the Education Department, but as the gentleman from Wisconsin has indicated, it is not just education, it is all programs.

In some of my town meetings, I use this little story. If I could, I would like to share it. What I ask people to do sometimes is to close their eyes and pretend for a minute that they go home from work or they go home from school and they open their mailbox and there is a letter there from a law office from far away and they open up the letter and all of a sudden they realize that they have been named an heir to an enormous fortune, from somebody they did not even know was related to them and they have left them this enormous fortune. And so I ask them to think about that and what it would be like and then think about the fact that this is a windfall, and you would like to do something to help children or you would like to do something to help your fellow human beings and you would like to give a significant portion of this windfall to help your fellow human beings or to help children. Think about that, envision that. Think about this happening to you. And then think about where you would give that money. And after you have thought a minute, I ask the people, now, how many of you honestly, liberals, conservatives, Republicans, Democrats, independents, whatever, how many of you, the first thing that you thought of was, I know, I'll give the money to the Federal Government? The answer to that in every town meeting is laughter. No one would give the money to the Federal Government. Why? Because I think we all instinctively know what the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. HOEKSTRA] told us a few minutes ago, that the Federal Government is a poor bargain and that the Government is one of the most inefficient ways to spend money or to help people.

In fact when we had this great welfare debate over the last year and a half, and it is still going on, as you indicated Wisconsin has been far ahead of the pack in terms of reforming welfare. What I have said, I said then, I say now, the real debate was not about saving money. In the end it was really about saving people, saving families, saving children from one more generation of dependency and despair.

What we are really saying is, let us break that cycle, let us slow the rate of growth in Government and let us preserve Social Security and let us pay down and pay off ultimately that national debt so that we can leave our kids a debt-free future. That is what Thomas Jefferson believed in, I think that is what most Americans believe in, and hopefully we can get more of the Members of Congress to believe in that as well.

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Mr. NEUMANN. You know, if the gentleman would yield back, we have been talking about these things and why we need to do these things. We have talked about the fact that Social Security is bringing in more money than what that is paying out to our seniors in benefits and that that extra money coming in, that $65 billion this year is supposed to be set aside in a savings account, but that actually instead of putting it aside in a savings account so it is there when the baby boom generation gets to retirements, so it is there to make good on Social Security commitments, that we are spending it in Washington in other Washington programs, and we have looked at this chart where we understand that Washington reports a deficit that is simply their overdrawn checkbook, and in fact in addition to overdrawing their checkbook they are taking that money out of Social Security trust fund.

They do not even count that toward the deficit when they report the deficit to the American people, and we have talked about the fact that in the year 2002, when Washington says they are going to balance the budget, what they mean is they are going to go into the Social Security trust fund, take out $104 billion, put it in their checkbook and call their checkbook balanced. We talked about the fact that in Washington a balanced checkbook means taking $104 billion out of the Social Security trust fund. That money should not be taken folks. That money should not be spent in other Government programs.

But where is Congress at? And, Congressman, we have gone through now 100 days of the 105th Congress, and I thought we maybe should just address a little bit what is going out and maybe, maybe if nothing else just to help us get back on track. During the first 100 days some very unique things have happened for the Republican led Congress and things that I do not think it is why I came to Washington in the first place, and I am anxious to see those things turned around.

We have seen the deficit go up for the first time in 4 years. We are seeing a higher deficit. And that is real, folks, that not only affects the people here in Washington, it affects the whole country because when the deficit goes up that means Washington is going into the private sector, borrowing more money, creating a tighter money supply and with the tighter money supply we see exactly what happened last week Tuesday, which is higher interest rates. Higher interest rates mean people cannot afford to buy houses and cars. When they do not buy houses and cars, that means there are not as many job opportunities, and that is a problem in this Nation. That is why we need to stay on track to a balanced budget.

So the first thing I point out that this Congress has seen in the first 100 days, for in the first time in 4 years is a deficit that has gone back up again. I might add that I voted against the bill last October, $22 billion that led to this deficit increase this year.

Second thing we saw when we first got out here, the Republican Party should stand for letting the American people keep more of their own money. We have had one tax vote in this Congress that was for a tax increase. Seventy-three of us voted against that bill. It is time we not have 73 but all 227 Republicans get back on track with the idea that we do not stand for raising taxes on the American people, we stand for letting the American people keep more of their own money. It is not like Washington gets this money and it is

theirs. It is not Washington's money, it is the people's money. So when we have tax votes in the future, our second vote is a vote on taxes, it was a tax increase. You may remember the airline ticket tax increase. We need to stop doing that and get back on track.

The third vote I would like to talk about during the 100 days: We took $340 million out of the pockets of the American citizens and we sent it overseas to foreign aid for purposes of family planning. So we took $340 million out of the pockets of American citizens, sent it overseas for purposes of family planning, including abortions. That is not why I came to Washington. So that is another vote that went the wrong direction. Of course we voted against it; many of us did.

But the bottom line is as a party we need to get back on track. No more tax increase votes. As a matter of fact, we want to vote to let the American people keep more of their own money. No new spending bills that are going to allow the deficit to go up. That is not what this party is about. This party is about controlling spending.

The last vote I talk about during the 105th Congress, first 100 days, was the last vote we took before the Easter recess. It was a vote to raise Washington committee staff spending by 14½ percent. So our first real spending vote of the 105th Congress was for a 14½-percent spending increase. I am happy to say that bill did go down to defeat and it was reworked, and we got closer to a freeze; maybe not what I would like to see exactly but did get closer to a freeze. But I think that bill represents for the first time the Republicans once again standing for what Republicans stand for, and that is less Washington, less bureaucracy, and I think maybe this flow in the wrong direction has been stopped and once again we will become the party that stands for letting the American people keep more of their own money and doing that by reducing the size and scope of Washington. We do not need more Washington committee staff, we need the American people keeping more of their own money, deciding how to spend their own money.

Now if Washington is going to take more money from the American people, if Washington is going to go into your paycheck and collect more taxes, of course they need more people to figure out how to spend that money. My suggestion is instead we just let the American people keep more of their own money. Then we will not need the additional Washington staff.

Does that mean we have problems in Social Security? No way. Social Security, if we just do the right thing, leave our Washington hands off of the Social Security money, Social Security is safe and solvent. If we keep spending the trust fund, we are in serious trouble, but if we keep our hands off that money in Washington, Social Security is fine.

How about Medicare? Well, the reality is we had a Medicare battle about 70 cents for every $100 of spending. We do not need to fight about Medicare, and I hear about all these cuts in Medicare spending. I have in front of me perhaps the most conservative budget being proposed in Washington. Medicare spending has gone from $211 billion in 1997 all the way up to $285 billion in the year 2002. So Medicare spending can still go up under this budget plan.

We can balance the budget, we can let the American people keep more of their own money, and we can still have Medicare and Social Security and the programs that are most important.

You know, I always enjoy these discussions in Washington because in Washington people start wringing their hands and saying, ''Oh, we can't do this and we can't do this; we have got to have more of the American people's money.'' We sometimes forget that we are already collecting $6,500 on behalf of every man, woman, and child in the United States of America.

Just think about this. The Federal Government today spends $6,500 on behalf of every man, woman, and child in the United States, and, Congressman, you know at our townhall meetings we talked about how much spending was being cut, that draconian cut in Washington, and do you remember the reaction we got from our folks at the townhall meetings when I read those draconian spending cuts that are going on in Washington? You remember when I read the numbers of actual spending, that spending was being cut from $1,568 billion all the way down to $1,629 next year and it was further being draconianly cut to $1,657 billion the next year, and do you remember what the people did——

Mr. GUTKNECHT. They could not believe it.

Mr. NEUMANN. They could not believe it. Spending is not going down under these budget plans, spending is going up each and every year. From the year 1996 to the year 2002 spending is not going down, spending has gone up from $1,568 billion to $1,810 billion. I sometimes think that the American people forget that this Government, Washington, DC is collecting $6,500 out of their pocket. You know some of them go, ''Well, I don't have to worry, I don't pay that much out of my paycheck.'' But every time a person walks into a store and buys something as simple as a loaf of bread the store owner makes a small profit on that loaf of bread, and when the store owner makes a profit on that loaf of bread part of that profit gets sent down here to Washington because of course they are paying taxes on their profit.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. If the gentleman would yield, another point you made and I think it may have slipped by some of our colleagues, how much interest on the debt each family is required to pay every year. Now they may not pay it directly, they may not pay it in direct taxes, but they pay it one way or the other. They pay it in the price they pay for a loaf of bread, when they want to buy a car, when they want to buy something else for the family, when they want to take a vacation. Those taxes are there and they have to be paid.

And I wonder if you can tell us—I know you do not have your chart on that, but that is an added burden on every family, and I want to come back to the burden on the family and what it means.

Mr. NEUMANN. It means $600 every month from an average family of 5 to do nothing but pay the interest on the Federal debt, 600 bucks a month. And you know when you think of a young family starting out in life or they maybe had a couple kids and you start thinking about them having to pay $600 a month to do nothing but pay the interest and then you think about this city where they start describing what it is they have to have the money to spend it on.

I think the worst example I have seen out here is the Russian monkeys being sent into space and you and I have had this conversation: I find it very frustrating because we brought an amendment last year to the floor of the House to prevent this from happening, but the fact is there was a Senator who wanted it so it got put back in. We sent $35 million of the American people's money to Russia so Russia could launch monkeys into space to do research on the monkeys. Now we killed that here in the House, but when it got over in the Senate they put the money back in.

And I think that is the point. Is it really fair to go to our families and ask them to send more money to Washington so that Washington can continue these programs, and you know it is a very important time out here. We have gone through those first 100 days; they are over and behind us. Are we going to get back on track to control Washington spending or are we going to keep going as we have been for the first 100 days?

I personally look forward to NEWT GINGRICH and the leadership of the Republican Party getting us back on track of what Republicans stand for: Less Washington, smaller Government, still the things necessary for our society, a strong defense, take care of the people who are not able to take care of themselves and by that I mean the handicapped and the disabled, but let us not keep going into our families' pocket and taking more and more money out here for all kinds of unimaginable things that we keep spending on. It is just a ludicrous thing.

We are in some very, very difficult times out here because the establishment believes that we have to keep spending more money. I heard today, for example, that in order to pass the bills what we actually have to do is spend another $20 billion.

Now remember we spent 22 billion extra last year and that 22 billion led to the first deficit increase, and 6

months almost to the day after that vote, 6 months almost to the day after that vote to increase the deficit, we saw the interest rates take a hike, and now I am hearing that we have got to spend another $20 billion just to get the bills to a passable form. I personally find it offensive that we would even consider such a thing.

And you know I look at this chart with the Social Security and think about the fact that it is new Washington spending that has taken that money from the Social Security Trust Fund and blown it in, that has taken that money from our children's future and spent it. It has just got to be stopped.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. If the gentleman would yield, the story of the Russian monkeys going into space, the real sad part of that story if you really boil it all down is that we had to borrow that money from our kids and every dollar we spend now in new programs or new items in the budget, we have got to borrow that money.

The first time I came out here as a candidate for Congress I wore a little pin and it said carpe diem: seize the day. And the one message that came through loudly and clearly at most of my townhall meetings that I had when we were home for the Easter break was that the American people, the people of my district want us to regain the initiative, they want us to seize the day. They understand that good habits are hard to get a hold of, bad habits are easy to fall into, and they want us to get back in those good habits of forcing fiscal discipline, and I was proud to be a part of the 104th Congress in spite of some of the back sliding we did toward the end. I think we made some real progress, but there is a real fear that you have and that I have that it is easy to fall back into those old habits of saying yes to all the various special interest groups who come out here to Washington and want more of our children's money.

If I could just say this too, and I want to say you know we do not want to paint too dark a picture because good things are happening. We have gone a long way in terms of reforming our entitlement system. The welfare system is a long way down the road to becoming much more what Wisconsin wants, what Minnesota wants, what the States want and encouraging personal responsibility and encouraging families to stay together.

We are making progress on Medicare. The President's budget and our numbers now are not far a part. He has proposed a hundred billion dollars' worth of savings, and we think that is good. On Medicaid the President has recommended 32 billion dollars' worth of savings.

But the real issue before us I think in this Congress, and I think as you said we can work with the welfare numbers, we can work with the Medicare numbers, we can work with the Medicaid numbers, we can work with the defense numbers, but the real problem is the discretionary spending.

Mr. NEUMANN. And new——

Mr. GUTKNECHT. New discretionary spending.

Mr. NEUMANN. On new programs.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. On new Washington spending programs. And once you start a new program you create a new constituency and that is one thing that if we have the courage to stand up and say no to any new programs, if the President wants new programs then he is going to have to find other programs that he is going to have to eliminate, and we all know there is wasteful, duplicative programs that are not working.

Mr. NEUMANN. If the gentleman would yield, I think that is the point. If Washington finds a genuine need and it is legitimate and they actually need to spend money on something that is legitimate, they need to find other programs that are not legitimate or not working and cancel those programs that are not working so we can afford to do a program that may be needed. Let me give you an example of how this might work.

We just found out that women in their forties should have mammograms and we found out that it is a genuine need. We have welfare reform where able-bodied welfare recipients are now required to be in the work force. So we potentially have a woman in her forties who has gone into the work force, taken her first job, is earning someplace between $6 and $8 an hour or maybe even minimum wage, so she is at the bottom end of the pay scale. So Medicaid is going to have to cover—generally eligible for Medicaid, Medicaid would have to cover those mammograms. You cannot just say we are going to cover all the mammograms because the money has to come from somewhere.

So let me give you an example how this might work. Suppose for example we said we are not going to send Russian monkeys into space with American tax dollars and instead what we are going to do is pay for mammograms for women in their forties who have just left the welfare roll and are in their first job and could not afford to have them otherwise.

□ 2015

That is how this thing could work when we find out that there is a legitimate need for doing something.

If I can just speak on one more point here, we were talking about the tax increases before, and we both campaigned during the same year when we first came here. I remember distinctly campaigning extensively against the 1993 tax increase.

If my colleagues recall, that vote passed this institution, the House, by one vote, and it passed over in the Senate by one vote. It raised the gasoline tax by 4.3 cents a gallon, and the people in Wisconsin were very upset about it. They were especially upset about it because they were taking another 4.3 cents a gallon in gasoline tax, but they were not using it to construct roads in Wisconsin or Minnesota or anywhere else. They were simply pouring on more Washington spending programs.

We came here campaigning against those tax increases and against that 1993 tax increase that passed here by one vote, of course passed over in the Senate by one vote, and the President then signed. But the bottom line is, I think our colleagues and I think the American people have the right and should know that many of us have not forgotten why we came here, and that even though these things seem to be adrift, we have not forgotten what we came here to do so our children will have opportunities in this great Nation of ours.

We came here to make sure that Social Security is solvent for our parents and for the senior citizens that rely on it. We came here to make sure Medicare does not go bankrupt. We came here to fix a broken system that was spending too much of our children's money. We have not forgotten what we came here to do. We came here to make sure that our families, that the American people that go to work every morning, get to keep more of their own money.

Many of us have not forgotten what we came here to do, and I think our colleagues and I think the American people should understand that there is a large number of us that, even if the rest seem adrift, we have not forgotten what the Republican Party stands for and why it was that we were elected as Republicans and sent to Washington.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to stand with the working families of middle America.

I would close with just one reminder, because our time has about expired here. When I was growing up, when my colleague was growing up, most of us grew up in families where only one person had to work, and that was because the tax rate was something like 4 to 5 percent of my folks' gross income. Today, the average family spends more for taxes than they do for food, clothing, and shelter combined. If tax increases had been the answer to these growing deficits, we would have had a balanced budget years ago.

The truth of the matter is, the real answer is we have to control our appetite for more spending. If we are willing to do that, if we are willing to face up to the special interest groups, if we are willing to say that if we want new programs we have to eliminate some of the old programs that are not working, if we are willing to do that, we can solve this budget problem, we can save Social Security without touching the CPI adjustment. We can do all of these things, but we have to have the courage and we have to seize the day.

Mr. NEUMANN. Mr. Speaker, I think that is a good way to wrap it up. I think it is important to wrap it up by reiterating that we can in fact balance

the budget by the year 2002, while we let the American people keep more of their own money and at the same time save the Social Security system. If we go past 2002 and we talk about how we pay off the debt, as we pay that debt off we are restoring those funds in IOU's and the Social Security trust fund now, we can do these things if we just control new Washington spending programs.

This is not even about going into programs that currently exist and somehow destroying them or attacking them, because the revenues are so much higher than what anybody anticipated, the economy is doing so well, that this is no longer about the things that were talked about 2 years ago. This is now just about controlling our desire in Washington, DC to spend and spend and spend in new Washington programs to satisfy some constituency.

We need to regain that initiative. We need to regain what we came here to do: Balance the budget so our children have hope and opportunities in this great Nation we live in; preserve Social Security and Medicare for our senior citizens; and for goodness sakes, let the American people keep more of their own money. It is their money, not Washington's money. That is how we preserve this Nation for the next generation, and that is what I hope our service to this country is all about.

SOUNDING THE ALARM FOR AMERICA'S PATENT SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MANZULLO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from California [Mr. ROHRABACHER] is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, next Thursday, April 17, the House of Representatives will make a crucial decision, and this decision has yet to be covered by the mainstream news media of the United States. Thus, the American people are for the most part unaware of this oncoming threat to our country and to the well-being of our citizens.

So let me sound the alarm bell, and that is what I am hoping to do tonight, sound the alarm bell. In the next few minutes I will be exposing a maneuver which, if successful, will do incredible long-term harm to the United States of America. Yet, at this moment, this legislation is being quietly maneuvered through the process and is likely to pass a vote in the House of Representatives and be made into law.

What I am referring to is dramatic and fundamental changes that are being proposed to be made to America's patent system, a system of rights and government institutions that have ensured that the United States has been, since the founding of our country, a technological leader in the world; that our fellow Americans, basically, were the inventors of the reaper, the inventors of the telegraph, the inventors of the telephone, the inventors of the television and of the electric light and the airplane and the microprocessor, and the MRI and other marvelous health technologies that we enjoy today, that have made our life a quality life compared to what it was just a few short years ago. Those Americans were the ones who invented these fabulous technologies that changed the way of life for the people of this world and uplifted the standard of living of the American people. That was no mistake.

We had patent laws and a patent system that protected the individual and made it profitable for investors to finance the development of new technologies. Written into our Constitution is the establishment of the patent office. Now, most people do not even understand that. They have no idea that we are any different than any other country of the world when it comes to technologies and inventions. They have no idea.

They know that we are different than other countries in the world in that we have freedom of speech, that we have freedom of press, we have freedom of religion, and that we respect the rights of the individual, and that was the purpose of our Founding Fathers, to establish a government that would protect people's rights. Yes, people know that about the United States, but they do not know one of the major factors that have given them the standard of living, given our people the standard of living that they enjoy, that has meant that they have reasonable and decent lives, was the fact that there were other protections in our Constitution, protections for the rights of people who invented and created things, things that would improve our lives.

From the earliest days of our Republic we had these protections and we had a patent office, actually part of our Federal Government since the time our Constitution was written. In fact, up until 2 years ago we had, as protected by law, by the United States law, all the way from our country's founding until 2 years ago, we had something that was called the guaranteed patent term.

Now, what is that all about, a guaranteed patent term? Well, what a guaranteed patent term has been in the United States of America is something that has ensured that we have been the ones who invented all of these wonderful things. The guaranteed patent term, from the time of our Constitution until two years ago, was that when someone had invented something, when they went to apply for a patent, that inventor, once that inventor applied for the patent, no matter how long it took the patent to be issued, the inventor was guaranteed a certain patent, legal patent term. At first it was 14 years and then it was expanded over 100 years ago to be 17 years, so we have had a guaranteed patent term of 17 years.

Now, what difference does that make, people will ask. Well, they did not have this in other countries. Inventors had their ideas stolen from them by very powerful people, and in fact, in other systems, it would be so mixed up in the bureaucracy, a person would never be granted a patent until 10 and 20 years after they applied. But in our country they knew that no matter how long it took a patent to be issued, they would have 17 years to recoup their investment.

This meant that people invested in our country, the private sector invested in new inventions and new ideas, which made all of the difference in our standard of living. We did not have to rely on the government to invest in new technology development because we had people in the private sector who would seek out inventors and creative people and give them money voluntarily to try to provide them the resources they needed to invent the telephone.

How different would our lives be today if the telephone had not been invented? How different would our lives be if these inventions that created the bountiful harvest of food in our country had not been invented? But private inventors sponsored by private investors did the job because they were guaranteed 17 years of protection.

Well, 3 years ago, and I am sorry to inform those of you who are reading this for the first time or listening to this for the first time, 3 years ago our right to a guaranteed patent term, a right Americans have enjoyed since the founding of our country, was taken from us and taken from us in a very stealthy manner, so most of the American people have no idea that this right has been taken away and what the implications of that right are.

The fact is that that right was taken away by a provision that was snuck into the GATT implementation legislation. That GATT implementation legislation of over 2 years ago now, 3 years ago actually, basically replaced the 17-year guaranteed patent term with an uncertain patent term. In fact, just a look at this issue from a distance, some people actually thought the patent term was being expanded and made longer.

Instead, what happened was, 17 years of a guaranteed patent term was exchanged for a patent term which is called 20 years from filing, and it sounds like there would be even more protection. Nope, no. In fact, what this did was take a situation where you were guaranteed, you knew how much time you would have in a patent and you were guaranteed that as a right, and instead, because the clock was ticking against the bureaucracy and this deterred people from trying to interfere with the process, now we have replaced it with 20 years from filing.

What that means is, once someone files for a patent, the clock is ticking against that person. The clock is ticking against the inventor, against the investor, and whatever time it takes is taken away from their time of protection, away from their property rights.

This will be a dramatic decrease in the amount of money that is spent in the United States to develop new technologies, the technologies that will keep us the No. 1 leader in the world economically. These new technologies are the only things that permit us to out-compete the slave labor and the cheap labor overseas. It is the good technology that has permitted the American people to increase their standard of living. But no, now that has been taken away, or it was in the GATT implementation legislation which eliminated the guaranteed patent term.

By the way, if someone's patent takes 15 years to issue, as many of our breakthrough technologies do, unimportant technologies issue very quickly, but things that make a difference, I mean billions of dollars of new wealth, that takes 10 years, 15 years sometimes, that means that for those 15 years foreign multinational corporations do not have to pay royalties into the pockets of our inventors.

□ 2030

That is 10 to 15 years that the money is going to be in their coffers instead of in the pockets of American inventors, instead of in the bank accounts of American citizens.

I consider this act of sneaking this into the GATT implementation legislation to be a total betrayal of the people of the United States. I voted for fast track. Fast track, which is what permitted them to sneak this provision into the bill, basically permitted them to change the patent law.

Let me explain how that worked. Fast track means that we as Members of Congress vote to give the right to the administration to negotiate a trade agreement with potential trading partners. The administration, in exchange for that agreement, that they can basically negotiate the agreement and bring it to Congress and put it before Congress, and we were only permitted up and down votes, that is what that fast track means, that we would only be permitted an up-or-down vote on this legislation that had been negotiated with our foreign trade partners.

But in exchange for fast track, the administration had to agree to two things. No. 1, there would not be anything included in the implementation legislation brought to Congress. There would not be anything in that legislation except that which was required by GATT itself. No. 2, we would have ample time, 50 days, to look over the GATT agreement in order to make our decision.

The administration waited until the last possible moment to put the GATT implementation legislation before Congress, just a few days before Congress was to adjourn, and they expected us, in I think it was 10 days, to work on this and to basically approve it without having a chance to read it and look it over.

One of the reasons we want to look it over is to find out what is in the GATT implementation legislation. Sure enough, there was a provision in that legislation that dramatically changed our patent rights. However, that provision was never required by the GATT agreement itself. In other words, that was not something that they had to put into the bill in order to be consistent with the GATT agreement they had made with our trading partners. Someone had snuck it into the bill.

When I say snuck into the bill, I mean snuck into the bill. I got wind there was some change going to be made in our patent laws, so I began calling the Trade Representative and others in the administration, asking whether or not there was actually going to be a provision in the GATT implementation legislation that changed American patent law. I was told that I did not have a right to know.

I, an elected representative of the people of the United States, as are the rest of my colleagues, and the administration told me I had no right to know what was going to be in a piece of legislation that was to be presented to the Congress of the United States? That is not only a betrayal, but an arrogant betrayal of the American people.

Basically, Mr. Speaker, we ended up in a situation where the Members of Congress were forced to vote in favor of the GATT implementation legislation that included a major change, a fundamental change, in the protection of American technological rights. We were forced to vote on that as one package. In other words, we either accepted this drastic change, this drastic change in American patent law protection, or we had to vote against the entire world trading system. We had to isolate the United States from the entire world trading system.

That was a betrayal, and I will never again vote for fast track authority going to this administration, under any circumstances. They lied that time, and I say lied, and that is exactly what this was, was a lie when they presented it to this body with a provision that was not mandated by the agreement itself. They lied when they said they would give us ample time to discuss the issue.

During my efforts to basically return to the guaranteed patent term and to try to stop it from going through in the GATT process, I learned of an ongoing plan that was aimed at, and I hesitate to use these words but they are accurate, aimed at destroying, that is right, I said destroying, the American patent system.

The American patent system, which has been the gem of our society, which has permitted us to develop technologies that will actually change our way of life and make our lives better as compared to other people around the world, the gem that has improved the life of the average person in our country as compared to the life of people in other countries, this gem is being destroyed.

The patent system that gives us the technological edge is being destroyed in a very hushed and quiet manner, and it will come to a vote, the next step in this process, it will come to a vote on the floor.

Mr. Speaker, here we are facing a very quiet maneuver, something that has been kept out of the mass media, something that the regular media, the news media in this country has not covered, that is going to make a dramatic change in America's fundamental technology and a dramatic change in our rights and a dramatic change in our standard of living. It will be something that over a long period of time will have a greater impact on our standard of living than our natural resources and the other great things that have made America such a wonderful country.

When did this all start? It is going to come to a head on April 17 when the Steal American Technologies Act, H.R. 400, comes to a vote on the floor of this House. About half of the Members of this House have no idea this bill is coming to a vote and have no idea what this bill is all about.

Four years ago Bruce Lehman, the head of our Patent Office, went to Japan where he signed an agreement with the head of the Japanese Patent Office to harmonize America's patent laws with those of Japan. To put this in perspective, America's patent laws over the history of our country have been the strongest and most protective laws in the world. That is what gave America the edge. Yet Bruce Lehman, head of the American Patent Office, went there 4 years ago, signed an agreement, a hushed agreement I might add, which I did not find out about until years later, to harmonize our law.

He was not signing the agreement to harmonize our law to bring Japanese protection up to the level of protection that is enjoyed and has been enjoyed by the people of the United States. Instead, what Mr. Lehman supposedly, representing the interests of the United States, signed was an agreement to make our system, our patent system, a carbon copy, a mirror image, of the Japanese system.

Let us make sure this is understood. The changes that were agreed to by our representative were to make our strong protection a weak protection like they have in Japan. In Japan, Japanese economic shoguns beat their competition down ruthlessly. If you are not in the ''in'' clique, you have no rights. The Japanese economic shoguns who rule that society know they have leverage on people because the laws do not protect the individual in Japan. They are aimed at the collective good in Japan, and the individual rights that have been so much part of our system, they do not even think that way.

That has permitted these powerful interests in Japan to keep an iron grip on that society. That is why it has been so difficult to open their markets

to American goods, because we were not dealing with their consumers who would want American products, we were dealing with Japanese powerful businessmen who know what power is all about and had used it in their own country.

Now we are changing our laws, our patent laws, to harmonize with them so they can do to the American inventor and the American people over here what they have been doing to their own people for 100 years.

What is worming its way through Congress is legislation that is implementing phase 2 of this notorious harmonization agreement. Phase 1 of the agreement was, guess what; what do you think phase 1 was? Phase 1 was the elimination of the guaranteed patent term, and the replacing of it with a system based on 20 years from filing, an uncertain term, which is the Japanese system. That was phase 1. That was what we got.

Immediately they tried to implement this agreement with Japan by sneaking it into the GATT implementation legislation, and forcing Congress to either vote against the entire world trading system or ratifying this secret and hushed agreement with the Japanese.

Phase 2 of that agreement with the Japanese is coming to the floor in one week, H.R. 400. How do I know? I know because H.R. 400 includes a provision that would destroy a vital protection of our law, our patent law, and replace it with a provision that comes directly from the Japanese code.

The Japanese code said, you know, it is 20 years from filing instead of a guaranteed patent term of 17 years. We change it to that. What else does the Japanese code say? What is this provision? Hang onto your hats. If H.R. 400 passes, we, like the Japanese, will have a system, a legal system, that mandates that when our inventors invent something and go to apply for a patent, after 18 months, whether or not that patent has been issued, it is going to be published for the entire world to see.

So if we have a system where breakthrough technologies, like the microprocessor or the MRI or the laser system, which took 20 years to get a patent, or polypropylene plastic which was a major breakthrough in the way we packaged things around the world, it took 20 years to get that patent issued, what is going to happen is after 18 months, whether or not the patent has been issued, every one of our technological secrets are going to be published for the entire world to see.

What does that mean? That means our technological secrets will be used by our enemies to destroy us economically. People who hate America, people who want to destroy our way of life, people who want to bring down the standard of living of the American people will have our technological secrets. This is the elimination of a right that we have had as well.

We had a right, from the founding of our Constitution, to a guaranteed patent term. That was eliminated by this sneaky maneuver in the GATT implementation legislation.

Now H.R. 400 goes the second step and it eliminates what right? From the founding of our country until this bill, if it passes, we have had a right of confidentiality. When an inventor goes with his patent application to the Patent Office, he has had a right that none of that information will ever be published, will ever be published, until his patent is issued. Because once it is issued, he then has protection. He has legal rights, then, that will protect him, and he knows that his adversaries, economic adversaries, cannot steal from him and use his own ideas against him. This was a right our people had.

Members have heard of industrial espionage. That espionage is that we do not want our adversaries to have our technological secrets. H.R. 400 will come to the floor of the House of Representatives a week from Thursday, and it will, if passed, mandate that every one of our technological secrets will be published for our enemies to use against us. It will eliminate the right of confidentiality.

If it does any good, I guess you can say they could probably use this as advocacy, it is certainly going to eliminate industrial espionage. Some laugh. This will be the first step in the destruction of America's ability to compete with other nations where they have cheap labor and slave labor. This will be the first step on the escalator down for the standard of living of the American people, and billions of dollars into the pockets of our worst enemies and competitors.

□ 2045

H.R. 400, I call it the Steal American Technologies Act, there are Members who are advocating this with a straight face and they are saying, if we published this, this will show our enemies what not to steal. Bruce Lehman, head of our patent office, last year was stopped short and believe me, it took all of our effort to do it, in his efforts to do what? What was his plan? He wanted to send the entire database of the patent office to China, the disk. He wanted to send our computer disk with the entire database of our patent office to China.

That is like sending the worst thief in the world the combination of your safe and saying, we are just sending it to you so you will know what not to steal. By the way, that was what he said was the purpose of sending the database, so they would know what not to steal. Something is haywire here; something is haywire here. The news media in the United States is not covering it. The American people do not know about it. And H.R. 400 is being supported by an army of lobbyists from multinational and foreign corporations that are going to meet each and every Member of Congress to try to get them to vote for this heinous piece of legislation. Disclosing all of our secrets? Disclosing all of our technology?

When this bill was first introduced, it had a different name. The name of the bill, now H.R. 400, is guess what? It is the 21st Century Patent Law Reform Act. Boy, does that sound positive. The 21st Century Patent Law Reform Act. What was this bill called when it was first introduced as 1733, which was 2 years ago? This bill, which was introduced by Carlos Moorhead and Pat Schroeder, was first called the Patent Publication Act. They were trying to sneak this through and they had no idea anybody was going to be on to it. That is what happened.

It was called the Patent Publication Act, but it got too hot, because that is the real purpose of this bill. The real purpose of the bill is to force our system to harmonize with the Japanese system so you publicize this. You publicize this after 18 months, you publicize the patent application, but they say, that is all right, we are including in H.R. 400 the right of people to sue, to sue.

If someone, when you have applied for a patent and your patent is published and some Japanese huge corporation or Chinese, like the Chinese army has these big companies now that steal our stuff over in China, if they start using your technology, then you can sue them once your patent is issued. That is what right they have given us. So sue me.

Can you imagine small American inventors trying to go up against these corporate giants, these corporate gangsters in these dictatorships like China or Vietnam or these corporate goons over in Japan?

So now these people who are trying to push this bill through, who have hired lobbyists to come and see your Member of Congress, my Member of Congress, everybody's Member of Congress being visited by these lobbyists, they are doing everything they can to pass the bill. And when you ask them, why are you supporting this bill, people call up their offices, after they have heard about how horrible it is. Every inventor in the United States is desperate to stop this bill. They are desperate. They know what this will mean.

So when people call up their Congressman and they say, why are you supporting this bill, I notice that you are supporting this H.R. 400, the Steal American Technologies Act, and the Member of Congress says, oh, just like the authors of the bill, they have been told that this is what they say, they talk about some really nice reforms in the bill.

There are a few here that are pretty good things in H.R. 400. They talk about, for example, ensuring that patent fees are retained in the patent office to make the patent office better and allowing the patent office to hire new employees, for example, and to protect inventors against fraud from phony advertising, sort of a truth in labeling type provision. That is all in H.R. 400. By the way, I support those

reforms. Those are very good reforms. But those are minor changes compared to what the real intent of the legislation is. They are figleafs. They are covers. They are a facade for something evil that is about to go on in this body.

It is like giving someone a bouquet of beautiful flowers. You have handed someone a bouquet of beautiful flowers. Then the proponents of the legislation hand the bouquet of beautiful flowers, and you are very happy. I have this bouquet of beautiful flowers. But then you happen to notice there are snakes in the bouquet. This bouquet is crawling with snakes as well as flowers. Well, you say, well, by the way, are these snakes poisonous?

They say, let me talk about the flowers, see how beautiful the flowers are here in this bouquet. No, I want to know if the snakes are poisonous because I do not want to hold on to it. Look at that beautiful rose in the bouquet. Why are you talking about snakes when you can look at the rose?

I do not want to take this home to my family. These snakes are poisonous. They will kill my children.

Do not think about that. Look at the beautiful flowers. Let me tell you about all the flowers.

That is what is going on with H.R. 400. They are talking about beautiful flowers, when the bouquet is filled with poisonous snakes. One of the snakes is mandating publication so that everybody in the world can steal it, steal our technology, steal our ideas and use them against us. That is a snake.

I had an industrialist in my office, a guy who ran a small solar energy company. And when this piece of legislation went through committee, and it has already gone through committee, he said, Congressman, if they mandate that I publish all of my patent applications, what is going to happen is they are going to use my patent applications, then will use all of the things that I have spent money for, millions of dollars to develop. They are going to go into production in Japan with my ideas, and all the money that they make from producing my technology they will use against me to defeat me in court and to steal my technology from me in court. They will be using my ideas and my innovation and my development to destroy me. That is a real snake. That is a real poisonous snake. That is what is going to be happening if H.R. 400 passes. That is a threat to our future.

H.R. 400 is the Steal American Technologies Act. But by the way, that snake that I just described, that is about new patents. If that was not bad enough, let me mention another snake that we have found hidden in the bouquet of flowers. I did not find this until recently when we had legal minds go over this bill with a fine-tooth comb, with a microscope.

What did we find? Another snake hidden among the flowers. That is that current patent owners, you see, the one I was just talking about where you have to publish your patent application, that only dealt with future technology. Current patent owners in the United States of America are going to find that there are provisions in this bill that opens them up to challenge by these huge corporate interests and by foreign and multinational corporations. In other words, once their patent has already been issued to Americans, we are going to find these huge corporate entities overseas coming in and filing court cases and challenging American patents that have already been issued.

Today it is very limited, very limited scope as to what you can challenge someone who owns a patent. They do not want it brought up again and again and again. What H.R. 400 does is open it up to a panoply of issues that you can bring before a court. Every one of our patent owners is going to be put in jeopardy. All of our current technology will be put in jeopardy. Not just the future, not just publication but current technology.

It is going to be challenged by the big boys of the world, both foreign and domestic.

There is a snake. There is a snake for you. How about another snake that we found in the bouquet of H.R. 400. Another snake is the snake that would permit these very same interests to interfere with a patent applicant as the process is moving. Once they find out, once they find out what he is up to because it has been published, they could actually go into the process and interfere with the process. That is what we found out. Can you imagine that. We are opening up, our own people are going to be cut off by the biggest people in the world. They will probably make a little change in the patent and then go in and try to interfere with the process. That is a real snake. That is a snake to everybody.

What about publication, what happens? By the way, one thing you have to understand, if the patent is not issued and you have then published it after 18 months, what happens if the patent is never issued. That means our American inventors are putting their heart and soul and investment in something and it does not pan out and the patent is not issued, what happens is everybody in the world knows all of their work. And if the patent is never issued, they have no rights whatsoever to sue anybody who is using their information.

Mr. Speaker, all of this was confidential before. It only became public up until this bill, if it passes, for since the founding of our country this has all been confidential information.

By the way, there is one big snake in this H.R. 400 Steal American Technologies Act, one big snake in the bouquet that I have not mentioned. It is probably the biggest snake of all. And it is so easy to see that proponents of the bill have had to go a long way to try to disguise it. Basically for the first 200 years of our country, since our Constitution, the Patent Office has been part of the U.S. Government. We have had patent examiners. Patent examiners make quasi-judicial decisions that determine who owns technology that represents billions of dollars, tens of billions of dollars. These people, they have had to be cleaner than judges because they determine ownership of technology, of property, of what will become money, of wealth.

These stalwart public employees at the Patent Office, these patent examiners, have been shielded from outside influences because they have been Government employees. Do my colleagues know what? In 200 years of this country's history, there has never been a scandal, never been a scandal with these patent examiners. The patent examiners have never been through scandals that have gone through many other different parts of our Government, because they have been shielded. They have been protected from outside influences.

And what does H.R. 400 do to the Patent Office that has been part of the U.S. Government since our country's founding? It obliterates it. It destroys it. It eliminates it. That is it. It takes the Patent Office and turns it into a corporate entity, a corporate entity. Maybe something like the Post Office. They do this in the name of privatization.

I am here to say that I am a Ronald Reagan conservative, I look at privatization as a very good thing. But there are core functions of government, the court system, our military, core functions of government, institutions that are set up to protect our individual rights, and you do not leave that in the hands of a corporate elite. You do not corporatize that. That is a legitimate function of government.

Mr. Speaker, they want to take the Patent Office and turn it into a corporate structure with a private board of directors made up of, and it is mandated in H.R. 400, to be made up of people with a business and financial background, meaning corporate leaders of this country will appoint who is the head of the Patent Office and oversee the policies of the Patent Office. And what effect will this corporatization have on this, on the honesty and the protection of our patent examiners from outside influences?

All I can say is that part of H.R. 400 is a provision that permits this new entity, this corporate entity, the Patent Office becomes a corporatized entity, permits that entity to accept corporate gifts, private and corporate gifts from foreign companies, from domestic companies. It permits this entity which will determine who owns what technology to accept gifts from the people who it is having to decide on who owns what. This is beyond belief, taking our patent examiners and subjecting them to who knows what outside influences by who knows who.

More than that, the new corporate entity will be able to float bonds so

that they can build huge palaces. This is one of the things that Bruce Lehman would like to do. He wants to build a huge new patent building. And by the way, if the new Patent Office corporatization does not have the money for some reason, well, the taxpayers are the ones who have to meet the obligation if those bonds that are floated by this corporate entity are not repaid.

H.R. 400 is the Steal American Technologies Act. It has already gone through subcommittee, passed I think by voice vote, went through committee. I think it passed by either voice vote or a close-to-unanimous vote.

□ 2100

It has already passed through these committees and there is an army of lobbyists in the Nation's Capital, hired by multinational and foreign corporations as well as some of our own domestic corporations, who are here trying to basically do what they have a right to do, which is influence the vote of Members of Congress.

The administration is behind this piece of legislation. They are backing it. Of course, this is the same administration which has been compromised by receiving campaign donations from Chinese interests, from Communist Chinese interests, I might add, by some of the same people we could expect to steal the American technology as soon as it was published. But the administration is backing it.

So we have these forces at play. These forces are working right now and this bill will pass unless the American people personally get involved. This is the way it has always been when there has been a threat to our well-being. Unless the American people get involved, the Government can go in the wrong direction. Unless people actually call their Member of Congress and say, for goodness sakes, oppose H.R. 400, the Steal American Technologies Act, and please support the bill, H.R. 811, Congressman ROHRABACHER's bill, and H.R. 812, a bill which will reaffirm, it is called the Patent Term Restoration Act, reaffirm and strengthen patent protection in America. It is diametrically opposed to H.R. 400.

What we have now are my bill, which would strengthen the patent office, and H.R. 812. H.R. 811, my bill, which would strengthen the American patent protection, over here, versus a piece of legislation, H.R. 400, that would destroy our patent protection as we know it and destroy the patent office.

They are coming to a head on the floor of the House a week from Thursday. What will happen is my vote will come as a substitute motion, which means it will be a vote either for H.R. 811 and 812 or for H.R. 400. If H.R. 400 passes, gets the higher number of votes, it will be passed into law, and I believe it will pass through the U.S. Senate.

As I say, it will have dramatic repercussions. It will be, and I honestly believe, be a Pearl Harbor in slow motion. Our standard of living, our way of life will be attacked and 20 years from now people will never know, will never know what hit them.

It was just 100 years ago when two young Americans decided that they would set out to discover the secrets of manned flight. Two young Americans, Orville and Wilbur Wright. They did not have a lot of education, but they had freedom and they were Americans and they had a dream. They owned this bicycle shop in Ohio and they read everything they could get their hands on.

Perhaps more than any other Americans, these two young men represented the spirit of what our country was and hopefully always will be all about. Orville and Wilbur there in their bicycle shop, reading and writing letters to people all over the world, struggling to find, to discover that secret, the secret that would permit all of mankind to soar, to soar into the heavens like birds, like meteors.

They worked hard. They had very little money. They had investors. They did have investors, and their investors knew if they discovered this, there would be a time period when their secret would become profitable. They would discover the secret and they would be able to make some return on their money. That is why people invested in them. Orville and Wilbur knew they would have a 17-year guaranteed patent term and they also knew their secrets, what they discovered would be kept secret until their patent was issued.

These two young Americans did what the crown heads of Europe and the huge empires around the world could not do. The Kaiser could not do it. The French, the English crown could not discover the secret, the technology that would permit man to soar like the birds, to fly into the heavens. All they had was their enthusiasm and their freedom.

I visited Kitty Hawk, NC, last year, and it is one of the most inspiring sites that I can imagine. I would recommend that to anyone who is listening or reading this in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Kitty Hawk talks about the indomitable spirit of the American people. They had an indomitable spirit because they lived in a society that protected creators. It protected investors. It protected innovators.

It protected the likes of Orville and Wilbur Wright, normal, common, everyday Americans, rather than a legal system that protected the elite like they have had in Japan, or the elite in Europe and the other countries from which our forefathers and mothers fled to the new world to live a new life and to live in freedom.

So the people like Orville and Wilbur were able to dream great dreams, and one day, and after years of failure and trying again and trying again, they did it. They discovered the secret, and the secret for them was the shape of the wing. It was the shape of the wing that they had not seen before that permitted them to understand lift; that managed to take mankind off of the ground on the windy shores of Kitty Hawk, NC, and catapulted mankind into a new era.

Here we are, less than 100 years later, less than 100 years after that first flight, and look how this has changed our way of life. Look what their discovery has meant for the United States of America. Their discovery has meant that we have built a tremendous aerospace industry that not only took man to the moon but has facilitated jet air travel throughout this planet, and has uplifted the standard of living not only of the people who work for the aerospace industry, who have good paying jobs, but everybody else who is able to enjoy the goods and services and visits that we have learned to expect as Americans, as part of our way of life and our freedom to travel.

What would have happened if Orville and Wilbur Wright would have had to publish their secret before that patent was issued? Would there have been a Mitsubishi Corp. who would take their invention and create an aerospace industry in Japan, while at the same time using their money and resources to destroy Orville and Wilbur Wright and destroy them in our own court system?

If H.R. 400 would have been in place, what would have happened was that the Japanese would have had all their secrets, and before that patent was issued the Mitsubishi Corp. could actually have come and interfered with their right to get the patent. It could put a challenge on if the patent had already been issued. It could have tied up these little guys from Ohio and tied them in knots, and they could have used the resources from the Wright brothers' own discovery, the wealth that was created by this new knowledge, to destroy the Wright brothers.

Now, that is only one example. That is only one example of how technology and the protection of technology will directly affect our standard of living. Hundreds of thousands of people work in the aerospace industry in the United States today. Good high-paying jobs. That is because it was started with Orville and Wilbur Wright. It was because our creators and innovators have had that protection. And now we are trying to harmonize our system with the Japanese law. We cannot stand by as free people and let this happen. We cannot let it happen.

We cannot let our own huge corporate interests, who are pushing this bill, and they are all of the big companies now thinking that we have to pass this bill. Because of what? They call it globalism. They say that we are entering in this new era of global harmony. Well, Lord protect us from those people who would perfect all of the people of the world. Because usually these idealists who want to create a perfect world end up causing great damage to the people of the United States of America,

to our rights and to our liberty and to our way of life.

Globalism, this thought that has captured the imagination of our corporate leadership, now is being used as an excuse to do things that will hurt the standard of living of the American people and will reduce the protections and the legal rights of our people.

This patent maneuver is just one example of that. It is maybe the first easily defined and easily described example of that. We cannot permit the corporate interests, who basically have the right to live here and enjoy the protection that the American people have given them, and they use their investments to go overseas to countries like China and create factories, perhaps even based on the technology they have stolen from their fellow Americans, we cannot permit this to happen so that our wealth and our technology and our ideas are used against the United States of America in the name of some global concepts.

It is not globalism they want. They are putting that money in their own pocket. They know that and they are justifying that sellout of the American people by talking about globalism.

I have not met any corporate leaders who come into my office and told me about the big meetings they have had with their Chinese leaders on the mainland of China about human rights. They always talk about how most-favored-nation status and trading with the Chinese is going to bring about more liberalization on the mainland of China and more respect for human rights, and yet they have never spoken to the red Chinese bosses themselves about human rights. I guess they think it is osmosis that will create these ideal flows.

Well, I know those people who were sitting in my office trying to get me to vote for most-favored-nation status were really interested in a 20-percent return on their investment rather than investing in the United States of America and getting only a 5- to 10-percent return. I know that is what it is all about. That is fine. If I can vote against it, I will, but I understand where they are coming from.

What is happening with H.R. 400, they have convinced themselves, the corporate leaders have convinced themselves that they are creating this new global economy, and that they can basically bring down the level of protection for American citizens and it will not bother them at all because they are creating this new global economy which will be better for everybody.

No. Their real purpose is to put more money in their pocket and to excuse every dastardly act that they need to do to make that money, even if they are making deals with the worst butchers in the world. The people of Tibet could be totally incinerated tomorrow, millions of them, and our corporate elite would still want to have most-favored-nation status with China.

Where does this all fit in with, of course, the campaign donations made to this administration? Where does it fit in with the subject of patents? It is the Red Chinese as well as the Japanese and other copycats around the world who are going to use our technology. They are going to have the benefits, these monster regimes will have the benefits of all the innovations and creative ideas before our own people are even issued the patent.

That is what H.R. 400 is trying to do. H.R. 400, the Steal American Technologies Act, will give them all that even before the patents are issued. We cannot let that happen. And we can stop it. The lobbyists can be defeated if people let their Member of Congress know that they are opposed to H.R. 400, the Steal American Technologies Act, and want their representatives to vote for the Rohrabacher alternative, H.R. 811 and 812. They can be stopped.

Whether it is Orville or Wilbur or whether it is Tom Edison, or whether we are talking about the people that have come up with the ideas and fought the wars, the people who have built the churches, the people who teach in our schools, the people who make this country what it is, a great and wonderful country, and have defended this country, these are ordinary American people. These are people who have come here from every part of the world to live in freedom, and not to have our laws harmonized downward with the laws that they came here to escape. They came here because this was going to be a better place, where individual rights of all citizens would be protected. The ordinary people of the United States of America. People who are not rich.

Both of my parents were raised on farms. Homesteads. My dad was a marine who fought in World War II. I spent 10 years as a journalist before I got involved in politics, and I did not make much money. It is ordinary people that will save our Republic. It is ordinary people that have saved and preserved our freedom, and this is one of those occasions when the ordinary people of the United States have got to make their will felt or we will see our freedom diminished and we will pay a price in the long run.

I am confident that a week from Thursday when this vote comes, that good will triumph and American freedom will be preserved because the people will speak and they will not let down the Orville and Wilbur Wrights of the past. They will not let down the patriots of bygone eras, and they will not let, in the name of some global concept, our rights as Americans to be diminished and to be frittered away by an elite that seems to have lost their patriotism and their direction and their moral values.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 2115

THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM IN BURMA AND AFGHANISTAN

(Mr. ROHRABACHER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I have been involved with many various groups of people who are struggling for their freedom in different parts of the world. Tonight, I would like to mention two of them. One is the people of Burma. The people of Burma are still under the heels of a despotic regime. Let me note that those people in Burma are led by a nobel laureate named Aung San Suu Kyi. Aung San Suu Kyi is one of the true heroes of our day. I would hope that as the American people hear about the issue of patents, which I just described, that they will realize that there are some people, no matter how brutal a regime, that are still willing to trade and do business with countries and governments like that in Burma. That government and the Burmese people are separated by a wide difference in the sense that one is the oppressed and one is the oppressor.

We set our policies, and as Americans we should always be identifying with the people who are the oppressed people and not those people who are the oppressors. This is important for our trade policies as well as our personal and political policies.

The other country I would like to mention is Afghanistan, where the Taliban movement is in control of three-quarters of the country. There is a king of Afghanistan in exile in Italy today who could and offers a positive alternative to the chaos and somewhat repressive nature of those individuals or other individuals seeking power in Afghanistan. I would hope that the people of Afghanistan can someday free themselves from the tyranny of chaos that has gripped them since the Russians invaded their country back in 1979–80.

So tonight, as part of my message, I would hope that people in Burma and the people of Afghanistan who have struggled so long and hard for their liberty understand that while we are here on the House floor debating issues like the patent law and other laws that really impact us greatly in the United States of America, that we also understand that America is a shining light of hope for the people of the world, whether they are oppressed people in Burma or in Afghanistan or elsewhere, and that in Afghanistan, where there is a chance for the king to bring about a new era, that the United States Government backs him and helps to end the cold war which was put to an end by the strength and freedom of the Afghan people.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. SCHIFF (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today, on account of medical reasons.

Ms. KAPTUR (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of personal business.

Mr. POMEROY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of official business.

Mr. FILNER (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today and the balance of the week, on account of official business.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of illness.

Ms. CARSON (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of illness.

Ms. KILPATRICK (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of personal business.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Member (at the request of Mr. SHERMAN) to revise and extend her remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. TIAHRT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. HULSHOF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GIBBONS, for 5 minutes, on April 9.

Mr. CHRISTENSEN, for 5 minutes each day, on April 9 and 10.

Mr. SHIMKUS, for 5 minutes each day, on today and April 9.

Mr. PAPPAS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEKAS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BONO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. THUNE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RIGGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KINGSTON, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. SHERMAN) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. ANDREWS.

Mr. STARK.

Mr. PASCRELL.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York in two instances.

Mr. WEYGAND.

Ms. WOOLSEY.

Mr. UNDERWOOD.

Mr. TRAFICANT.

Mr. KLECZKA.

Mr. KUCINICH.

Mr. STOKES.

Mr. HOLDEN.

Mr. THOMPSON.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia.

Mr. DIXON.

Mr. VISCLOSKY.

Mr. ORTIZ.

Ms. HARMAN.

Mr. ACKERMAN.

Mr. MARTINEZ.

Mr. COYNE.

Mr. BERRY.

Mr. BROWN of California.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. TIAHRT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. GIBBONS.

Mr. BLUNT.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.

Mr. GINGRICH.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

Mr. GILMAN in three instances.

Mr. GALLEGLY.

Mr. GEKAS in two instances.

Mr. MCCOLLUM.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia in two instances.

Mrs. ROUKEMA.

Mr. PORTMAN.

Mr. SHUSTER.

Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. ROHRABACHER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DUNCAN.

Mr. CLAY.

Mr. DEUTSCH.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Oversight reported that that committee did on the following date present to the President, for his approval, a bill of the House of the following title:

On March 21, 1997:

H.R. 514. An act to permit the waiver of District of Columbia residency requirements for certain employees of the Office of the Inspector General of the District of Columbia.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 20 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, April 9, 1997, at 11 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XXIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2493. A letter from the General Sales Manager and Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation, transmitting the annual report on monetization programs for U.S. fiscal years 1993, 1994, and 1995, pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 1431(b)(9)(B); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2494. A letter from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, transmitting the Service's final rule—Revisions of part 46, Regulations Under the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA) (FV96–351) received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2495. A letter from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, transmitting the Service's final rule—Nectarines and Peaches Grown in California; Revision of Handling Requirements for Fresh Nectarines and Peaches (FV–96–916–3 Interim Final Rule) received April 2, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2496. A letter from the Under Secretary for Rural Development, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the the Department's final rule—Community Facilities Grant Program (Rural Housing Service (RHS)) (RIN: 0575–AC10) received April 1, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2497. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Propamocarb Hydrochloride; Pesticide Tolerance for Emergency Exemptions [OPP–300464; FRL–5597–2] (RIN: 2070–AC78) received March 3, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2498. A letter from the Chairman and CEO, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Disclosure to Shareholders; Disclosure to Investors in Systemwide and Consolidated Bank Debt Obligations of the Farm Credit System; Quarterly Report (RIN: 3052–AB62) received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2499. A letter from the Administrator, Farm Service Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Interim Rule: Special Combinations for Flue-Cured Tobacco Allotments and Quotas (RIN: 0560–AF14) received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2500. A letter from the Administrator, Farm Service Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Farm Credit—Title VI of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Act) (RIN: 0560–AE87) received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

2501. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting his requests for a fiscal year 1997 supplemental and a fiscal year 1998 budget amendment for the Federal Election Commission [FEC], pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1107 (H. Doc. No. 105–61); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

2502. A letter from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting the annual report of the Reserve Forces Policy Board for fiscal year 1996, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 113 (c) and (e); to the Committee on National Security.

2503. A letter from the Under Secretary of Defense, transmitting the Secretary's selected acquisition reports [SARS] for the quarter ending December 31, 1996, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2432; to the Committee on National Security.

2504. A letter from the Director, Office of Administration and Management, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule—Air Force Privacy Act Program [Air Force Reg. 12–35] received

March 21, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on National Security.

2505. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting an interim response to the requirement of section 1256 of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1997 for a report on Parity of Pay for Active and Reserve Component members; to the Committee on National Security.

2506. A letter from the Director, Office of Administration and Management, Department of Defense, transmitting a report on printing and duplicating services procured in-house or from external sources during fiscal year 1996, pursuant to Public Law 104–201, section 351(c) (110 Stat. 2490); to the Committee on National Security.

2507. A letter from the Secretary, Panama Canal Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Panama Canal Commission Acquisition Regulation; Debarment, Suspension, and Ineligibility [48 CFR Part 3509] (RIN: 3207–AA30) received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on National Security.

2508. A letter from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting the Department's report entitled ''Military Capabilities of the People's Republic of China''; to the Committee on National Security.

2509. A letter from the President and Chairman, Export-Import Bank of the United States, transmitting a report involving U.S. exports to various countries, pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 635(b)(3)(i); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

2510. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, transmitting the Council's 1996 annual report to Congress, pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 3305; to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

2511. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Reserve's final rule—Regulation M, Consumer Leasing Act [Docket No. R–0952] received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

2512. A letter from the Chairman, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the 1996 annual report of the National Credit Union Administration, pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 1752a(d); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

2513. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of Thrift Supervision, transmitting the Office's final rule—Economic Growth and Regulatory Paperwork Reduction Regulatory Amendments (RIN: 1550–AB05) received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

2514. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Educational Research and Improvement, Department of Education, transmitting notice of Final Priority—Educational Research and Development Centers Program—received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 1232(f); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

2515. A letter from the Acting Secretary of Labor, transmitting the 1996 reports of the Department of Labor's Advisory Council for Employee Welfare and Pension Benefit Plans; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

2516. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulations, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's report on the Educational Research and Development Centers Program, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(B); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

2517. A letter from the Chairperson, National Council on Disability, transmitting the Council's annual report for fiscal year 1996, pursuant to 29 U.S.C. 781(a)(9); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

2518. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; California—Ozone [FR #CA126–0030; FRL–5804–5] received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2519. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Clean Air Act Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plan Revision for Utah; Visibility Protection [UT–001–0001a; FRL–5802–2] received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2520. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plan; Minnesota; Enhanced Monitoring [MN40–01–6988a; FRL–5694–4] received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2521. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plan; Indiana [IN–53–1a; FRL–5710–1] received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2522. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval of Section 112(1) Program of Delegation; Indiana [IN74–1(a); FRL–5687–8] received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2523. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—National Priorities for Uncontrolled Hazardous Waste Sites [FRL–5805–2] received April 3, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2524. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Vermont; Reasonably Available Control Technology for Major Stationary Sources of Nitrogen Oxides and Volatile Organic Compounds Not Covered By Other Category-Specific Regulations [A–1–FRL–5801–9] received April 3, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2525. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Microbial Products of Biotechnology; Final Regulation Under the Toxic Substances Control Act [OPPTS–00049C; FRL–5577–2] (RIN: 2070–AB61) received April 3, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2526. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Control of Air Pollution; Amendment to Emission Requirements Applicable to New Gasoline Spark-Ignition Marine Engines [FRL–5805–7] received March 3, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2527. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval of Section 112(1) Program of Delegation; Wisconsin [WI73–01–7302(b); FRL–5691–7] received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2528. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—State of Florida: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions (FRL 5802–9) received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2529. A letter from the Managing Director, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Revision of Part 2 of the Commission's Rules Relating to the Marketing and Authorization of Radio Frequency Devices [ET Docket No. 94–45, RM–8125] received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2530. A letter from the Managing Director, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Telephone Number Portability [CC Docket No. 95–116, RM–8535] received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2531. A letter from the Managing Director, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Amendment of the Commission's Rules to Relocate the Digital Electronic Message Service From the 18 GHz Band to the 24 GHz Band and to Allocate the 24 GHz Band for Fixed Service [ET Docket No. 97–99] received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2532. A letter from the Managing Director, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rules—Amendment of Part 90 of the Commission's Rules To Provide for the use of the 220–222 MHz Band by the Private Land Mobile Radio Service [PR Docket No. 89–552 RM–8506]; Implementation of Sections 3(n) and 332 of the Communications Act [GN Docket No. 93–252]; Regulatory Treatment of Mobile Services; and Implementation of Section 309(j) of the Communications Act—Competitive Bidding [PP Docket No. 93–253] received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2533. A letter from the Managing Director, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Amendment of Part 1 of the Commission's Rule—Competitive Bidding Proceeding [WT Docket No. 97–82] received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2534. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Notice and Request for Comment Regarding Compliance Assistance and Civil Penalty Leniency Policies for Small Entities—received April 2, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2535. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy Management Staff, Office of Policy, Food and Drug Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Listing of Color Additives for Coloring Contact Lenses; 1,4-Bis [(2-hydroxyethyl) amino] -9, 10-anthracenedione bis (2-propenoic) ester copolymers; Confirmation of Effective Date [Docket No. 91C–0189] received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2536. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy Management Staff, Office of Policy, Food and Drug Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Consolidation of Drug Regulations [Docket No. 96N–0183] (RIN: 0910–AA53) received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2537. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy Management Staff, Office of Policy, Food and Drug Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Investigational Device Exemptions; Disqualification of Clinical Investigators [Docket No. 92N–0308] received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2538. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy Management Staff, Office of Policy, Food and Drug Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Medical Devices; Medical Device Reporting; Annual Certification [Docket No. 91N–0295] (RIN: 0910–AA09) received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2539. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy Management Staff, Office of Policy, Food and Drug Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Electronic Records; Electronic Signatures [Docket No. 92N–0251] (RIN: 0910–AA29) received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2540. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy Management Staff, Office of Policy, Food and Drug Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Food and Drugs; Technical Amendments [21 CFR Parts 101 and 102] received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2541. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Tamper-Indicating Seals for the Protection and Control of Special Nuclear Material (Regulatory Guide 5.15) received April 1, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2542. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—NRC Generic Letter 97–01: Degradation of Control Rod Drive Mechanism Nozzle and Other Vessel Closure Head Penetrations [GL 97–01] received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2543. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Monitoring the Effectiveness of Maintenance at Nuclear Power Plants (Regulatory Guide 1.160, Revision 2) received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a) (1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2544. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Nuclear Power Plant Instrumentation for Earthquakes [Regulatory Guide 1.12] received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2545. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Identification and Characterization of Seismic Sources and Determination of Safe Shutdown Earthquake Ground Motion [Regulatory Guide 1.165] received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2546. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Pre-Earthquake Planning and Immediate Nuclear Power Plant Operator Postearthquake Actions [Regulatory Guide 1.166] received April 1, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2547. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Restart of a Nuclear Power Plant Shut Down by a Seismic Event [Regulatory Guide 1.167] received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2548. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Standard Review Plan; Basic Geologic and Seismic Information [Section 2.5.1 of NUREG–0800] received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2549. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Standard Review Plan; Vibratory Ground Motion [Section 2.5.2 of NUREG–0800] received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2550. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Standard Review Plan; Surface Faulting [Section 2.5.3 of NUREG–0800] received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2551. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Reactor Siting Criteria (Regulatory Analysis) [10 CFR Part 50 and 100] received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2552. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Status of Investment Advisory Programs under the Investment Company Act of 1940 [Release No. IC–22579; IA–1623; S7–24–95] (RIN: 3235–AG07) received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2553. A letter from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Informal Guidance Program for Small Entities (17 CFR Part 202) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2554. A letter from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Penalty-Reduction Policy for Small Entities (17 CFR Part 202) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

2555. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Assistance Agency, transmitting notification concerning the Department of the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance [LOA] to Israel for defense articles and services (Transmittal No. 97–12), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(b); to the Committee on International Relations.

2556. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Assistance Agency, transmitting a copy of Transmittal No. 03–97 for the relocatable over-the-horizon radars [ROTHR] project arrangement [PA], pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); to the Committee on International Relations.

2557. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Assistance Agency, transmitting the Department of the Navy's proposed lease of defense articles to Brazil (Transmittal No. 09–97), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2796(a); to the Committee on International Relations.

2558. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting copies of international agreements, other than treaties, entered into by the United States, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(a); to the Committee on International Relations.

2559. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule—Overflight Payments to North Korea (Office of Foreign Assets Control, Treasury) (CFR Part 500) received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on International Relations.

2560. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a report to the Congress detailing payments made to Cuba by any United States person as a result of the provision of telecommunications services, pursuant to Public Law 104–114, section 102(g) (H. Doc. No. 105–62); to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed.

2561. A letter from the Chairman Pro Tempore, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. Act 11–524, ''Department of Insurance and Securities Regulation Establishment Act of 1996'' received March 21, 1997, pursuant to D.C. Code, section 1–233(c)(1); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2563. A letter from the Acting Comptroller General of the United States, transmitting a list of all reports issued or released in February 1997, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 719(h); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2564. A letter from the Executive Director, Committee for Purchase from People who are Blind or Severely Disabled, transmitting the Committee's final rule—Additions to the Procurement List—received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2565. A letter from the Chief Executive Officer, Corporation for National Service, transmitting a report of activities under the Freedom of Information Act for the calendar year 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552; to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2566. A letter from the Executive Director, District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority, transmitting the official resolution disapproving the Mayor's response and revised fiscal year 1998 financial plan and budget submitted to the Authority on March 18, 1997, pursuant to section 202(d) of Public Law 104–8; to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2567. A letter from the Chairman, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting a report of activities under the Freedom of Information Act for the calendar year 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C 552(e); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2568. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Election Commission, transmitting a report of activities under the Freedom of Information Act for the calendar year 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(d); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2569. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, transmitting the Board's final rule—Death Benefits (5 CFR Part 1651) received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2570. A letter from the Acting Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting a report of activities under the Freedom of Information Act for the calendar year 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(d); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2571. A letter from the Acting Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting a report of activities under the Freedom of Information Act for the calendar year 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(d); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2572. A letter from the Executive Director Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation,

transmitting a copy of the annual report in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act during the calendar year 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b(j); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2573. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule—Cost-of-Living Allowances (Nonforeign Areas) [5 CFR Part 591] (RIN: 3206–AH07) received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2574. A letter from the Director, Peace Corps, transmitting the fiscal year 1996 annual report under the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act [FMFIA] of 1982, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3512(c)(3); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2575. A letter from the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting a copy of the annual report in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act during the calendar year 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b(j); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2576. A letter from the Acting Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting a report of activities under the Freedom of Information Act for the calendar year 1996, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(e); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2577. A letter from the Executive Director, United States Artic Research Commission, transmitting the Commission's consolidated semiannual report under the Inspector General Act, and the annual report under the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3512(c)(3); to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

2578. A letter from the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, Department of Commerce, transmitting the annual report of the coastal zone management fund for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for fiscal year 1996, pursuant to Public Law 101–508, section 6209 (104 Stat. 1388–309); to the Committee on Resources.

2579. A letter from the Acting Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, transmitting the Services final rule—Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Determination of Endangered Status for Three Plants and Threatened Status for Five Plants from Vernal Pools in the Central Valley of California [50 CFR Part 17] (RIN: 1018–AC00) received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2580. A letter from the National Marine Fisheries Services, transmitting the Service's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Yellowfin Sole by Vessels Using Trawl Gear in Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands [Docket No. 961107312–7021–02; I.D. 032097A] (50 CFR Part 679) received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2581. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Offshore Component Pollock in the Aleutian Islands Subarea [Docket No. 961107312–7021–02; I.D. 022697A] received March 21, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2582. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Atka Mackerel in the Central Aleutian District of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands [Docket No. 961107312–7021–02; I.D. 031497C] received March 21, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2583. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Deep-Water Species Fishery by Vessels Using Trawl Gear in the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No. 961126334–7025–02; I.D. 031497D] received March 21, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2584. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No. 961126334–7012–02; I.D. 031097A] received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2585. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No. 961126334–7025–02; I.D. 031097B] received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2586. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area; Prohibited Species Catch Limits for Tanner Crab [Docket No. 961217360–7052–02; I.D. 112596C] received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2587. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Consolidation of the Fishery Management Plan for the Atlantic Bluefish Fishery [Docket No. 970303042–7042–01; I.D. 021097C] (RIN: 0648–AJ78) received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2588. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Season Opening [I.D. 031497A] received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2589. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Closure of the Commercial Red Snapper Component [Docket No. 960807218–6244–02; I.D. 032097F] received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2590. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Pacific Halibut Fisheries; Catch Sharing Plans [Docket No. 961217359–7050–02; I.D. 121196B] (RIN: 0648–AJ11) received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2591. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Offshore Component Pollock in the Aleutian Islands Subarea [Docket No. 961107312–7021–02; I.D. 031997A] received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2592. A letter from the Acting Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Technical Amendment [Docket No. 960612172–7054–02; I.D. 011697A] (RIN: 0648–AI21) received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2593. A letter from the Acting Assisting Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Amendment 14 [Docket No. 961108316–7051–02; I.D. 101796C] (RIN: 0648–AI47) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2594. A letter from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary [Docket No. 950427120–7006–02] (RIN: 0648–AH99) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2595. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Framework Adjustment 23 [Docket No. 970324064–7064–01; I.D. 021997B] (RIN: 0648–AJ32) received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2596. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Framework Adjustment 20 [Docket No. 970318056–7056–01; I.D. 021397B] (RIN: 0648–AJ43) received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2597. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska, Pollock in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No. 961126334–7025–02; I.D. 032897B] received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2598. A letter from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Central Aleutian District of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands [Docket No. 961107312–7021–02; I.D. 032497A] (50 CFR Part 679) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2599. A letter from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Scallop Fishery; District 16 of Registration Area D [Docket No. 960502124–6190–02; I.D. 022097B] (50 CFR Part 679) received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2600. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Surface Mining, transmitting the Office's final rule—Iowa Regulatory Program [SPATS No. IA–009–FOR] received April 3, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2601. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, transmitting the Office's final

rule—Hopi Tribe Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Plan [HO–004–FOR] received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2602. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, transmitting the Office's final rule—Alaska Regulatory Program [AK–005–FOR, Amendment No. V] received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

2603. A letter from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting the biennial report regarding the activities of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's [NOAA] National Marine Fisheries Service's Chesapeake Bay Office to protect and restore the living resources of the Chesapeake Bay, pursuant to section 307(b)(7) of the NOAA Authorization Act of 1992; to the Committee on Resources.

2604. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Civil Monetary Penalties Inflation Adjustments (U.S. Coast Guard) [CGD 96–052] (RIN: 2105–AC63) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2605. A letter from the Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, transmitting the Bureau's final rule—Implementation of Section 109 of the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act (RIN: 1105–AA39) received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2606. A letter from the Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons, transmitting the Bureau's final rule—Literacy Program [BOP–1036–I] (RIN: 1120–AA33) received march 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2607. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's 18th annual report to Congress pursuant to section 201 of the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act of 1976, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 18a(j); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2608. A letter from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting the Office's final rule—Post-Employment Conflict of Interest Restrictions; Exemption of Positions and Revision of Departmental component Designations (RIN: 3209–AA07) received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2609. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Robinson Helicopter Company Model R44 Helicopters (Federal Aviation Administration) [Docket No. 96–SW–15–AD; Amdt. 39–9900; AD 97–02–15] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2610. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Raytheon Aircraft Company (formerly Beech Aircraft Corporation) Model 1900D Airplanes (Federal Aviation Administration) [Docket No. 96–CE–43–AD; Amdt. 39–9907; AD 97–03–01] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2611. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Amendment of Class E Airspace; Battle Mountain, NV (Federal Aviation Administration) [Airspace Docket No. 96–AWP–32] (RIN: 2120–AA66) received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2612. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Aircraft Flight Simulator Use in Pilot Training, Testing, and Checking at Training Centers: Editorial and Other Changes (Federal Aviation Administration) [Docket No. 26933; Amdt. Nos. 61–101, 121–263, 135–67, 142–1] (RIN: 2120–AA83) received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2613. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Drawbridge Operating Regulation; Bonafouca Bayou, LA (U.S. Coast Guard) [CGD8–95–026] (RIN: 2115–AE47) received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2614. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Safety Zone Regulations; Government Cut, Miami, FL (U.S. Coast Guard) [COTP Miami–97–009] (RIN: 2115–AA97) received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2615. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Regulated Navigation Area Regulations; Lower Mississippi River (U.S. Coast Guard) [CGD08–97–008] (RIN: 2115–AE84) received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2616. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Temporary Speed Limits for the St. Mary's River (U.S. Coast Guard) [CGD09–97–005] (RIN: 2115–AE84) received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2617. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Performance-Oriented Packaging Standards; Final Transitional Provisions; Revisions and Response to Petitions for Reconsideration (Research and Special Programs Administration) [Docket No. HM–181H; Amdt. Nos. 172–150, 173–255, 178–117] (RIN: 2137–AC80) received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2618. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Aircraft Engines CT7 Series Turboprop Engines (Federal Aviation Administration) [Docket No. 96–ANE–34; Amdt. 39–9956; AD 97–05–12] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2619. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330 and A340 Series Airplanes (Federal Aviation Administration) [Docket No. 97–NM–22–AD; Amdt. 39–9974; AD 97–07–01] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2620. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A300 Series Airplanes (Federal Aviation Administration) [Docket No. 96–NM–107–AD; Amdt. 39–9975; AD 97–07–02] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2621. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Revision of Class E Airspace; Selawik, AK (Federal Aviation Administration) [Airspace Docket No. 96–AAL–28] (RIN: 2120–AA66) received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2622. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Revision of Class E Airspace; Nuiqsut, AK (Federal Aviation Administration) [Airspace Docket No. 96–AAL–27] (RIN: 2120–AA66) received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2623. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Establishment of Class E Airspace; Kake, AK (Federal Aviation Administration) [Airspace Docket No. 96–AAL–26] (RIN: 2120–AA66) received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2624. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Pilot, Flight Instructor, Ground Instructor, and Pilot School Certification Rules (Federal Aviation Administration) [Docket No. 25910; Amendment Nos. 1–47, 61–102, 141–8, 143–6] (RIN: 2120–AE71) received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2625. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Revision of Class E Airspace; Clinton, OK (Federal Aviation Administration) [Airspace Docket No. 96–ASW–12] received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2626. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Establishment of Class E Airspace; Panhandle, TX (Federal Aviation Administration) [Airspace Docket No. 96–ASW–06] received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2627. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's finel rule—Establishment of Class D Airspace; McKinney, TX (Federal Aviation Administration) [Airspace Docket No. 96–ASW–15] received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2628. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Adding Controlling Agency to Restricted Areas: R–2530 Sierra Army Depot, CA; R–4802 Lone Rock, NV; and R–4811 Hawthorne, NV (Federal Aviation Administration) [Airspace Docket No. 97–AWP–4] (RIN: 2120–AA66) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2629. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Revision of Class E Airspace; Pauls Valley, OK (Federal Aviation Administration) [Airspace Docket No. 96–ASW–09] received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2630. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Revision of Class E Airspace; Russellville, AR (Federal Aviation Administration) [Airspace Docket No. 96–ASW–13] received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2631. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting

the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company CF34 Series Turbofan Engines (Federal Aviation Administration) [Docket No. 95–ANE–41; Amdt. 39–9972; AD 97–06–15] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to Public Law 103–337, section 342(b) (108 Stat. 2721); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2632. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company CF34 Series Turbofan Engines (Federal Aviation Administration) [Docket No. 95–ANE–19; Amdt. 39–9971; AD 97–06–14] (RIN: 2120–AA64) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2633. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (Federal Aviation Administration) [Docket No. 28839; Amdt. No. 1788] (RIN: 2120–AA65) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2634. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (Federal Aviation Administration) [Docket No. 28838; Amdt. No. 1787] (RIN: 2120–AA65) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2635. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Revision of Class E Airspace; Corsicana, TX (Federal Aviation Administration) [Airspace Docket No. 96–ASW–18] received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2636. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Safety Zone Regulations: Pelican Passage Dauphin Island, AL (U.S. Coast Guard) [COTP Mobile, AL 97–005] (RIN: 2115–AA97) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2637. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Tank Level or Pressure Monitoring Devices (U.S. Coast Guard) [CGD–071] (RIN: 2115–AD69) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2638. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Amendment to Regulated Navigation Area Regulations; Lower Mississippi River (U.S. Coast Guard) [CGD08–97–008] (RIN: 2115–AE84) received March 27, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2639. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Technical Amendments to Former Interstate Commerce Commission Regulations in Accordance with the ICC Termination Act of 1995 (Federal Highway Administration) (RIN: 2125–AE12) received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2640. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Design Standards for Highways; Geometric Design of Highways and Streets (Federal Highway Administration) [FHWA Docket No. 95–12] (RIN: 2125–AD38] received March 31, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2641. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Light Truck Average Fuel Economy Standard, Model Year 1999 (Federal Highway Traffic Safety Administration) [Docket No. 97–15; Notice 1] (RIN: 2127–AG64) received April 3, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2642. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Minimum Levels of Financial Responsibility for Motor Carriers; Hours of Service of Drivers; Technical Amendments (Federal Highway Administration) (RIN: 2125–AE07) received April 3, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2643. A letter from the Chairman, Surface Transportation Board, transmitting the Board's final rule—Railroad Consolidation Procedures—Modification of Fee Policy (STB Ex Parte No. 556) received April 2, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2644. A letter from the Senior Vice President, Communications, Tennessee Valley Authority, transmitting a copy of the Authority's statistical summaries as part of their annual report for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 1995, and ending September 30, 1996, pursuant to 16 U.S.C. 831h(a); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2645. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulations Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Upgraded Discharges (RIN: 2900–AI40) received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

2646. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulations Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule—Veterans Education: Increase in Rates Payable Under the Montgomery GI Bill—Active Duty (RIN: 2900–AI55) received March 26, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

2647. A letter from the Chief, U.S. Customs Service Regulations Branch, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule—Duty-Free Stores (U.S. Customs Service) [T.D. 97–19] (RIN: 1515–AB86) received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2648. A letter from the Assistant Commissioner (Examination), Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule—Maquiladora Industry Coordinated Issue [I.R.C. 168(g)(1)(A) received March 21, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2649. A letter from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule—Determination of Issue Price in the Case of Certain Debt Instruments Issued for Property [Rev. Rul. 97–17] received March 21, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2650. A letter from the Assistant Commissioner (Examination), Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule—Coordinated Issue Construction/Real Estate Industry Percentage of Completion Method Timing of Cost Recognition—received March 21, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2651. A letter from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule—Differential Earnings Rate for Mutual Life Insurance Companies [Notice 97–17] received March 24, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2652. A letter from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule—Substantiation of Business Expenses for Travel, Entertainment, Gifts, and Listed Property [TD 8715] (RIN: 1545–AT98) received March 25, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2653. A letter from the Chief, Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule—Certain Trust Arrangements [Notice 97–24] received April 7, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2654. A letter from the Commissioner (Examination), Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule—Petroleum and Retail Industries Coordinated Issue: Convenience Stores—received April 2, 1997, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2655. A letter from the Acting Secretary, Department of State, transmitting a report assessing the voting practices of the governments of U.N. member states in the General Assembly and Security Council for 1996, and evaluating the actions and responsiveness of those governments to U.S. policy on issues of special importance to the United States, pursuant to Public Law 101–167, section 527(a) (103 Stat. 1222); Public Law 101–246, section 406(a) (104 Stat. 66); jointly, to the Committees on International Relations and Appropriations.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

[The following action occurred on March 31, 1997]

Mr. BURTON: Committee on House Oversight. Oversight plans for all House committees (Rept. 105–44). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

[Submitted April 8, 1997]

Mr. SMITH of Oregon: Committee on Agriculture. H.R. 1000. A bill to require States to establish a system to prevent prisoners from being considered part of any household for purposes of determining eligibility of the household for food stamp benefits and the amount of food stamp benefits to be provided to the household under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (Rept. 105–43). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. DREIER: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 107. Resolution providing for consideration of motion to suspend the rules (Rept. 105–45). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. BLILEY: Committee on Commerce. H.R. 1003. A bill to clarify Federal law with respect to restricting the use of Federal funds in support of assisted suicide; with amendments (Rept. 105–46 Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

[The following action occurred on April 4, 1997]

Pursuant to clause 5 of rule X the Committees on House Oversight, the Judiciary, and Transportation and Infrastructure discharged from further consideration. H.R. 3121 referred to the

Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

[Submitted April 8, 1997]

Pursuant to clause 5 of rule X the Committees on Ways and Means, the Judiciary, Education and the Workforce, Government Reform and Oversight, Resources, and International Relations discharged from further consideration. H.R. 1003 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

TIME LIMITATION OF REFERRED BILL

Pursuant to clause 5 of rule X the following action was taken by the speaker:

H.R. 1003. Referral to the Committees on Ways and Means, the Judiciary, Education and the Workforce, Government Reform and Oversight, Resources, and International Relations extended for a period ending not later than April 8, 1997.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 5 of rule X and clause 4 of rule XXII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred as follows:

By Mr. HYDE (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. MCCOLLUM, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. MICA, and Mr. MCNULTY):

H.R. 1225. A bill to make a technical correction to title 28, United States Code, relating to jurisdiction for lawsuits against terrorist states; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ARCHER (for himself, Ms. DUNN of Washington, Mr. RANGEL, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. COYNE, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. HERGER, Mr. CAMP, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. WELLER, Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KLECZKA, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. TANNER, Mrs. THURMAN, and Mr. PORTMAN):

H.R. 1226. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent the unauthorized inspection of tax returns or tax return information; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. DUNN of Washington (for herself, Mr. GINGRICH, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. SAM JOHNSON, Mr. SNOWBARGER, Mr. METCALF, Mr. GIBBONS, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey, Mr. GUTKNECHT, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. HERGER, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. BARR of Georgia, Mr. PAUL, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mr. CAMP, Mr. COOK, and Mr. WELLER):

H.R. 1227. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for increased accountability by Internal Revenue Service agents and other Federal Government officials in tax collection practices and procedures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ACKERMAN (for himself, Mrs. MORELLA, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, Mr. BOEHLERT, Mr. BROWN of California, Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN, Mr. EVANS, Mr. FARR of California, Mr. FOGLIETTA, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Ms. FURSE, Ms. JACKSON-LEE, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MANTON, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. NADLER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PORTER, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ROMERO-BARCELO, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. STARK, Mr. UNDERWOOD, Mr. YATES, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. ROTHMAN):

H.R. 1228. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to permanently prohibit the possession of firearms by persons who have been convicted of a felony, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ACKERMAN:

H.R. 1229. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to ensure that affordable, comprehensive, high quality health care coverage is available through the establishment of State-based programs for children and for all uninsured pregnant women, and to facilitate access to health services, strengthen public health functions, enhance health-related research, and support other activities that improve the health of mothers and children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, the Judiciary, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DELAY:

H.R. 1230. A bill to give all American electricity consumers the right to choose among competitive providers of electricity in order to secure lower electricity rates, higher quality services, and a more robust U.S. economy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself, Mr. FROST, and Mr. FOGLIETTA):

H.R. 1231. A bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to establish guidelines for renovation, relocation, closing, or consolidation of post offices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

By Mr. BONO (for himself, Mr. TRAFICANT, Mrs. THURMAN, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. NEY, Mr. RIGGS, Mr. MICA, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. HUNTER, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. GOSS, Mr. CONDIT, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. BARR of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP, and Ms. KAPTUR):

H.R. 1232. A bill to require country of origin labeling of perishable agricultural commodities imported into the United States and to establish penalties for violations of such labeling requirements; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. CLAY (for himself and Mr. RANGEL):

H.R. 1233. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax relief to middle income families who are struggling to pay for college, to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide significantly increased financial aid for needy students, provide universal access to post-secondary education, reduce student loan costs while improving student loan benefits, to streamline the Federal Family Education Loan Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FATTAH:

H.R. 1234. A bill to require States to equalize funding for education throughout the State; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. DICKEY:

H.R. 1235. A bill to establish a Corporate Welfare Reduction Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DREIER:

H.R. 1236. A bill to provide for an annual report to Congress concerning diplomatic immunity; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 1237. A bill to provide retrospective application of an amendment made by the Violent Crime Control and Law enforcement Act of 1994 pertaining to the applicability of mandatory minimum penalties in certain cases; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 1238. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to reduce the period during which a court has exclusive authority to administer the oath of allegiance to an applicant for naturalization from 45 days to 5 days; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 1239. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to permit the Attorney General to waive the requirement that an applicant for naturalization take an oath of renunciation and allegiance in cases where the applicant is unable to understand its meaning because of a disability or mental impairment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GEKAS (for himself and Mr. GILMAN):

H.R. 1240. A bill to amend certain provisions of title 5, United States Code, relating to pay for administrative law judges; to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight.

By Mr. KLECZKA (for himself, Mr. HERGER, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. FAZIO of California, Ms. JACKSON-LEE, Mr. FROST, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. FILNER, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Ms. FURSE, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. MATSUI, Mr. NEY, and Mr. CUNNINGHAM):

H.R. 1241. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 with respect to the eligibility of veterans for mortgage revenue bond financing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LIVINGSTON:

H.R. 1242. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that certain deductions of school bus owner-operators shall be allowable in computing adjusted gross income; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCCOLLUM (for himself, Mr. MICA, and Ms. BROWN of Florida):

H.R. 1243. A bill to amend the base closure laws to reform the process by which property at military installations being closed or realigned is made available for economic redevelopment and to improve the ability of the Secretary of Defense to contract for protective services at installations being closed; to the Committee on National Security.

By Mr. MEEHAN (for himself, Mr. HANSEN, Mr. RIGGS, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. VISCLOSKY):

H.R. 1244. A bill to prescribe labels for packages and advertising for tobacco products, to provide for the disclosure of certain information relating to tobacco products, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce.

By Mrs. MINK of Hawaii:

H.R. 1245. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to research on cognitive disorders arising from traumatic brain injury; to the Committee on Commerce.

H.R. 1246. A bill to prescribe alternative payment mechanisms for the payment of annual enrollment fees for the TRICARE program of the military health care system; to the Committee on National Security.

By Mrs. MYRICK (for herself, Ms. DUNN of Washington, Mr. MCINTOSH, Mr. GINGRICH, Mr. HASTERT, Mr. STUMP, Mr. SAM JOHNSON, Mr. LIVINGSTON, Mr. BLILEY, Ms. MOLINARI, Mr. SOLOMON, Mr. ARMEY, Mr. PAXON, Mr. COX of California, Mr. LINDER, and Mr. DELAY):

H.R. 1247. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of the Trreasury from changing the treatment of partnership distributions to limited partners; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. NEY (for himself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HOSTETTLER, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. DICKEY, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. ROEMER, Mr. WISE, Mr. SOLOMON, Mr. THOMPSON, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska, Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina, and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 1248. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to permit classification of certain hospitals as rural referral centers, to permit reclassification of certain hospitals for disproportionate share payments, and to permit sole community hospitals to rebase Medicare payments based upon fiscal year 1994 and 1995 costs; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PEASE:

H.R. 1249. A bill to redesignate the Federal building located at 107 Federal Building, in Terre Haute, IN, as the ''John T. Myers Federal Building''; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York):

H.R. 1250. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to regulate the manufacture, importation, and sale of ammunition capable of piercing police body armor; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SHAW (for himself, Mr. BOYD, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Mr. DEUTSCH, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. GOSS, Mr. FOLEY, Mr. MCCOLLUM, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. SCARBOROUGH, Mr. STEARNS, Mrs. THURMAN, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, and Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma):

H.R. 1251. A bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for salaries and expenses of the National Weather Service, including the National Centers for Environmental Prediction, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. MURTHA:

H.J. Res. 68. Joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to school prayer; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CONYERS:

H. Con. Res. 57. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress respecting the designation of jazz as a rare and valuable national treasure; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. BROWN of California:

H. Con. Res. 58. Concurrent resolution establishing the congressional budget for the U.S. Government for fiscal year 1998 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002; to the Committee on the Budget.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 4 of rule XXII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

28. By the SPEAKER: Memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Idaho, relative to improving patient access to quality health care; to the Committee on Commerce.

29. Also, memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Idaho, relative to the implementation of the new national ambient air quality PM2.5 and ozone standards; to the Committee on Commerce.

30. Also, memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Idaho, relative to the Bitterroot Grizzly Bear Environmental Impact Statement; to the Committee on Resources.

31. Also, memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Idaho, relative to the Snake River in the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area; to the Committee on Resources.

32. Also, memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Idaho, relative to proposed regulations governing Bureau of Land Management criminal law enforcement; to the Committee on Resources.

33. Also, memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Idaho, relative to the introduction of Canadian wolves in the State of Idaho; to the Committee on Resources.

34. Also, memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Idaho, relative to a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 4 of rule XXII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 18: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. BACHUS, and Mr. SOLOMON.

H.R. 27: Mr. PAPPAS, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. ENSIGN, and Mr. SANDLIN.

H.R. 34: Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska.

H.R. 44: Mrs. KELLY, Mr. TRAFICANT, and Mr. CUNNINGHAM.

H.R. 65: Mr. BRYANT, Mr. TRAFICANT, Mrs. ROUKEMA, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, and Mr. CAPPS.

H.R. 71: Mr. SKEEN and Mr. WOLF.

H.R. 76: Mr. MASCARA, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. MCCOLLUM, Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, Mr. SANDLIN, Mr. BALDACCI, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. MATSUI, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. HANSEN, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. ADAM SMITH of Washington, and Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma.

H.R. 93: Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma.

H.R. 96: Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. MICA, Mr. COOKSEY, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. CLEMENT, Mr. WALSH, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. FROST, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. BENTSEN, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. BARR of Georgia, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. BOEHLERT.

H.R. 107: Mr. GORDON, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. COMBEST, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. MARTINEZ.

H.R. 108: Ms. FURSE.

H.R. 123: Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania, and Mr. LATOURETTE.

H.R. 125: Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska, Mr. HASTERT, Mr. EWING, Mr. WELLER, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mr. FAWELL.

H.R. 127: Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania, Mr. WOLF, Mr. BOEHLERT, Mr. ACKERMAN, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. QUINN.

H.R. 130: Mr. SOLOMON.

H.R. 136: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. DAVIS of Florida, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 164: Mr. GRAHAM, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MILLER of California, Mr. QUINN, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mrs. CARSON, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. GEJDENSON, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. TRAFICANT, Mr. BONIOR, Mr. FAZIO of California, Mr. YATES, Mr. EVANS, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. JACKSON-LEE, Mr. OBERSTAR, Ms. SANCHEZ, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. DELLUMS, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania, Mr. GORDON, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. MATSUI, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. COYNE, and Mr. MCINTOSH.

H.R. 165: Mr. NORWOOD.

H.R. 178: Mr. ROTHMAN.

H.R. 180: Mr. DAVIS of Florida, Mr. BOYD, and Mr. MICA.

H.R. 192: Ms. GRANGER, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. COLLINS, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. LINDER, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. HANSEN, Ms. MOLINARI, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. CAPPS, and Mr. GORDON.

H.R. 195: Mr. BLILEY, Mr. LAFALCE, Mr. MCHUGH, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. MCCRERY, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. BATEMAN, Mr. CASTLE, Mr. MATSUI, Mr. KLUG, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. GEKAS, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. MCINNIS, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. JEFFERSON, and Mr. WELLER.

H.R. 202: Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 216: Mr. DELLUMS, Mr. WATT of North Carolina, and Mr. MARTINEZ,

H.R. 218: Mr. BONILLA, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. GOODE, Ms. DANNER, Mr. LINDER, Mr. QUINN, and Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma.

H.R. 222: Mr. BONO, Mr. MICA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. SHAW, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. HOLDEN.

H.R. 225: Mr. CANADY of Florida and Mr. FARR of California.

H.R. 228: Mr. DEAL of Georgia and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 230: Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. PICKETT, and Mr. FROST.

H.R. 279: Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. MCINTYRE, and Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 292: Mr. HUTCHINSON and Mr. MCKEON.

H.R. 297: Mr. BOUCHER.

H.R. 301: Mr. BOUCHER.

H.R. 303: Mr. TRAFICANT, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. DICKEY, Mr. ANDREWS, and Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland.

H.R. 304: Mr. DELLUMS.

H.R. 306: Mr. LOBIONDO, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, and Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts.

H.R. 335: Mr. GORDON, Mr. SAXTON, and Mr. HALL of Texas.

H.R. 339: Mr. NEY and Mr. HILLIARD.

H.R. 367: Mr. HASTERT and Mr. BACHUS.

H.R. 383: Mr. SKEEN and Mr. HORN.

H.R. 407: Mr. BILBRAY, Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut, and Mr. WEXLER..

H.R. 408: Mr. DINGELL, Mr. EHRLICH, and Mr. FOLEY.

H.R. 414: Ms. GRANGER, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. COLLINS, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. PAXON, Ms. DANNER, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. HANSEN, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. LINDER, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. CAPPS, and Mr. GORDON.

H.R. 418: Mr. WYNN, Mr. HORN, and Mr. KIND of Wisconsin.

H.R. 426: Mr. GOODE, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. BARCIA of Michigan, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina, and Mrs. NORTHUP.

H.R. 437: Mr. CALLAHAN, Mr. BALDACCI, Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina, Mr. EVANS, Mr. FILNER, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. BROWN of California, Mr. OBERSTAR, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 446: Mr. CLEMENT, Mr. SOLOMON, and Mr. PITTS.

H.R. 475: Ms. RIVERS, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 491: Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. HORN, Mr. METCALF, Mr. DELLUMS, Mr. GUTIERREZ, and Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska.

H.R. 493: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. DELLUMS.

H.R. 500: Mr. MANTON and Mr. ROTHMAN.

H.R. 501: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois and Mr. DELLUMS.

H.R. 505: Mr. BENTSEN and Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 521: Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. SABO, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, and Mr. HEFNER.

H.R. 533: Mr. CLYBURN.

H.R. 536: Mr. FLAKE and Mr. MARTINEZ.

H.R. 563: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. DELLUMS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. BEREUTER.

H.R. 564: Mr. PAUL.

H.R. 570: Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.

H.R. 574: Mr. CLYBURN.

H.R. 577: Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 586: Mr. ALLEN, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. RILEY, Mr. ROEMER, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. SHAW, Mr. STRICKLAND, Mr. VISCLOSKY, and Mr. WYNN.

H.R. 587: Mr. SENSENBRENNER and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 603: Mr. ROTHMAN and Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 604: Mr. SMITH of Texas and Mr. FAZIO of California.

H.R. 630: Mrs. TAUSCHER.

H.R. 635: Mr. MARTINEZ.

H.R. 659: Ms. DANNER, Mr. HEFNER, Mr. STENHOLM, Mr. PASTOR, and Mr. SOUDER.

H.R. 664: Mr. DELLUMS.

H.R. 667: Ms. MOLINARI, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. FARR of California, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. MARTINEZ.

H.R. 674: Mr. LIVINGSTON, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. BOYD.

H.R. 676: Mr. MANTON, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. VENTO, Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania, and Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 680: Mr. HILLIARD.

H.R. 683: Mrs. FOWLER, Mr. JONES, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. TIAHRT, and Mr. WEXLER.

H.R. 684: Mr. FILNER.

H.R. 687: Mr. GUTIERREZ and Mr. DELAHUNT.

H.R. 688: Mr. COMBEST, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. STENHOLM, and Mr. WICKER.

H.R. 689: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina and Mr. FROST.

H.R. 714: Mr. SHUSTER.

H.R. 739: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennyslvania.

H.R. 753: Mr. PAUL, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. WATERS, Ms. DEGETTE, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. FAZIO of California, and Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 766: Ms. STABENOW and Mr. DELLUMS.

H.R. 777: Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. FROST, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. FURSE, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. VENTO, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. FILNER, Ms. NORTON, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. FORD, Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. SANCHEZ, Mr. SCOTT, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. ANDREWS, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. EVANS, Mr. BONIOR, Mr. STARK, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. OWENS, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. ROMERO-BARCELO, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. MILLER of California, Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. DEGETTE, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, and Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 789: Mr. SNOWBARGER, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. NEY, Mr. NEUMANN, and Mr. BALLENGER.

H.R. 793: Mr. DELLUMS and Mr. LIPINSKI.

H.R. 802: Mr. DEAL of Georgia.

H.R. 805: Mr. CAMPBELL.

H.R. 813: Mr. DUNCAN.

H.R. 815: Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. THOMPSON, Mr. WYNN, Mr. MILLER of California, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. HORN, Mr. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. KIND of Wisconsin, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. MATSUI, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. HEFNER, Mr. HOBSON, and Ms. FURSE.

H.R. 816: Mr. STUMP, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Mr. COOKSEY, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, and Mr. NETHERCUTT.

H.R. 831: Mr. CAMPBELL.

H.R. 832: Mr. ACKERMAN.

H.R. 875: Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. MCDADE, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. PICKETT, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. MCCRERY, and Mr. DEAL of Georgia.

H.R. 895: Ms. FURSE.

H.R. 897: Mr. NEY and Ms. FURSE.

H.R. 906: Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. GOODE, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON.

H.R. 907: Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 916: Mr. MCCRERY, Mr. BUNNING of Kentucky, Mr. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. WATKINS, Mrs. THURMAN, Mr. KLUG, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. STUMP, Mr. OXLEY, Mr. VENTO, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. FILNER, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. SMITH of Michigan, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. CANADY of Florida, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. HALL of Ohio, Mr. WISE, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. MCHALE, Mr. SPENCE, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. FROST, Mr. BENTSEN, Mr. KUCINICH, and Mr. BOEHNER.

H.R. 918: Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 928: Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Mr. SAM JOHNSON, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. LIVINGSTON, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. MCINTOSH, Mr. SKEEN, Mr. KNOLLENBERG, and Mr. COLLINS.

H.R. 934: Mr. NEY, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. HALL of Texas.

H.R. 947: Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 949: Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. STARK, Ms. NORTON, Mr. VENTO, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. FURSE, Mr. THOMPSON, and Mr. DAVIS of Virginia.

H.R. 955: Mr. SAXTON, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. SHAYS, and Mr. CHABOT.

H.R. 956: Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. MICA, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. OXLEY, Mr. NETHERCUTT, Mr. DAVIS of Virginia, and Mr. BOEHNER.

H.R. 965: Mr. SNOWBARGER, Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina, Mr. HEFLEY, Mr. SPENCE, and Mr. SHADEGG.

H.R. 972: Mr. NEUMANN.

H.R. 979: Mr. ALLEN, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. CALLAHAN, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. CONDIT, Mr. FAZIO of California, Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania, Mr. WELLER, Mr. HORN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BERMAN, and Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.

H.R. 980: Mr. LEWIS of California, Mr. SKEEN, Mr. SOLOMON, and Mr. SPENCE.

H.R. 981: Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, and Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.

H.R. 983: Mr. MILLER of California.

H.R. 991: Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1000: Mr. BERRY, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. SMITH of Michigan, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Ms. DANNER, and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 1009: Mr. DICKS, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. HILL, and Mr. STUMP.

H.R. 1010: Mr. STEARNS, Mr. MCINTOSH, Mr. BALLENGER, and Mr. GOODE.

H.R. 1014: Mr. EVANS, Ms. FURSE, Mr. DELLUMS, Mr. SANDERS, and Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 1016: Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 1023: Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. TRAFICANT, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. DIXON, Mr. RAMSTAD, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. HOEKSTRA, and Mr. GIBBONS.

H.R. 1041: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. FORD, and Mr. STRICKLAND.

H.R. 1049: Mr. DELLUMS.

H.R. 1050: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. JACKSON, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. WATT of North Carolina, and Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 1060: Mr. ARCHER, Mr. CLEMENT, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. HORN, Mr. GOODE, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. BUNNING of Kentucky, Mr. LAFALCE, Mr. SPENCE, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. BALDACCI, and Mr. PALLONE.

H.R. 1071: Mr. CONYERS, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. FILNER, Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. DELLUMS, Mr. FROST, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, and Mrs. MEEK of Florida.

H.R. 1089: Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 1090: Mr. LUTHER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, Ms. WATERS, and Mr. WEXLER.

H.R. 1126: Mr. KILDEE, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1129: Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Mr. WATT of North Carolina, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. METCALF, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. PORTER, Ms. DEGETTE, Mrs. CARSON, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Ms. NORTON, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. KUCINICH, and Mr. CAPPS.

H.R. 1130: Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mrs. THURMAN, Mr. DELLUMS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. FOGLIETTA, Mr. RUSH, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. FAZIO of California, Mr. MARTINEZ, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. CAPPS, Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN, and Mr. HILLIARD.

H.R. 1134: Mr. TRAFICANT, Mr. DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. OLVER, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mr. LIVINGSTON, Mr. DELLUMS, Mr. FATTAH, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. GEPHARDT, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. HINCHEY.

H.R. 1138: Ms. DANNER, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. HANSEN, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. NEY, Mr. STUMP, and Mr. DUNCAN.

H.R. 1140: Mr. GREEN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, and Ms. WOOLSEY.

H.R. 1151: Mr. KILDEE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. BARCIA of Michigan, Mr. KLINK, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. WALSH, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. FILNER, Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. GEJDENSON, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. DIXON, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. THOMPSON.

H.R. 1153: Mr. HOUGHTON, Mr. SKEEN, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, and Mr. HAYWORTH.

H.R. 1156: Mr. PALLONE and Mr. MANZULLO.

H.R. 1161: Mr. FROST, Mr. WOLF, Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. BILBRAY, and Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina.

H.R. 1169: Mrs. MYRICK, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. TRAFICANT, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SAWYER, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. MARTINEZ.

H.R. 1204: Mr. FILNER and Mr. GALLEGLY.

H.R. 1205: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania and Mr. MCKEON.

H.J. Res. 47: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.J. Res. 54: Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. GOODLING, Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. HOBSON, Mr. PEASE, and Mr. SHAW.

H.J. Res. 59: Mr. PAUL and Mr. CHAMBLISS.

H. Con. Res. 6: Ms. KAPTUR.

H. Con. Res. 8: Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DICKS, Mr. DELLUMS, and Mr. MANTON.

H. Con. Res. 14: Mr. WEXLER.

H. Con. Res. 27: Mr. FORD, Ms. RIVERS, Mr. WATT of North Carolina, Mr. CLAY, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. QUINN, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, Mr. MASCARA, and Mr. FLAKE.

H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut, Mr. UNDERWOOD, Mr. FILNER, Mr. DELLUMS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. OLVER, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H. Con. Res. 43: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. WELLER.

H. Con. Res. 50: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. FRANKS of New

Jersey, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. MANTON, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. WEXLER, Ms. DUNN of Washington, and Mrs. MORELLA.

H. Con. Res. 55: Mr. FOLEY, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. CUNNINGHAM.

H. Res. 26: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. BROWN of California, Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. WATT of North Carolina, Ms. NORTON, Ms. RIVERS, Mr. GREEN, and Mr. BONIOR.

H. Res. 98: Mr. ADERHOLT and Mr. SESSIONS.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 1 of rule XXII.

9. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Republican Party of San Mateo County, CA, relative to the American Land Sovereignty Protection Act; which was referred to the Committee on Resources.