

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 AUTHORIZED.—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.