the balanced budget bill; to have another contributor who was an individual family contributor who contributed about $1 million in the spring of this year, and then come along in month 7, and they got a pretty good tax break buried in that balanced budget bill, also.

□ 1930

That is the way this system has worked, and that is what is wrong with the system. Too much time is focused on fund-raising and not enough time on good public policy. We can change that by bringing campaign finance system reform to this floor for full and open debate.

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

[Mr. NORWOOD 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 New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

CITIZENSHIP REFORM ACT OF 1997

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

Mr. BILBRAY. Madam Speaker, let me first say, as one of the original cosponsors of the bipartisan campaign finance legislation, I would ask those of us on both sides of the aisle who truly want to see this body finally address that issue to go to our colleagues and ask them to quit the dilatory procedures in asking for adjournment after adjournment so we can get through the budgetary process, not have to have a CR, not have to be threatened with the close-down of the Government. And then we can address the issue that we all want to take a look at, especially those of us who cosponsored the bipartisan campaign finance reform.

That set aside, I am here to specifically address an issue of fairness and an issue of common sense. It is the bill that is called H.R. 7. It is the Citizenship Reform Act of 1997. It amends the Naturalization Act to stop giving automatic citizenship to the children of illegal aliens and tourists. It is basically there because those of us who have worked in local government and had to address this issue in local communities realize that it is a much bigger issue than what most people say.

I served as a county supervisor in a county in California. We came to the conclusion that Washington has to quit giving incentives to people to break our immigration laws. Madam Speaker, in California, in fact in Los Angeles County alone, there are over 250,000 citizen children of illegal aliens who qualify for such benefits as Medicare, AFDC, WIC, SSI. And, de facto, their parents get that money rewarded to them for breaking the law and having a child here. We are talking about two-thirds of the births in the largest populated county in the United States, Los Angeles County, and those public hospitals, are children of illegal aliens. We are talking about a cost in California alone to the State of California of over $500 million annually in providing health care services to the children of illegal aliens.

Now, some people may say that 40 percent of all births paid by Medicare in California going to illegal aliens is not that big a deal because it is California. But, Madam Speaker, all of the United States pays for this and all the people of the United States bear the responsibility of sending the wrong message, and that is, we will reward people for breaking our laws and punish those who wait patiently.

This loophole needs to be closed. It is not the responsibility of an illegal alien to close this loophole. It is not their fault that Washington has invited people in to get paid for breaking the law. The fact is, this loophole falls on our shoulders. It is not the mother of illegal aliens that should be blamed. It is Washington and our lack of commitment to fairness and common sense.

In Texas alone, there were fraudulent birth certificates sold to foreigners just so they can gain access to these public benefits. In fact, in one county in Texas, over 3,800 phony birth certificates were sold to the mothers so their children could get this automatic citizenship. Eighty-nine people today are being indicted, and over $400,000 worth of welfare fraud has been identified.

Now, granting automatic citizenship to the illegal aliens in this country is one of those terrible bait and switches that we say, come on in, break our laws, and we will reward you. We are talking fairness here, because there are thousands of would-be immigrants who are waiting patiently to immigrate into this country who do not get these benefits because their children were born while they were waiting.

The other issue is, what is really the difference between an illegal immigrant who comes in with a child who is 1 year old in their arms? Do they not have as much need for service as somebody who came across and gave birth right after getting on U.S. soil? It is totally absurd, and we have got to talk about the fairness.

Madam Speaker, there are those who will say that it is unconstitutional not to give everyone on U.S. soil automatic U.S. citizenship. I remind you, the children of diplomats do not get automatic citizenship and the children of certain tribes did not get automatic citizenship until 1924. The 14th amendment has never been clarified by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has never ruled on the right of illegal alien children to get automatic citizenship.

I think it is the obligation of Congress, under the fifth section of the 14th amendment, to raise this issue, bring it forth, and let the chips fall where they might. Why are people so scared of fairness? Why are they so scared of taking care of this?

Madam Speaker, I close with the fact that we have 51 bipartisan cosponsors. A hearing was held on June 25. We are looking forward to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. SMITH] chairman of the Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims, setting a date in October. I encourage everyone to join with us, call your Congressman, let us address this issue fairly and up front.

DEMOCRAT RECORD ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

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

Mr. FARR of California. Madam Speaker, I rise to continue the discussion on campaign finance reform. As you have heard earlier, there is a big effort here in the House to come up with a meaningful package.

I would like to remind everyone that this is not the first time that we have debated this issue. In fact, in the last Congress, in the 104th, which is the Congress that was elected in 1994, a bill came to the floor, a bill that I authored so I am very familiar with it, that was a repetition of the bills that had been here before that had been passed out of this House when Democrats were in control. And I think that the approach that we need to be reminded of, in this era when everybody wants some campaign reform, they will take the cream off the top and try to do something immediately, trying to do an easy fix. We do not even seem to be able to do the easy fix.

We were shown the now historical handshake where the President and the Speaker of this House agreed that it would be campaign finance reform done in the last session. It has not been done. It was supposed to be done in this session. We have not even had a committee hearing or a scheduled vote.

I want to remind people that the bill that has always gotten the most votes in this House, and that in the 103d and the 102d and the 101st sessions of Congress got off of the floor of this House only to be filibustered by Republicans in the Senate or vetoed by President Bush, was a campaign finance reform bill that was comprehensive that did set campaign spending limits.

My colleagues, we are not going to have a meaningful campaign reform bill until we can limit how much candidates can do. We know from case law and the Supreme Court decision that we cannot, as a Congress, limit free speech, but we also know that we can set up a process where one can volunteer to set the limits for themselves in