

SHOWCASING OUR STATE OF
SOUTH DAKOTA

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, when I came here to Washington, it was for the purpose of trying to bring some common sense to this institution and to this city. I believe that it is infinitely better for my children and for the children of this country and our grandchildren if we can have a Federal Government that is more efficient, that is more responsive, that is smaller, and if we can restore discussion and debate about values to our culture.

Somehow we have gotten to a point in this country where we can accept the fact that if we are willing to write a check to the IRS, it removes us from the responsibility that we have to be good citizens, to work in our communities and our churches, to be good strong family leaders. That is a trend that I believe we need to change and something that we are making progress on. Significant progress.

Progress on issues like welfare reform; the first balanced budget for some 30 years; the first tax cuts in 16 years, since 1981; Medicare reform; important reforms in the area of education that address values that we share, values like parental choice, like trying to give the taxpayers the best value for their dollar and provide the very highest quality education that we can for our young people.

Mr. Speaker, this weekend I had the opportunity to go back to my home State of South Dakota and to hunt pheasants on a beautiful, crisp, clear day. I should not say it was entirely clear; it was crisp. We were out in the fall of our State and enjoying something that has become a ritual and tradition in South Dakota, and something where government has worked together in a constructive way with landowners, with conservationists, with sportsmen's groups, with our State government, local government, farmers, ranchers to do something that has been very, very important to the economy of our State of South Dakota.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen growth in that industry that has nearly doubled the revenues that are generated in our State; some \$70 million a year from the process of pheasant hunting in South Dakota. And \$70 million in South Dakota is a lot of money. I think that stands as a model of the way we can work together to address some of these issues on areas where we have common conflicts.

Sometimes we get crosswise between environmental groups and between landowners in certainly our State of South Dakota, but it was a great experience and we had a wonderful time and we had an opportunity to showcase our State.

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We have a number of other important challenges ahead of us, if we are going

to complete the task of trying to make government simpler and less complicated for the people of this country.

I had an opportunity to visit with someone in my State who is a small business person whose business was just acquired by another business. I was listening to, as a condition of the sale, I was listening to the discussions that he held that they had to do an environmental analysis. In this environmental analysis they found that the air conditioner that was sitting outside the building was dripping onto the ground and they decided that that was causing distress to vegetation. So what was the solution?

Because it was dripping onto the ground in one spot, they decided to take a 12-inch-by-12-inch concrete slab, 2 inches thick, and to place it on the ground there. And somehow that was the solution that there would be less distressed vegetation with a 12-by-12 concrete slab than there would be with the drip drip that was a pinpoint drip from the air conditioner. I thought to myself, that is a perfect example of a regulation that certainly goes beyond the pail in terms of any rationale or common sense that might be there.

One of the areas that we are going to talk about in the next few weeks and something that I think is long overdue is a discussion of how we can reform the IRS, restructure it and generate a long-term discussion about how we make our Tax Code simpler, less complicated and fairer and hopefully eliminate the enormous amount of time and energy and resources that are spent each year by the people of this country in trying to comply with a Tax Code that clearly has gotten out of control.

Just as an example, we have 480 tax forms in this country. The form EZ, which is the simple form, that has some 31 pages, 7½ million words in our Tax Code. In fact, the estimates have been, the Kemp Commission found that we spent over 5 billion man-hours a year doing nothing but filling out tax returns, some 3 million people in the process of filling out returns which, interestingly enough, is more people than we have in our entire armed services, which means one thing, that is, we spend more time, energy and resources and dollars defending ourselves from our own Tax Code than we do from foreign enemies.

I think that is ironic. I think it speaks volumes for the need for change in this country. I think that one of the reasons we have this complicated Tax Code is that command and control here in Washington, DC; there is so much internal resistance to change in this city.

I was reading recently, as well, that in 1964 there were some 16,000 lobbyists in Washington. Today there are 64,000. The proliferation of lobbyists, in my view, I believe supports the fact that we have a complicated government and a complex Tax Code and most lobbyists spend their time trying to figure out loopholes and exemptions from our current Tax Code.

So it is high time we engage in this debate. It is happening around the country. It is happening in a way which I think hopefully will give us some solutions that come from the ground up, where the people of this country engage in this issue and say, this is what we want to do. I am proud to be a part of that debate. I look forward to having some discussions of that in my home State of South Dakota.

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

[Mr. KUCINICH 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 gentlewoman from Washington [Mrs. LINDA SMITH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. CLAYTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

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

[Mr. KINGSTON 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 Puerto Rico [Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ 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.]

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

[Mr. McNULTY 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 Michigan [Mr. SMITH] is recognized for 5 minutes.