

SUPPORT H.R. 2625, RENAMING WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, in American history, extraordinary times seem to call forth extraordinary individuals, great leaders who have given inspiration and hope during difficult times and moments of crisis.

FDR led this country through a terrible Depression and an even more terrible world war. JFK inspired a Nation during the height of the Cold War and led America into space, a journey which culminated in putting a man on the moon in 1969. And Ronald Reagan challenged the conventional wisdom, both at home and abroad, rejecting the failed economic policies of the past and embracing a foreign policy based on strengths and a resolute belief in the rightness of American democratic values.

Grateful Americans have a proud national tradition of honoring their heroes, and grateful Americans from across the country have urged Congress to honor that great American hero Ronald Reagan.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 2625, a bill to redesignate Washington National Airport as Ronald Reagan National Airport. It is time to honor those who have done so much to make America great.

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EDUCATION INITIATIVES

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, welcome back. I would like to talk today about education. Tonight in the State of the Union the President is poised to talk about investing in education for the 21st century. I think he is right.

Today, almost 60 percent of American citizens believe that the Federal Government is not investing enough in public education. Some would have us believe that the Federal Government is trying to take over education. That is not true.

The facts are these: About one-third of the Nation's schools need extensive repairs. According to the GAO, 46 percent of our schools lack electrical wiring necessary for computers and telecommunications technology. Fifty-five percent of our schools lack phone lines for modems necessary to connect to the Internet. If we are to truly move into the 21st century, we need to invest in education, and I think the President is on the right track.

He is also calling for investment in 100,000 new teachers. I think that is correct also. Right now in this country we have over 69,000 provisional uncertified teachers working in our schools. We have crowded classrooms.

Let us hire more teachers, improve our classrooms, let us improve in education.

HARDWORKING AMERICANS ARE BALANCING THE BUDGET

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

Mr. NEUMANN. Mr. Speaker, it has started already. We are back here less than 6 hours and I am already hearing the demagoguing begin: The Democrats have balanced the budget. The American people know better, and I am going to shock my Republican colleagues right now. It is not the Democrats that have balanced the budget or the Republicans that have balanced the budget; it is hardworking American citizens that have taken the investment opportunities, invested their money and saved, gone to work every day and worked hard. That is what has kept our economy strong and it is because the economy is strong that we are reaching a balanced budget.

I do think it is important to state, though, for the first time since 1969-1970, for the 12 months running between December 1, 1996 and November 30, 1997, for the first time in nearly 30 years, the United States Government did not spend more than they had in their checkbook.

Where the credit goes is somewhat irrelevant. What is important is for the first time in 30 years, we are doing the right thing for the future of this great Nation that we live in.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS WILL BOAST BOLD INITIATIVES

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the feeding frenzy and the rush to judgment that we have heard in the media during the past week involving the President is something I think that really is shameful. The media is saying that no Democrats are sticking with the President. This is one Democratic Congressman who is proud to stick with the President of the United States. He has been a good President. He has had many initiatives, and I want to listen to some of those initiatives tonight.

When he talks about expanding Medicare, I am with him. When he talks about expanding child care, I am with him. When he talks about using the surplus to shore up Social Security, I am with him. When he talks about 100,000 new teachers, I am with him.

There are safeguards in this country, there are constitutional protections. One of them is one is innocent until proven guilty. The President of the United States deserves those same kinds of protections that you and I would want for ourselves.

The Bible says, let he who is without sin cast the first stone. I think we

ought to remember that. Bill Clinton is my friend, my President. He has been a good President. I stand by him. Let us not rush to judgment. I am going to be listening to him tonight and I know he is going to have a brilliant State of the Union with bold initiatives that are good for this country.

IT IS TIME TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, our economy is the strongest that it has been in several decades. Wall Street is having one of the best years ever. The New York Times reported recently that more than 1,000 people on Wall Street got bonuses over \$1 million. So it is time for working families to share in this great prosperity.

That is why Senator KENNEDY and I today are introducing legislations in the respective bodies of raising the minimum wage to \$6.65 an hour to help restore some of the buying power of the minimum wage earners that have been lost over the last 30 years. Raising the minimum wage will help 12 million workers in this country, many of them, 66 percent, adults, and many of those mothers with children. A mother with 2 children earns \$10,700 a year. She chose work over welfare and yet she is \$2,600 below the poverty line. That is a disgrace. We need to get on and raise the minimum wage. It is indeed about creating opportunity, it is about rewarding work, about fairness, about dignity. Let us raise the minimum wage.

INITIATIVES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

(Ms. KILPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, today we mark the first day of the second year of our 105th Congress.

I stand here today to support the President and our Democratic Caucus and legislature as we continue our program of investing in American citizens, increasing and investing in education. I hope we will hear tonight that the President is soundly behind legislation and dollars that will make all American schools modern and bring them up to the 21st century: Smaller class sizes, as well as investing in our inner cities, expanding community investment banks in the inner cities, expanding affordable housing, expanding and protecting the environment.

We have been a strong caucus here in the Democratic Caucus in this 105th Congress. I have pledged to work with my colleagues tirelessly to protect Social Security, to protect quality education, and to make certain that the children of America are educated and ready for the 21st century.