

Another example of the abuse of the Social Security number is a provision in tax law requiring a spouse paying alimony furnish the IRS with the Social Security number of the spouse receiving alimony.

There are not isolated incidents; in fact, since the creation of the Social Security number in 1934 there have been almost 40 congressionally-authorized uses of the Social Security number as an identification number for non-Social Security programs! Abuse of the Social Security system also occurs at the state level. Mr. Speaker, in many states. One cannot get a driver's license, apply for a job, or even receive a birth certificate for one's child, without presenting their Social Security number to a government official, and just X weeks ago 210 of my colleagues voted to allow States to require citizens to show their Social Security number in order to vote. Since the Social Security number is part of a federal program created by Congress, it is Congress' responsibility to ensure it is not used to violate the privacy of America's citizens.

Perhaps the most disturbing abuses of the Social Security number is the Congressionally-authorized rule forcing parents to get a Social Security number for their newborn children in order to claim them as a dependent. Mr. Speaker, forcing parents to register their newborn children with the state is more like something out of the nightmare of George Orwell than the dreams of a free Republic that inspired the nation's founders.

Unless the abuses of the Social Security number is stopped, Americans will soon have a de facto national identification number, which would provide the federal government the ability to track all citizens from cradle to grave. The drafters of the Constitution would be horrified if they knew that the federal government would have the ability to set up a universal identifier and every newborn baby had to be assigned a number by the federal government. I therefore urge my colleagues to protect America's freedom by cosponsoring the Privacy Protection Act of 1998.

IN HONOR OF ROCKY RIVER  
BASKETBALL COURTS

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 25, 1998*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mike McLaren and the players at the Rocky River courts in Rocky River, Ohio.

Chris Ballard, the author of Hoops Nation, recently toured the country looking for the best basketball courts and pickup games around. I am pleased to announce that Ballard features the Rocky River Courts in Rocky River, Ohio among America's top five basketball courts. NBA greats Danny Ferry and John Amaechi must agree since they play there regularly. The following is Ballard's description of the Rocky River Courts:

Take well-organized yuppie ball out of the health clubs, dump it on a court in a wealthy suburb of Cleveland, and you've got Rocky River, a magnet for Ohio's most talented gym rats. Mike McLaren, a local hoops junkie, has been organizing the games for 20 years, setting up teams and court rotations and keeping the slug fests to a minimum. Until City Hall

runs the players out of town, as it's been threatening to do for years, McLaren's legions will be playing in fair and foul weather.

CONGRESS AND THE INTERNET

**HON. LEE H. HAMILTON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 25, 1998*

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, February 18, 1998 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

CONGRESS AND THE INTERNET

The Internet is transforming American society. It is having a profound effect on our government institutions and our economy and how we communicate with each other and with the rest of the world. About 40 million people used the Internet in 1996, and that number is expected to rise to about 200 million by 1999.

The Internet is a global network of computers linked by phone and cable lines. It began in 1969 as a Defense Department initiative to link a handful of universities, research laboratories and military bases, and has now become ubiquitous. Individuals can access the Internet from personal computers at home or at work, at schools or in the library. The Internet is a means of disseminating information and, increasingly, a way to conduct business.

Congress is struggling to define what role government should play in the Internet. The Internet is a wide-open forum with few rules and regulations. It is not owned by anyone, and it is not confined by geographical borders. This very openness is the great strength of the Internet, facilitating the free exchange of information and ideas around the world. It is also a source of concern. For example, some of the most profitable web sites on the Internet are devoted to gambling and pornography. Some in Congress have urged aggressive regulation of the Internet, while others have urged minimal government involvement.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

The Internet has had a dramatic effect on how the average citizen interacts with the federal government. First, individuals now have greater access to information about government. Federal agencies have web sites which usually describe key programs and initiatives and help citizens get answers to commonly asked questions, such as how to apply for a job or how to get benefits. Second, the Internet has made it easier for citizens to communicate with their elected representatives. About 4000 people have contacted my web site in the last year, and many constituents now send e-mail messages to my office. Third, the Internet provides a wide-range of fora for citizens to debate and discuss political issues, from 3-mails and chat rooms to ideologically-oriented web sites.

The Internet has also revolutionized media coverage of Washington. When I first came to Congress in the mid-1960s, most Americans got their news on current events from the morning paper and the evening news. Today, media coverage is almost non-stop, and the Internet has contributed to this trend. For example, the Monica Lewinsky story first broke on a web site, and several news outlets have provided round-the-clock reporting on the scandal from their web sites. Some would say the Internet is feeding the public's appetite for information. Others

would argue that it has lowered media standards, opening the floodgates to unrestrained speculation.

AREAS OF POSSIBLE REGULATION

Congress will focus its legislative efforts on the Internet in four basic areas. First, it will consider various consumer protection bills, including measures to restrict junk e-mail, protect the privacy of personal information in government databases, and, most importantly, limit pornography and gambling on the Internet. Congress passed legislation in 1996 making it a crime to knowingly send or display indecent material over the Internet, but the Supreme Court invalidated the law on free speech grounds. Supporters say restrictions are necessary to limit access by minors to such materials. Opponents respond that parents, not the government, should control what their children see, that most Internet providers, such as America Online and Prodigy, already give parents and schools the tools to screen out offensive materials, and that regulating pornography will be difficult because U.S. laws don't reach web sites established overseas. We want to protect children from inappropriate material, but we also want to protect the exploding commercial potential of the Internet.

Second, Congress will debate measures relating to taxation of Internet commerce. One recent study estimated that the value of goods and services traded over the Internet will grow from \$8 billion in 1997 to \$327 billion in 2002. Those figures do not include consumers who are increasingly shopping on the Internet as they become more comfortable with the technology and more aware of the protections against credit card fraud. Many state and local governments, concerned about the shift of commerce to the Internet, want to impose taxes on Internet transactions. The challenge is determining which jurisdiction should levy the taxes, or whether state and local governments should be allowed to tax Internet commerce at all.

Third, Congress will consider bills involving the export of encryption, which is data scrambling technology used to prevent unauthorized access to electronic data on the Internet. Encryption, for example, may be used to secure credit card purchases over the Internet, or to restrict access to certain government web sites. The encryption issue is very contentious. Bills have been introduced to ease restrictions on the export of encryption products so that U.S. manufacturers are on a level playing field with their overseas competitors. The White House, however, has opposed relaxing export controls because of concerns that widespread use of sophisticated encryption will hamper law enforcement and intelligence gathering.

Fourth, Congress is reviewing the issue of trademark protection. Currently, the government has contracted with a private entity to assign web site names. Problems arise when entrepreneurs grab an address that is clearly identified with a well-known brand name or even with a governmental entity. Some argue the federal government should plan an enhanced role in resolving trademark disputes, while others favor referring such disputes to an international organization because the Internet transcends national boundaries.

CONCLUSION

The federal government has a legitimate role to play in Internet governance, particularly where interstate commerce, trade and law enforcement are involved. I do believe, however, that Congress should proceed with caution as it debates measures to regulate the Internet. I favor a minimum of regulation, but there are some things, like child molesters who get information from the Internet, that simply cannot be ignored. The

Internet is a powerful, global technology which is changing our society in ways we don't fully understand, and raising complex legal and policy issues we have rarely, if ever, confronted. My sense is that Members of Congress should probably spend more time trying to learn about the complex and technical issues surrounding the Internet before trying to regulate it.

**INCREASED MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCES FOR CRIMINALS POSSESSING FIREARMS**

SPEECH OF

**HON. JON CHRISTENSEN**

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 24, 1998*

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 424.

In the 104th Congress, I introduced the Hard Time for Gun Crimes Act of 1996, which made it clear that anyone who commits a felony with a gun should plan on spending the next few decades behind bars—no exceptions.

I am elated that the Leadership has adopted the basis of my bill and incorporated it into this legislation before us today. By adding stiffer penalties for crimes committed with guns, we'll be able to keep those who prey upon our society behind bars where they belong.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this very important piece of legislation, as it will make our homes and neighborhoods safer places to live.

**SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY ON NATIONAL TRIO DAY 1998**

**HON. BOBBY L. RUSH**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 25, 1998*

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, Saturday, February 28, 1998, Chicago State University, a premier institution of higher learning in the First Congressional District, will be celebrating its annual TRIO Day. Congress established TRIO as a federally funded educational program in 1965 to serve disadvantaged first generation college students. This day recognizes the needs of disadvantaged youth and adults aspiring to improve their lives. TRIO Day also reminds us of the federal investment that we must continue to make to ensure that these individuals fulfill their potential and develop as productive members of our communities and of our country.

TRIO programs have proven effective in helping low-income students to succeed in higher education. The activities that TRIO promotes create real opportunities and address the "invisible" barriers of class, race, and culture. TRIO helps students to overcome those academic and social barriers that may pose difficulties for them in a formal educational setting.

TRIO programs truly work. Funding for TRIO supports a range of pro-active interventions to assist students. These include Upward Bound, Student Support Services, Talent Search, Educational Opportunity Centers, and the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement program. TRIO helps students in

the following areas: choosing a college; tutoring; personal and financial counseling; career counseling; workplace and college visits; assistance in obtaining financial aid; and academic assistance in high school or assistance to re-enter high school and college.

Congress can see the positive outcomes from TRIO programs. An estimated two million students have graduated college with TRIO support. Additionally, TRIO has helped to reduce defaults in the federal student loan program by helping low-income Americans to understand their financial aid obligations and to avoid institutions that may promise more than they can deliver.

I salute Chicago State University's tireless efforts to open its doors to TRIO-eligible students. Their ongoing partnership with local schools, businesses, and other community based organizations ensures that TRIO funds will impact students of diverse backgrounds.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that this body join me in saluting Chicago State University on the occasion of National Annual TRIO Day. I am proud to work on behalf of TRIO not only for Chicago State University students, but all disadvantaged students in our nation so they might fulfill their goals for higher education and lifelong learning.

**REPRESENTATIVE MEEK HONORS RED MUMFORD, WESTSIDE PROPERTY OWNERS' COMMUNITY ACTIVIST**

**HON. CARRIE P. MEEK**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 25, 1998*

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, February 19, 1998, the North Miami Westside Property Owners' Association recognized the contributions made to the community by Mr. Red Mumford, a resident of my district. I rise today to add my praises and bring to the attention of my colleagues the outstanding examples of his community activism.

With his signature crown of auburn hair, Red, as his friends know him, has lived in the City of North Miami for 29 years. Most recently, he has served as president of the Westside Property Owners' Association, tackling neighborhood problems like the Pepper Park Rock Pit and the noise caused by area adult entertainment clubs. His eagle eye has kept watch over the city council and he has led the charge on countless issues of importance.

Personally, Red has enjoyed continued support from his wife, Joyce, who is a community activist of her own merit. They are never far apart, even when Red is playing his saxophone with his own jazz band.

What speaks loudest about the man, however, are those actions which go largely unnoticed by the general public. Though his children have grown, Red continues to act as a positive role model for the kids in his neighborhood. He set up a trampoline in his yard and a basketball net in his driveway. He even allows the kids to swim in the family pool. In a world where neighbors continually grow more distant, Red goes out of his way to provide constructive activities for those children fortunate to live in his area. Never once has he asked for anything in return.

I am proud to have a man of the stature of Red Mumford living in my congressional district. His years of hard work have not gone unnoticed by his friends and family. I wish him continued success in all his endeavors.

**TRIBUTE TO CAPT. JOHN HOGAN ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE POSITION OF CHIEF COUNSEL OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE**

**HON. ROBERT SMITH**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 25, 1998*

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a man whose love for his country and its farmers stands as a far greater testament to his character than mere words ever could. John Hogan, Captain, United States Naval Reserve, retired from the position of Chief Counsel to the House Committee on Agriculture on January 31, 1998. His retirement marks a great loss to this Committee, which will surely miss his unrivaled knowledge of America's agricultural laws and policies.

Captain Hogan came to Washington D.C. in 1969 when he joined the staff of the House Committee on the District of Columbia. His boss was the Ranking Republican, Congressman Archer Nelson, from John's home state of Minnesota. Alas, farming ran in John's blood, so in 1975 he moved to the House Committee on Agriculture where he served as Associate Counsel. In 1979 he was promoted to Minority Counsel and then, with the Republican majority in 1995, John became Chief Counsel to the Committee. In this position he has ably served both myself and my immediate predecessor, now Senator PAT ROBERTS, as well as three different Republican Ranking Members.

Mr. Speaker, this Irish-American son of the soil still owns the same farm in Janesville, Minnesota that was homesteaded by his family many years ago. Yet, while dreams of dairy cows and topsoil may have danced in his head, he was so committed to his job that for almost everyday of his long career he was the first one into and the last one out of the office. Because of this, it was often remarked by his co-workers that John never left, but in fact evidence that he did from time to time leave his desk can be found in the impressive list of academic achievements he has compiled. Captain Hogan owns a Bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota, an LLB from George Washington University, an LLM from Georgetown, and an MBA from American University.

John put this knowledge to work, and America's farm laws reflect his tremendous understanding of what it takes to keep America the breadbasket of the world.

America's farm communities could not have asked for a better friend or more dedicated servant than Captain Hogan. His long and distinguished career is a remarkable testament to a remarkable man. Mr. Speaker, I know that this whole body rises with me to say to John Hogan, Captain, you have left this Committee better than you found it; you have given of yourself, so that others might have more to receive; you have set an example that others may try to emulate, though equal it they never can. For all you have done, this body and your country thanks you. Have a happy retirement.