

House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I have been in this chamber 11 years and I have seen days that are very satisfying and days that are not. I, obviously, am very proud to be a Republican Member of this Congress and am proud that in 1994 that Republicans had an opportunity to lead this Congress, to help get our country's financial house in order, to save our trust funds, and to move from a caretaking society to a caring society, where people have their hopes and dreams more likely to occur.

I was also proud to be part of a 1994 Congress that took office in 1995 that was able to move forward with congressional accountability, getting Congress under all the laws that we had exempted ourselves from. Congress had exempted itself from the civil rights law, it had exempted itself from fair pay, the 40-hour workweek, time and a half. The private sector had to do it, Congress did not.

Congress had exempted itself from OSHA, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which basically meant that the Congress did not have to abide by safety procedures for its employees. A Member of Congress could not be sued by an employee for sexual harassment. We exempted ourselves from things that the private sector came under. We did until the 104th Congress, the last Congress, in which we passed congressional accountability.

But we did not stop there. And we did it, candidly, on a bipartisan basis, which is the best way to get reform through. We did not just try to ram it through. We worked with colleagues on both sides of the aisle and got wide support for it. We did the same thing with gift ban and lobby disclosure. We banned, frankly, all gifts, something that was long needed certainly to bring them under control, because Members could receive unlimited gifts of meals and wine and so on. They did not even come under the gift ban. They could get \$100 at a clip, \$250, during the course of a year. We wanted to bring it down to what the Senate had, but the Speaker wanted to ban all gifts, and I concurred in that.

We also, for the first time since 1946, we also amended our lobby laws to really get people who are lobbyists to register and to report who they try to influence and how much they spend. And it has made a significant difference in identifying who really is trying to influence this place. These were reforms that happened under the 104th Congress and, to its credit, on a bipartisan basis.

But we did not deal with campaign finance reform. I guess three out of four is pretty good, but it was my hope and my expectation that a reform-minded Congress would deal with campaign finance reform; and that we would reform our laws, the unlimited soft money that has contributed to the political parties, the over \$260 million

that was given collectively to both parties that was not used for party building, was not used for registration, but was used to influence directly individual races, circumventing the campaign law, unlimited sums by individuals, corporations, labor unions and other interest groups.

I was hoping that we would deal with sham issue ads, the truly campaign ads, call them that and place them under the campaign laws, freedom of speech, under the rules that everyone else has to abide by; that we would codify Beck and make sure that nonunion members do not have to pay political costs to a union for a political activity they do not agree with; improve FEC disclosure enforcement; deal with the abuse in franking and require that foreign money and fund-raising on government property stop. Because right now it is illegal to do that for campaign money, but it is not illegal to do it for soft money. So we need to make sure people know that, one, we ban soft money, but if there is money that is not under hard money, that foreigners cannot do it and they cannot raise this money in government buildings.

It had been my hope and expectation we would deal with this issue last year, but we did not. There was a promise we would deal with it in February and, at the latest in March, but we did not; and then a promise we would deal with it in May, and we have not. And so promises are becoming empty words. It is important that my side of the aisle live up to its agreement, live up to its agreement to deal with campaign finance reform.

I fault my colleagues on the other side for not wanting to deal with the abuses in the White House, I fault my colleagues on this side of the aisle for not wanting to reform the system. We need to do both. We need to hold the abuses of the White House accountable, and we need to reform the system. We need to do both to be truly credible. And I hope and pray that in the days and weeks to come we do that.

TOMORROW'S CAPITOL HILL ROBOTICS INVITATIONAL PROMISES TO BE A REAL TREAT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, if you think ball-playing robots invading Congress sounds like a science fiction script, then think again, and set your alarm clock for early tomorrow morning, when you and I will kick off an unprecedented head-to-head national robotics competition on Capitol Hill. It will truly be an exciting time in the halls of Congress tomorrow.

A dozen high school teams from across the country, including students from Plymouth North and Quincy and North Quincy High School, many of whom are in the gallery here tonight, will cheer on their robots' attempts to

pivot around mechanical competitors scoring points by heaving large balls into 8-foot goals.

Last summer, when I attended the Rumble at the Rock in America's hometown, Plymouth, Massachusetts, a regional robotics competition held at Plymouth Rock, I expected something between a chess club demonstration and a science fair. What I saw left me stunned and truly impressed.

These competitions create an intense thirst for achievement that is usually reserved for the NCAA or NBA finals, proving again what sports promoters and parents have long known: We can create demand for excellence among the kids themselves.

Tomorrow's Capitol Hill robotics invitational is designed to underscore the work of a unique foundation, called FIRST, which is headed by Andrew Allen, a former astronaut who served as commander of the Space Shuttle Columbia. The acronym FIRST stands for, and I am quoting, For Inspirational and Recognition of Science and Technology.

Over 20,000 students on 200 teams participated in regional contests leading to FIRST's national finals earlier this year at the Epcot Center in Florida. Televised by ESPN, and with a crowd of more than 12,000 screaming from the sidelines, it had all the excitement of a national student athletic championship.

Each team is issued an identical trunkful of raw materials and a \$425 credit to purchase additional supplies, then has 6 weeks to collaboratively design and construct a robot capable of competing in a designated event. The participating students have built remote control robots capable of picking up and maneuvering 20-inch rubber balls around a small 6-sided playing field to score goals while competing against other robots.

These projects combine technical sophistication, practical know-how and old-fashioned teamwork. A key to FIRST's success is breaking down the classroom door by partnering with corporate sponsors like Boston Edison and Gillette, and through mentoring from corporate R&D shops and academic engineering departments.

As the Quincy and Plymouth students discussed earlier today with senior officials at the Department of Education, these projects are national educational models combining on-the-job training with competitive adrenaline. How else can you explain that morning during a New England storm this past winter when members of the Plymouth North robotics team trudged through the snow to attend school, even though classes were canceled? Or the many Sunday evenings when Mike Bastoni, its devoted robotics teacher, has to shoo students out of the computer lab at 10 o'clock at night?

It is no accident that these kids emerge with a keen sense of their own potential and with the tools to succeed in a rapidly changing technologically

advanced work force. The ultimate rewards, as the students in the House gallery can attest better than I, are lifelong skills and self-respect.

I look forward to the competition tomorrow in the Rayburn foyer, and I promise all who come a real treat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your effort and your assistance in cosponsoring this event.

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PAYCHECK PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SUNUNU). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BOB SCHAFFER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, it happened again just a few days ago. I was at a Republican event, a political event dealing with putting candidates on the ballot back in Colorado and one of the individuals in the audience came up and he said, "I am fed up and sick and tired of labor unions taking cash out of my wages and spending those dollars on political causes that I do not support."

This was a Republican worker who lives up north in the Morgan area, in Morgan County in my district, in the Fourth District of Colorado. And he asked if there is anything I can do about that.

Well, I asked more questions, tried to find out exactly what had occurred to him. It seems he works for a closed-shop operation there in Colorado, which is in not a right-to-work State. A closed-shop State means essentially that one can be forced or compelled to join a labor organization against their will as a condition of employment. Their only option, of course, is to give up their job and move on and go somewhere else.

So this individual does not approve of his union's activities. I suppose he probably supports some of the collective bargaining and maybe some of the agency representation and so on. But what he really resented was that a certain portion of his paycheck was automatically deducted and withheld and redirected toward political causes of the union's choosing without the consent of this particular wage earner. He thought it was a crime. In fact, he called it such. And I could not disagree with him at all.

Well, this is a practice which occurs throughout the country. It is interesting, here on the House floor, with all the debate about campaign finance and campaign finance reform and what campaigns ought to look like, how they ought to be funded, whether there ought to be caps and limits, what kind of disclosure and reporting requirements that we ought to insist upon, that no one is really willing to spend the time talking about whether campaign funds are raised legitimately in the first place.

The fact of the matter is, right here in the great old United States, it is quite possible, in fact it is quite likely, that a wage earner can have a portion of his wages automatically deducted and withheld out of his paycheck and spent on some political cause simply because he happens to be associated with a labor union. It happens with other organizations as well.

Well, we have tried in fact to take a crack at the issue here on the House floor. The last time campaign finance issues were raised we brought a topic to the floor called the Paycheck Protection Act, a proposal designed to end this practice of having wages automatically deducted and spent on political causes without the consent of the wage earner.

It strikes me as being a pretty simple matter, yet it gets quite confused here in Congress. And I will explain that in a moment, why there seems to be a source of confusion. But it seems that anybody would be hard pressed to come up with an explanation as to why stealing wages out of somebody's paycheck and directing it toward a political cause without the wage earner's knowledge or the wage earner's consent is a good idea, how it can possibly be justified, how we can in fact stand for it, how we can allow campaign cash to be raised in this sort of manner and not object on a daily basis.

Well, I have heard from too many constituents, rank and file union Americans, who do object, who do come up to me at political events, at town meetings, at the parade celebrating small towns throughout my rural district, who come up and tell me that they are fed up with it, that they are sick and tired of having their wages raided by people they do not support for political causes they do not condone, and spent in a way that is outside their control.

I sort of look at this as a pay raise. If we can really protect the paychecks of hard-working Americans, make sure that no portion of their wages are automatically deducted and siphoned off for political causes, that really means, for many wage earners in America it means more dollars in their pocket.

It is very consistent with our efforts towards tax cuts in America to try to encourage and empower individual wage earners by protecting what they work hard for, by protecting their earnings, to allow them to keep what they have toiled over and the fruits of their labor and let them spend it on things that they believe to be high priorities rather than some union boss sitting in another city perhaps or maybe right here in Washington, D.C., or maybe a committee of them that is forming today perhaps to decide which Members of Congress ought to stay and which ones ought to go.

Well, it really does work that way. If my colleagues want to figure out what the motivation is why any labor organization would stand for siphoning off

portions of their members' wages to spend on political causes of the union's choosing, they just need to spend a little time here in Washington D.C.

Whenever we have these campaign finance debates, these halls are lined out here in the committee hallways and Members offices' are lined with union organizers and union lobbyists and union bosses who understand that when we talk about paycheck protection, we really are threatening the way of life for a handful of powerful union bosses who have made an art and a career out of siphoning wages away from wage earners' paychecks for the political purposes of their choice.

Campaigns can be fun if they are involved in them, if they are involved in raising money and trying to spend it in a way that helps affect the direction of Congress. It seems to be the American way. That is what every citizen should be encouraged to do and to participate in and be involved in, to choose the candidate of their liking and decide which one best represents them, to put a yard sign in their yard maybe, to put a bumper sticker on their car, to take some literature through their neighborhood and give it to their friends and neighbors, maybe to go to precinct caucus meetings and maybe some State and county assemblies, maybe the national convention, to be involved in whatever way they can in help selecting the candidate that best represents them and that they think is the one that is really going to help turn the country around and to meet their expectations.

And a big part of that is raising money too, as we all know in this case. We spend a lot of time trying to replenish the campaign coffers so that we can run for election. And our opponents who are out trying to replace us today are on the phone, perhaps trying to raise money for their campaign coffers so that they can convey their message.

There is nothing wrong with that. That makes a lot of sense. But it ought to be voluntary. It seems, at the very least, we ought to insist upon a voluntary nature about politics. To insist upon the simple notion that no one, no one in America should ever be forced to contribute to a political cause which they do not support. Does that seem to be too much to ask?

Well, when we asked that question here on the House floor a few months ago, the answer was no, it was too much to ask actually when it came right down to it. Because those union bosses and lobbyists that I mentioned who march around the Capitol building and who hang out around the offices of likely Members of Congress who seem to be sympathetic to the cause of union bosses, well, they said no, they said no to the Paycheck Protection Act.

We hope to give them another chance and another opportunity, in fact, several opportunities crafted in several different ways. There are a dozen, at least a handful of proposals and variations on the Paycheck Protection Act that we can consider here in Congress.