

terrible waste of taxpayer dollars by the Federal bureaucracy.

Yesterday, the Associated Press reported that the Veterans Benefits Administration spent more than \$200 million to upgrade its computers, but now it is slower than ever in processing claims.

This terrible inefficiency comes at a time when our veterans are dying at a rate of more than 500,000 a year, no major war for many years, and fewer soldiers and veterans now than in the past. It now takes 205 days to complete a veteran's claim compared to 164 in 1991, and 164 days was slow.

The problem is that Federal employees are paid the same whether they work hard or whether they work easy. There is already a big bonus system in place for outstanding performance.

What we need now is to cut the pay of Federal employees who are not working hard and efficiently and producing good results. This is what happens in the private sector. Real estate agents are not paid unless they sell the house. The Federal Government will always be a sea of ineptitude and inefficiency, as former Energy Secretary Watkins just described it, unless we make it operate more like the private sector.

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NRA'S GRIP ON CONGRESS RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILDREN DYING

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the Republican majority and the National Rifle Association keep blaming everyone but themselves for this country's epidemic of gun violence, but the American people know that the tactics of the NRA have misfired again.

Guns kill; it is that simple. Until the Republican leadership takes aim at the real culprit, the proliferation of guns in the United States, 13 children a day will continue to die as a result of gun violence.

According to the Justice Department, Federal gun prosecutions are up 16 percent and State and local gun prosecutions have risen 22 percent. But still, our children are dying.

Our children need effective background checks, they need child safety locks, and they need the NRA to loosen its grip on the Republican leadership, and they need this now.

I urge my Republican colleagues to stop playing politics with children's lives and start working on meaningful gun legislation. Our children's lives depend on it.

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REPUBLICAN BUDGET RESOLUTION IS FOOLISH AND SPENDTHRIFT

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am not going to talk about guns, but I am going to talk about something we may vote on this week.

My Republican colleagues may bring to the floor a budget resolution that their own colleagues say is foolish and spendthrift. The Republican budget resolution, at least as we see it now, but I understand that it may be changing, does nothing to aid Social Security and Medicare and does not extend the programs' solvency for one single day. It spends the projected tax surplus on tax cuts, and it does not set aside a dime to pay off the \$5.5 trillion in debt.

The Republican leadership, I am concerned, are making promises that they cannot keep. As a Democrat, it is not only us that is rejecting that budget. My colleague, the Senator from Texas said this last week, "If this budget is adopted, we will have found a surefire way to stop Democrats from spending the surplus; the Republicans will spend it first."

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INTERNATIONAL ABDUCTION NO. 7—MITCHELL AND KELLY GOLDSTEIN

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

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell the story of Mitchell Goldstein and his daughter, Kelly. Her story is the seventh account in my series of 1 minutes on the more than 10,000 children who have been abducted to foreign countries.

In 1996, Mr. Goldstein's Swiss ex-wife abducted their then 4-year-old daughter, Kelly Goldstein, of whom Mitchell had custody and took her to Switzerland. Since that time, he has been in the Swiss courts seeking the return of Kelly, via the Hague Convention. After numerous failed appeals filed by his ex-wife, the Supreme Court of Switzerland ordered her return to the United States in a final decision rendered in August of 1997.

Mr. Goldstein has been to Switzerland three times to bring his daughter home. On these three occasions, he has been denied the chance to be reunited with his daughter because his ex-wife has fled with Kelly, placed her in foster care, or the court order has not been enforced by local authorities.

Mr. Speaker, Mitchell Goldstein is asking for someone to take action and help him bring his daughter home. I urge Congress, my colleagues, to step up to the plate and be that someone.

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THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the pending business is the question of the Speaker's approval of the Journal of the last day's proceedings.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 352, nays 49, answered "present" 1, not voting 32, as follows:

[Roll No. 58]

YEAS—352

Abercrombie	DeMint	Johnson (CT)
Allen	Deutsch	Johnson, E. B.
Andrews	Diaz-Balart	Johnson, Sam
Archer	Dickey	Jones (NC)
Armey	Dicks	Kanjorski
Baca	Dingell	Kaptur
Bachus	Dixon	Kasich
Baker	Doggett	Kelly
Baldacci	Dooley	Kennedy
Baldwin	Doolittle	Kildee
Ballenger	Doyle	Kilpatrick
Barcia	Dreier	Kind (WI)
Barr	Duncan	King (NY)
Barrett (NE)	Dunn	Kingston
Barrett (WI)	Edwards	Klecza
Bartlett	Ehlers	Knollenberg
Barton	Ehrlich	Kolbe
Bass	Emerson	Kucinich
Bateman	Engel	Kuykendall
Becerra	English	LaFalce
Bentsen	Eshoo	Lampson
Bereuter	Etheridge	Lantos
Berkley	Evans	Larson
Berman	Everett	Latham
Berry	Farr	LaTourette
Biggert	Fattah	Lazio
Billirakis	Fletcher	Leach
Bishop	Foley	Lee
Blagojevich	Forbes	Levin
Bliley	Ford	Lewis (CA)
Blumenauer	Fowler	Lewis (KY)
Blunt	Franks (NJ)	Linder
Boehlert	Frelinghuysen	Lipinski
Boehner	Frost	Lofgren
Bonilla	Gallegly	Lucas (KY)
Bono	Ganske	Luther
Boswell	Gejdenson	Maloney (CT)
Boucher	Gekas	Maloney (NY)
Brady (TX)	Gephardt	Manzullo
Brown (FL)	Gilchrest	Markey
Bryant	Gillmor	Mascara
Burr	Gilman	Matsui
Buyer	Gonzalez	McCarthy (MO)
Callahan	Goode	McCarthy (NY)
Calvert	Goodlatte	McCreery
Camp	Gordon	McHugh
Campbell	Goss	McInnis
Canady	Graham	McIntosh
Cannon	Granger	McIntyre
Capps	Green (TX)	McKeon
Capuano	Hall (OH)	McKinney
Cardin	Hall (TX)	McNulty
Carson	Hansen	Meehan
Castle	Hastings (WA)	Meek (FL)
Chabot	Hayes	Meeks (NY)
Chambliss	Hayworth	Menendez
Clayton	Herger	Metcalfe
Clement	Hill (IN)	Mica
Coble	Hilleary	Millender-
Coburn	Hinojosa	McDonald
Collins	Hobson	Miller (FL)
Combest	Hoeffel	Miller, Gary
Condit	Hoekstra	Minge
Conyers	Holden	Mink
Cook	Holt	Moakley
Cooksey	Hoolley	Mollohan
Cox	Horn	Moran (KS)
Cramer	Hostettler	Moran (VA)
Cubin	Houghton	Morella
Cummings	Hoyer	Murtha
Cunningham	Hunter	Myrick
Danner	Hyde	Nadler
Davis (FL)	Inslee	Napolitano
Davis (VA)	Isakson	Neal
Deal	Istook	Nethercutt
DeGette	Jackson (IL)	Ney
Delahunt	Jefferson	Northup
DeLauro	Jenkins	Norwood
DeLay	John	Nussle