

sudden economic distress occurs due to plant closures, mergers and acquisitions that lead to dislocation, displacement and layoffs, layoffs that occur because of trade or technology.

I am pleased to announce that we have more than 160 cosponsors, bipartisan support, and am equally pleased that all the members of the Connecticut delegation have sponsored this legislation, along with my good friend the gentleman from Maine (Mr. BALDACCI), who we will hear from shortly as well, and I especially want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) for their advice in pursuing this legislation.

I know firsthand why we seek this kind of remedy. We are experiencing some 1,700 layoffs within my district. What we know firsthand is that there is often a lack of coordination. It is this kind of coordinated effort that this piece of legislation seeks to remedy.

In short, when there is a natural disaster, FEMA comes in and provides an opportunity to make sure that it integrates with all the Federal agencies the kind of emergency response that is needed when communities are experiencing a natural disaster. It is true when there have been base closures in the past that the Department of Defense comes in and also organizes all the Federal agencies that are impacted, and in this way presenting a coordinated effort in assisting the communities through these problematic concerns.

That is not the case currently when layoffs occur, when workers are displaced. So, what this bill seeks through the Department of Commerce is to create in the Economic Development Administration a coordinating entity that will work with our various agencies, that will work with the Department of Agriculture, Small Business Administration, the Treasury, Labor, HUD, and, of course, the Department of Commerce itself.

The purpose here is to appoint a team leader. Again, when communities are experiencing these kinds of layoffs, currently the communities involved have to reach out to the various Federal agencies. What this will do when a community experiences the economic distress that I have talked about is it will provide the Department of Commerce with the opportunities to come in and coordinate this assistance, so it will be both cost savings, efficient and effective and assist our communities and assist those who are being displaced, those who have been laid off, with getting the kind of immediate coordinated assistance that they expect from the Federal Government.

I want to thank as well the administration, especially the Department of Commerce, for working with us on this approach. We hope to pilot this approach by getting them up to Connecticut and having them work through some of these particularly

thorny areas so that we can coordinate in a whole-hearted effort to make sure that workers are receiving the kind of relief that they have.

Mr. Speaker we are seeking original cosponsors on this bill that we are going to drop tomorrow evening. As I have indicated, we have more than 160 cosponsors to what is a very pragmatic, straightforward solution in addressing communities that experience economic distress.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on June 15, 2000, I was away from the House on official business and missed rollcall vote number 288, the Nethercutt amendment to H.R. 4578. I would have voted no.

On rollcall vote 289, the Weldon amendment to H.R. 4578, I would have voted no.

On rollcall 290, the motion to recommit with instructions regarding H.R. 4578, I would have voted aye.

On final passage, rollcall vote number 291 on H.R. 4578, the Department of Interior Appropriations for FY 2001, I would have voted no.

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U.S. MEMBERSHIP IN THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about a bill that is coming to the floor either tomorrow or the next day. It is H.J. Res. 90. This resolution, if it were to pass, would get us out of the World Trade Organization.

There are many of us here in the House and many Americans who believe very sincerely that it is not in our best interests to belong to the World Trade Organization, who believe very sincerely that international managed trade, as carried on through the World Trade Organization, does not conform with our Constitution and does not serve our interests.

It said by those who disagree with this so often in the media that those of us who disagree with the World Trade Organization that we are paranoid, we worry too much, and that there is no loss of sovereignty in this procedure. But quite frankly, there is strong evidence to present to show that not only do we lose sovereignty as we deliver this power to the World Trade Organization, that it indeed is not a legal agreement. It does not conform with our Constitution; and, therefore, we as Members of Congress should exert this privilege that we have every 5 years to think about the World Trade Organization, whether it is in our best interests and whether it is technically a good agreement.

The World Trade Organization came into existence, and we joined it, in a

lame duck session in 1994. It was hurried up in 1994 because of the concern that the new Members of Congress, who would have much more reflected the sentiments of the people, would oppose our membership in the WTO. So it went through in 1994; but in that bill, there was an agreement that a privileged resolution could come up to offer us this opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, let me just point out the importance of whether or not this actually attacks our sovereignty. The CRS has done a study on the WTO, and they make a statement in this regard. This comes from a report from the Congressional Research Service on 8-25-99. It is very explicit. It says, as a member of the WTO, the United States does commit to act in accordance with the rules of the multilateral body. It is legally obligated to ensure national laws do not conflict with WTO rules. That is about as clear as one can get.

Now, more recently, on June 5, the WTO director, General Michael Moore, made this statement and makes it very clear: the dispute settlement mechanism is unique in the international architecture. WTO member governments bind themselves to the outcome from panels and, if necessary, the appellate body. That is why the WTO has attracted so much attention from all sorts of groups who wish to use this mechanism to advance their interests.

Interestingly enough, in the past, if we dealt with trade matters, they came to the U.S. Congress to change the law; they came to elected representatives to deal with this, and that is the way it should be under the Constitution. Today, though, the effort has to be directed through our world trade representative, our international trade representative, who then goes to bat for our business people at the WTO. So is it any surprise that, for instance, the company of Chiquita Banana, who has these trade wars going on in the trade fights, wants somebody in the administration to fight their battle, and just by coincidence, they have donated \$1.5 million in their effort to get influence?

So I think that the American people deserve a little bit more than this.

The membership in the WTO actually is illegal, illegal any way we look at it. If we are delivering to the WTO the authority to regulate trade, we are violating the Constitution, because it is very clear that only Congress can do this. We cannot give that authority away. We cannot give it to the President, and we cannot give it to an international body that is going to manage trade in the WTO. This is not legal, it is not constitutional, and it is not in our best interests. It stirs up the interest to do things politically, and unelected bureaucrats make the decision, not elected officials. It was never intended to be that way, and yet we did this 5 years ago. We have become accustomed to it, and I think it is very important, it is not paranoia that makes some of us bring this up on the floor.