

Banca rotta, the bench is corrupt, the bench is broken.

We are a Nation of laws, but we are also a Nation that legislates on a foundation of religious and spiritual values.

□ 1645

Nothing in Christianity or Judaism or Islam supports the concept of usury against the defenseless, but that is exactly what this corrupt, broken bench does: It pits women and children against credit card companies. Corporate lawyers will get their money regardless of whether women and children get their dinner. Shame on the credit card companies for demanding this, and shame on the Republican majority for caving in. Republicans are enslaving the American people to credit card companies.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings or other audible conversation is in violation of the rules of the House.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

AMERICA NEEDS COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY POLICY

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is April 15, an important day. It is tax day. Today, millions of Americans are in the process of filing their taxes. When all is said and done, many will get a refund from Uncle Sam. Hopefully, these refunds will not be needed to pay to fill up their gas tank.

At every town hall meeting I have held, the price of gasoline has been a significant issue. Last weekend when I was at home in my district, I saw gas costing \$2.15 and \$2.24 and even higher per gallon. The prices do not seem to be coming down any time soon.

If we had a comprehensive energy plan in place, we might not have seen these massive price increases. The time to act is now.

What are the facts? Well, since 2001, the average price of gasoline increased 86 percent, from \$1.23 to \$2.29 a gallon. U.S. imports of oil over that period of time have increased by more than 10 percent, and the price of a barrel of oil

has more than doubled from just over \$23 to over \$50 a barrel today.

Many remember the early 1970s when we sat in lines to get our gasoline, and those lines often stretched for blocks and blocks. That gave us a lot of time to think, and most of us vowed that our Nation should never be dependent on foreign oil again.

Today, however, the sad truth is we are actually more dependent on foreign oil than we were then. So, as tax day arrives, let us be certain that we adopt an energy policy so comprehensive that future tax refunds will do more than just get spent on a tank of gas.

HONORING JOSIE GRAY BAIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WATSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Josie Gray Bain, a brilliant woman who was a dedicated wife, mother, and pioneer educator, who I had the distinct honor to work with closely when I served on the Los Angeles School Board.

Josie Gray Bain was born in Atlanta, Georgia, where she attended elementary and high school. Shortly after graduation from high school, she met and married Reverend John C. Bain of Los Angeles. In the fall of 1930, Josie Bain relocated to Spring Hill, Tennessee, where she and her husband began their first ministerial appointment. Their son, John David, was born soon thereafter. Both Josie and her husband enrolled at Drake University, where Josie received her B.S. degree with honors and continued to do graduate work there.

In 1942, Josie Bain moved with her husband to Los Angeles, California. She completed her graduate studies at California State College in Los Angeles, Immaculate Heart College, and the University of Southern California.

In 1948, she began her career in education with the Los Angeles Unified School District as an elementary schoolteacher at Marianna Avenue Elementary School. After teaching several years, she was promoted to positions of ever-increasing responsibility. Josie ended her brilliant career as Associate Superintendent of Instruction, the first African American in the history of the Los Angeles Unified School District to be appointed to the position.

Josie Bain was an active member of several professional and civic organizations, including Delta Kappa Gamma, Education Sorority; Delta Sigma Theta, Education Sorority; National Council of Negro Women; the Urban League; United Methodist Women; and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. She founded and served as president of the Interchange For Community Action, which provided scholarships for many disadvantaged minorities for more than two decades.

Josie Bain devoted her life to her family, God, community, and her

church. She lived her life with style, grace, integrity, and vitality. Her dedication to helping children was recognized by all those whom she touched, and her accomplishments were evidenced by numerous awards and honors bestowed upon her throughout her life.

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

(Mr. GUTKNECHT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

REAUTHORIZE AMTRAK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today we introduced a bipartisan Amtrak reauthorization bill that will truly serve America's traveling public. I want to thank the gentleman from Alaska (Chairman YOUNG), the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), for joining me in this effort. This is truly a bipartisan effort and shows the strong support Amtrak has within the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Congress.

The current funding issues concerning Amtrak brings up a fundamental question of where this Nation stands on public transportation. We have an opportunity to improve a system that serves our need for passenger rail service, or we can just let it fall apart and leave this country's travelers and businesses with absolutely no alternative form of public transportation.

Without the funding Amtrak needs to keep operational, we will soon see people that rely on Amtrak to get to work each day waiting for a train that is not coming. We continue to subsidize highways and aviation, but when it comes to passenger rail service we refuse to provide the money Amtrak needs to survive.

This issue is bigger than just transportation. This is about safety and national security. Not only should we be giving Amtrak the money it needs to continue to provide service, we should be providing security money to upgrade their tracks and improve safety and security measures in the entire rail system.

Once again, we see the Bush administration paying for its failed policy by cutting funds to public service and jeopardizing more American jobs. This administration sees nothing wrong with taking money from the hard-working Amtrak employees who work day and night to provide top-quality service to their passengers. These folks are trying to make a living for their families, and they do not deserve such