

simplification, energy self-sufficiency and security, innovation and investment, and ending lawsuit abuse and litigation management.

I tell you, Madam Speaker, that is an agenda that the American people can be proud of. It is an agenda that the American people can embrace with enthusiasm, with optimism, with passion, not with a dour look on your face and say "woe is me, isn't the world awful."

These are the exciting kind of proposals. These are exciting proposals that we will put forward before the House as we continue our leadership, our strong leadership, to bring about increasing American competitiveness.

For 3 years, House Republicans have promoted the House economic competitiveness agenda. This year alone we have passed over 39 pieces of legislation that will help make America more competitive. We have real solutions. Republicans offer real solutions. We invite our colleagues to join us in moving America forward and providing an opportunity for the United States businesses and working families.

But instead, they have no plan, and instead of working with us at the committee level or on the House floor, the Democrats have tried to undermine the economic competitiveness agenda over and over and over again.

Again, their so-called innovative agenda is not innovative. It is a call for increased government spending, presumably fueled by increased taxes. In response to our economic agenda, at so many different points they have been nothing but obstructionists over and over again.

For example, college access for all. They say they are for expanding access to college, yet they voted against the College Access and Opportunity Act, 181 of them, including the top two leaders in their party, 181 of them voted against the College Access and Opportunity Act.

Energy independence, Democrats say they want to end our dependence on foreign oil, and yet they try to obstruct every single plan to access America's own oil and natural gas reserves, such as tapping into ANWR and the OCS.

The Energy Policy Act, 183 Democrats, including their top two leaders, voted no. Refinery Permit Process Schedule Act, 176 Democrats, including their top two leaders, voted no. And the Deep Ocean Energy Resources Act, 156 Democrats, including their top two leaders, voted no.

Affordable health care, a difficult challenge for so many large and small businesses around our Nation, Democrats say they want to help employers provide health insurance to their employees. But they vote against every single measure to do so. The HEALTH Act, 185 Democrats, including their top two leaders, voted no. Small Business Health Fairness Act, 165 Democrats, including their top two leaders, voted no. And recently, the Health Information Technology Promotion Act, something

that would truly streamline health care for our Nation, 139 Democrats, including their top two leaders, voted no. So, Madam Speaker, it truly is a remarkable contrast between the two parties.

I want to put up one more chart, because when you think about what would happen if the other side were in fact to be in the majority, I get questions at home, what would they do? What would they do?

Again, elections are about choices and they are about the future, and to determine what they would do, all you have to do is look at the legislation that they have proposed, the legislation they proposed. I presume that is what they would do, don't you, Madam Speaker?

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The top two bills that they have proposed, H. Res. 635 and H. Res. 636, the first step in impeaching President Bush resolution and the second step in impeaching President Bush resolution.

Madam Speaker, I do not believe that the American people are interested in leadership in this House of Representatives that has as its number one priority the impeachment of the President of the United States. That is not what the American people are interested in.

What else are they interested in? H.R. 4683, the Federal Health Care System Government-Run Health Care Act. House Democrats want to create a Federal health care system without choices, which would combine the efficiency of the Department of Motor Vehicles and the compassion of the IRS, and they would tax Americans to get to it. They would amend the Social Security Act, the bill would, to impose on the income of every individual a tax equal to 1.7 percent of wages received, and on every employer an excise tax of 7 percent of the wages paid to each employee, and on the self-employment income of every individual a tax equal to the applicable percentage of the self-employment income for such taxable year. Who cosponsors that? Ranking Democrats, remember, the individuals who would be chairmen of the committees, ranking Democrats and senior members of the Democrat Caucus.

Madam Speaker, I do not think that is what Americans are bargaining for. That is not what I hear my constituents say they want when I go home and talk to them which is every single week. They are not interested in the Federal Government running health care.

H.R. 1018, it is called the Permanent Welfare Housing Act. I call it the welfare reform repeal Act. Public housing, this bill would remove provisions that residents of public housing are required to participate in 8 hours per month of either community service or economic self-sufficiency activities in order to retain their public housing. Who are the sponsors? The ranking Democrats, remember folks who would be chair-

men of these committees, and multiple, multiple senior Democrat Members.

Madam Speaker, one of the most incredible and productive and positive pieces of legislation that has passed through this Congress in the past 12 years has been welfare reform. It has put literally millions of Americans back to work, to be productive citizens, to have pride in what they are doing, to believe that they have some worth and they have some input into the productivity of this Nation. What is it that the other side wants to do? Well, they want to repeal portions of it that would provide that kind of sense of accomplishment and sense of participation.

So, Madam Speaker, Republicans understand that it is the American people who built this Nation, American people who built this economy and made this the land of opportunity. Washington's job as the people's representative is to provide national and economic security and to give each individual the freedom and the protection to pursue their American dream.

The imagination and hard work of the American people have built this wonderful and beautiful Nation, and they have made it prosperous. Our task as Members of the United States Congress is to ensure that this remains true for the next century.

Once again, the other side relies on the vague promises and big government programs to solve every perceived problem in the United States. Government is not the answer, and this philosophy, which is truly left over from previous bureaucratic administrations of the 1960s and 1970s, has only slowed down progress in our Nation every single time it has been instituted.

Madam Speaker, we live in a glorious Nation. It is a wondrous Nation, a Nation that is still seen by men and women around the world as a beacon of liberty and repository of hope. I am incredibly proud to serve in the United States House of Representatives and to have the opportunity to share this positive perspective and this positive vision with my colleagues and with the Nation as we have done tonight.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. LYNCH (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mr. MCGOVERN (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mr. MOORE of Kansas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for the week of September 18 on account of the death of his father.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to: