

costs and the benefits of the regulations being placed upon our people. And what this really comes down to is simply a good government act. This is good government.

The U.S. Government imposes a hidden tax on our public today. Last week, we voted for a tax relief package. We imposed taxes, income taxes, excise taxes, inheritance taxes, capital gains taxes, death taxes on our people in an overt way. We see the tax, it comes out of our paycheck, we send in our 1040. But there are other taxes that our public pays today, there are other taxes that citizens of this country pay, and that is a hidden tax, the cost of regulations.

It is estimated by Thomas Hopkins of the University of Rochester, the Rochester Institute of Technology, that hidden tax of regulations costs our economy, our people, our small businesses every year in excess of \$700 billion. A \$700 billion tax is being imposed upon the people of this country, and we are not even looking into whether or not these taxes exceed the costs, whether the benefits of these taxes exceed the costs, whether or not they are being duplicative or not. All this is a good government measure to say: Let us look at what we are doing as a Federal Government, let us look at the regulations we are promulgating.

This does not change one regulation, this does not affect any law from being implemented. This gives the public the right to know the truth. This gives the public the information that they need so they can follow the law.

All we are saying is, "Let's have the Office of Management and Budget review these regulations, let's have the Office of Management and Budget weigh the costs and the benefits of these regulations, let's have the Office of Management and Budget tell us whether they are overly duplicative or not," and I would like to echo what my colleague from Illinois said about the bill and its supporters:

Mr. Chairman, this is a bipartisan bill. This bill is being supported by the National Governors' Association, the National Conference of State Legislators, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties and the International City and County Management Association. The bill is also supported by Americans for Tax Reform, the Center For The Study of American Business, Citizens for a Sound Economy, the Seniors Coalition and the Sixties Plus Coalition.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

It is very peculiar to hear the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) say we have OMB to do this analysis so we can find out the cost benefit of regulations. Well, OMB already does that, and the gentleman said the OMB said it costs \$700 billion a year to comply with regulations.

That is not accurate. OMB said, after doing their analysis, that it costs \$230 billion not \$700 billion; and that is the costs. But the benefits for regulations OMB said ranged, because we cannot know precisely how to quantify it, but we know there are certain enormous benefits that come from regulations to protect the environment, to protect public health and safety; they say the benefits of a \$230 billion cost is anywhere from \$260 billion in benefits to \$3.5 trillion.

Now the gentleman wants OMB to do a report, but he ought to be accurate in telling the Members what OMB is already saying on this very subject. Let me tell my colleagues what some others are saying about this bill.

The United Auto Workers say the UAW submits that this bill would only serve to further delay the promulgation of public health and safety protections by mandating wasteful analysis and diverting limited agency resources.

The United Steelworkers say that they oppose this bill because it would lengthen and complicate the already cumbersome regulatory process of agencies such as OSHA which address issues affecting worker safety and health.

The Consumers Union opposes this bill, and they say that the substitution of different words or details does not obviate the need this bill would create for the Executive Branch to expend the very substantial resources in an attempt to quantify what they may well find is unquantifiable and most certainly would be meaningless in an aggregate form.

Now do we want to take taxpayers' hard-earned money and waste it, because that is what this bill would do. It would have OMB spend, I believe, without a limit, millions of dollars on an analysis on non-major regulations. We are not talking about major regulations, but regulations that are non-major, often noncontroversial, usually noncontroversial, regulations that everyone supports, and then have to go through a lot of paperwork. Well, maybe it is a win for those who have their own agenda to say that if maybe they are lucky, OMB came out with a report showing that the costs out-did the benefits. They can say, well, there is a wasteful regulation, but even if they can never come up with a way of showing that some of these regulations are not effective, they could just busy all the people in the government doing these reports that serve no useful purpose.

Let us subject this bill to a cost-benefit analysis. We do not know what the full costs will be of this bill to make OMB go through all these regulations and review. But we do know that the costs are going to be extraordinary and the benefits are going to be minuscule. We ought not to enact legislation that does not serve a cost-benefit purpose,

we certainly ought not to have regulations that do not have benefits outweighing the costs. And I think that the way to make sure that we have regulations that are effective and cost effective is to do our job as congressional custodians through oversight and not just simply pass laws that can do a great deal of harm.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of our time.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to yield the remaining time to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MCINTOSH) for his management.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee will rise informally.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT) assumed the chair.

SUNDRY MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sundry messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

□ 1530

REGULATORY RIGHT-TO-KNOW ACT OF 1999

The Committee resumed its sitting.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MCINTOSH).

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Chairman, how much time is remaining on each side?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MCINTOSH) has 21½ minutes remaining; the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) has 16 minutes remaining.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We are bringing this bill, the Regulatory Right-To-Know Act of 1999, which is, as my colleague said, a bipartisan bill to promote the public's right to know the cost benefits and impacts of Federal regulations. This bill is the product of work done by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY) over the last several years, and it builds on provisions that were included in the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for 1997, 1998, and 1999. There is also a companion bill in the Senate, S. 59, also designed to establish a permanent and strengthened regulatory accounting system.

Now, my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) says this bill would put onerous new requirements on the bureaucracies and the