

own citizens. Who should be more upset, for example, about forced abortion? Is it those who proclaim the inviolable right to life or those who argue for so-called reproductive rights? Even these polar opposites recognize the crimes of the Chinese government in forced abortion. Should we then stop this oppression of millions? Are we committed to lob missiles at this massive nation until it ceases this program?

Will the principle upon which we are now claiming to act lead us to impose our political solutions upon the nations that now contain Tibet, and Kurdistan, and should the sentiment rear, even Quebec and Chechnya?

The most dangerous thing about where we are headed is our lack of historical memory and our disastrous inattention to the effect of the principles upon which we act, for ideas do indeed have consequences, Mr. Speaker, and they pick up a momentum that becomes all their own.

I do believe that we are on the brink, Mr. Speaker, but it is not yet too late. Soon I fear the train, as it is said, will have left the station. We stand on the verge of crossing that line that so firmly distinguishes empire from republic. This occurs not so much by an action or series of actions but by the acceptance of an idea, the idea that we have a right, a duty, an obligation, or a national interest to perfect foreign nations even while we remain less than principled ourselves.

When will we, as a people and as an institution, say "we choose to keep our republic, your designs for empire interest us not in the least." I can only hope it will be soon, for it is my sincerest fear that failing to do so much longer will put us beyond this great divide.

THE SILICONE BREAST IMPLANT RESEARCH AND INFORMATION ACT

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 1999

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as a Member of the House Commerce Subcommittee on Health, I am committed to ensuring patients have complete and comprehensive access to information before they make a decision about a medical procedure.

To this end, I am proud to re-introduce the Silicone Breast Implant Research and Information Act because I believe it is critical to the advancement of women's health and is the first step towards answering the many questions about the safety and efficacy of silicone breast implants.

By re-introducing this bill today, I along with the 41 original cosponsors, hope to draw attention to an issue that has been either neglected or out right ignored for too long.

It is estimated that as many as 2 million women have received silicone breast implants over the last 30 years. Unfortunately, the information provided to these women before they elected to have silicone breast implants has been both incomplete and even inaccurate.

Moreover, results from past studies have only raised more questions about possible negative effects that ruptured or leaking silicone breast implants may have on breast milk, connective tissue, autoimmune diseases and the accuracy of breast cancer screening tests.

Our legislation ultimately seeks to change this by focusing on three critical points—information, research, and communication.

First, and in my opinion most importantly, this bill will ensure that information sent to women about silicone breast implants contains the most up to date and accurate information available.

Current information packets sent to women do not accurately describe some of the potential risks of silicone breast implants. While recent studies by the Institute of Medicine indicate the rupture rate may be as high as 70 percent, information sent to women suggests the rupture rate is only 1 percent.

Second, this bill encourages the director of the National Institutes of Health to expand existing research projects and clinical trials. Doing so will compliment past and existing studies and will hopefully clear up much of the confusion surrounding the safety and efficacy of silicone breast implants.

Finally, this bill establishes an open line of communication between federal agencies, researchers, the public health community and patient and breast cancer advocates.

Women, especially breast cancer patients, want and deserve full and open access to silicone breast implants. Therefore, it is critical that these products are safe and effective, and that women are provided complete and frequently updated information about the health risks and benefits of silicone breast implants.

While I unequivocally support a women's right to choose to use silicone breast implants, I believe we have a responsibility to support research efforts that will provide the maximum amount of information and understanding about these products.

Recently, I met with a group of women who had silicone breast implants. One of them shared with me her story about trying to get health insurance after she received her implants. To my dismay, it is standard operating procedures for several health plans to deny health insurance for women with breast implants. And this was a healthy woman! This story only reinforced my belief that silicone breast implants may cause very serious health problems.

The day has come to answer the questions and find out what is causing so many women who have implants to get sick. I hope each of you join me in support of this important legislation.

THE REFORESTATION TAX ACT OF 1999

HON. JENNIFER DUNN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 1999

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, on March 11 when I introduced the Reforestation Tax Act of

1999, my statement focused on the benefits of this legislation to the forest products sector of our economy. Today, as I add eight more cosponsors to this increasingly popular effort, I would like to focus my remarks on the benefits for non-industrial forest landowners.

America's privately-owned forests make up almost 58% of our nation's total forest lands and are one of our most valuable resources. They provide wildlife habitat, maintain watershed health, and are used for a wide array of recreational activities such as hiking, camping, fishing, and hunting. In addition, they provide the foundation for a multi-billion dollar forest products industry.

To ensure that our wildlife habitat and watershed needs as well as a reliable supply of timber is available for the future, we need to encourage industrial and nonindustrial landowners to invest in enhancing their forest ownership. Investing in forest land is risky. Trees can take anywhere from 25 to 75 years to grow to maturity, depending on the type of tree, regional weather, and soil conditions. The key to success is good management, which is costly. Furthermore, fire, disease, floods, and ice storms—events that are uninsurable—can wipe out acres of trees at any time during the long, risky growing period.

The Reforestation Tax Act of 1999 will remove disincentives for private investment in our forests and help with the cost of maintaining them. By reducing the capital gains paid on timber for individuals and corporations by 3 percent each year the timber is held—up to a maximum reduction of 50 percent—forest landowners will be partially protected from being taxed on inflationary gains. While this provision would not fully compensate for the negative tax impact of inflation, it would provide a significant incentive for those forest landowners who must nurture their investment for a long period of time.

Today, many landowners cease reforestation efforts when they reach the current \$10,000 ceiling on expenses that are eligible for the credit. Removing the cap on expenses eligible for the credit would eliminate a disincentive for private forest landowners to plant more trees. Current law allows this \$10,000 in reforestation expenses to be amortized over a seven year period. My legislation not only eliminates the monetary cap but also reduces the amortization period to five years. With these changes, the reforestation tax credit and amortization will encourage forest landowners to operate in an ecologically-sound manner that leads to the expansion of investment in this vital natural resource.

By removing these current law disincentives to sustainable forestry for both our industrial and non-industrial forest landowners, we will increase reforestation and enhance sound environmental management on private land. We believe this will benefit Americans across the country, not just forest landowners.

I am grateful for the broad support the Reforestation Tax Act of 1999 has gained since its introduction, and I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House to make this bill a reality.