

NRA RUNNING OUT OF ARGUMENTS AGAINST GUN SAFETY

(Mr. CONYERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, the House passed the Lofgren motion a week ago instructing the conferees to insist that the comatose gun safety conference meet. A week later, the silence is deafening.

The silence you hear, Mr. Speaker, is the NRA, National Rifle Association, running out of arguments against gun safety. First they said the gun laws do not work, but the Brady law stopped 500,000 felons, fugitives and stalkers from buying guns.

Then they said we need to enforce the laws. So now everyone supports enforcement.

But when you hear the NRA cry its misleading statistics, remember, it is a trick, a trick to divert attention from their opposition to closing the gun show loophole, a trick so that the NRA does not have to explain why it supports laws that allow criminals to get their guns back, and it is a farce. The NRA opposed the laws they now want so badly enforced, and the NRA has made sure that the agencies that enforce the gun laws can only do so with one arm tied behind their back.

PREVENTING A NUCLEAR CATASTROPHE

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, it is common knowledge that nuclear waste is one of the most dangerous and deadly substances known to man. Yet before us today is Senate bill 1287, a bill which calls for the transportation of this deadly material across 43 States, near your neighborhoods, past your homes and school yards.

Overwhelming scientific evidence shows that transporting the unprecedented amount of nuclear waste as required in Senate bill 1287 endangers our environment and the lives of millions of Americans living across those 43 States. The Department of Energy estimates that a rail accident involving a shipment of nuclear waste would result in the radioactive contamination of a 42-square mile area.

Mr. Speaker, a cleanup of this environmental disaster would cost the taxpayers \$620 million and require 460 days just to complete, millions of dollars, hundreds of days spent cleaning up a catastrophe that we can prevent today by voting no on Senate bill 1287.

Protect the lives of your constituents and our precious environment. Vote no on Senate bill 1287.

OVERBURDENING OSHA REGULATIONS HURTING AMERICANS

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, this month the Occupational Safety and Health Administration announced that American homes are dangerous and "a hazard to workers who work in their own home."

Now, if that is not enough to bust your subdermal hematoma, check this out: employers who allow their own employees to work out of their own homes are now liable if their employee gets hurt in their very own home.

Beam me up.

What is next? Will husbands be fined for an aggressive honeymoon in their very own home?

I recommend that Congress ship OSHA to Japan and China, and let them screw those countries up.

I yield back the fact that these overburdening regulations in America are killing American jobs and forcing American companies to move overseas.

RISING GAS PRICES HURTING AMERICANS

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, we have recently celebrated the first day of spring, and very soon Americans will take to the roads for their summer vacations. At least that is what they would like to do.

Unfortunately, rising gas prices may keep many Americans from taking summer vacations this year. Gasoline prices are rising out of control, with the possibility of reaching close to \$2.00 per gallon this summer. These fuel prices have also forced airlines to raise ticket prices.

Mr. Speaker, today our Nation is more dependent on foreign oil than we were during the gas crisis of the 1970s, and Energy Secretary Bill Richardson admits that the Clinton-Gore administration was "caught napping."

Well, while the administration has been sleeping, gas prices have been skyrocketing. I hope the Clinton-Gore administration wakes up soon, because Americans cannot afford much more of these outrageous gas prices.

SUPPORT THE CHILD HANDGUN AND INJURY PREVENTION ACT

(Ms. CARSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to ask my fellow colleagues a very important question: When is enough?

Every day across the country our children are dying due to gun violence, and yet Congress has failed to stop the killing and protect our children.

I want to commend the Smith & Wesson agreement to provide safety locks on their handguns within 60 days and to make them child resistant within a year. I would encourage the manufacturers of Glock, who have the market on the law enforcement guns across this country, to follow suit.

Although this is a monumental step in the right direction for the gun industry, Members of Congress still have a long way to go to protect our children and our communities. My bill, H.R. 515, the Child Handgun and Injury Prevention Act, which I introduced in the first session of this Congress, would require child safety devices on all newly manufactured handguns. We have 72 cosponsors. We need another 363 cosponsors.

Mr. Speaker, we need to provide sensible gun legislation which would mandate child safety protection devices on handguns.

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FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD OPERATE LIKE PRIVATE SECTOR

(Mr. DUNCAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, almost every day we read or hear about some terrible waste of taxpayer dollars by the Federal bureaucracy.

Yesterday, the Associated Press reported that the Veterans Benefits Administration spent more than \$200 million to upgrade its computers, but now it is slower than ever in processing claims.

This terrible inefficiency comes at a time when our veterans are dying at a rate of more than 500,000 a year, no major war for many years, and fewer soldiers and veterans now than in the past. It now takes 205 days to complete a veteran's claim compared to 164 in 1991, and 164 days was slow.

The problem is that Federal employees are paid the same whether they work hard or whether they work easy. There is already a big bonus system in place for outstanding performance.

What we need now is to cut the pay of Federal employees who are not working hard and efficiently and producing good results. This is what happens in the private sector. Real estate agents are not paid unless they sell the house. The Federal Government will always be a sea of ineptitude and inefficiency, as former Energy Secretary Watkins just described it, unless we make it operate more like the private sector.