

tax rate increase does not violate the constitutional requirements that a majority must be present to do business.

The bottom line is this: A majority of the House, under the Constitution, may determine the rules of the proceedings including a requirement that a larger majority may be required to do certain things. For instance, for 125 years in this body we have required a two-thirds vote to suspend House rules and pass legislation under this procedure. No one has ever challenged that rule.

This House has also adopted a rule that says it does not even want to have introduced, let alone considered, certain commemorative bills. We banned bills by the rules of this House, and it was a very good rule which I helped to put in.

So long as no basic constitutional principle or rights are being violated, which they are not in any of these rules, a House majority may adopt the rules of its proceedings regarding the introduction, consideration, or passage of legislation.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is something which, according to the Supreme Court, cannot be challenged in any other body or any other tribunal. A court challenge to our new rules will be dismissed on these very grounds, and thank goodness for the American taxpayer.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAFALCE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. LAFALCE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. HOYER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF THE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT ON THE STATE OF TEXAS

The Speaker pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. GENE GREEN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I take the floor to discuss again the possible effects of the Personal Responsibility Act, the PRA, on the State of Texas. This measure reforms welfare in many ways. Unfortunately, it also repeals a number of nutrition programs such as the school nutrition program and also the senior citizens lunches which, for Texas, would be disastrous.

A recent USDA study says this PRA reveals Texas would lose over a billion dollars in fiscal year 1996 alone. The reduction in funding for Texas represents a 30-percent reduction in funding for

school lunches and senior citizens lunches.

Under the block grant arrangement, Federal funds would first be awarded to the State and then allocated to the programs throughout the State. However, many nutrition programs, such as the school lunch, already go directly to the school districts.

Adding an additional bureaucracy to funnel funds appears contradictory to the premise of the block grants, when everyone agrees we need to cut the layer of bureaucracy not increase, but this Personal Responsibility Act is another layer to take away funding directly to the school children and seniors.

Local school districts could take deep cuts in funding. The Aldine Independent School District, where my children went to school, will have their food budget reduced by over \$2 million and require a lunch costing \$1.35 now to be increased to \$1.75 and maybe even more. This could mean thousands of students in the Aldine area might not be able to afford a nutritious lunch.

The Pasadena School District in Harris County that I also represent part of, 50 percent of their meals are served this year by a free or reduced price of lunches. The number of free meals have tripled in the past 6 years.

The Houston Independent School District provides 118,797 free or reduced meals every year, and they would be reduced.

Tufts University Center for Hunger states that iron deficiency anemia affects nearly 25 percent of the poor children in the United States and impairs their cognitive development.

The Tufts study further states that the longer a child's nutritional and emotional and educational needs go unmet there is a greater overall cognitive deficit.

While I think we can all agree that reforming welfare is needed, the needs of the school children are of paramount importance. This may not be how the people of Texas thought how welfare reform would begin, but it currently is written into this Personal Responsibility Act and will increase the hunger for Texas children and senior citizens.

I would like to paraphrase a letter from the Aldine Independent School District from our executive director of Food Services that says, "We are proud of what we do. Last year we received \$7,900,000 from the Federal Government for reimbursement for free and reduced, prepaid meals and food commodity programs."

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They serve an average of 12,000 breakfasts a day and 24,000 lunches a day to Aldine children. They are proud of what they do, and many students in Aldine get their nutrition from the school cafeteria which enables them to perform better academically in the classroom. The food served at the schools goes directly to that child. It does not go to their parent. It goes to that child, and a hungry child cannot

learn. These children are already here, so we need to nurture them and educate them so they can become healthy and productive members of society. We do not need to turn our backs on society's most least fortunate, our children, our senior citizens. Mr. Speaker, I ask that the House change this Personal Responsibility Act to reflect the needs that are reflected in our children.

FEBRUARY 8, 1995.

The Hon. GENE GREEN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN GREEN: Aldine ISD provides an excellent education to children in middle to lower income families. There are 46,000 students enrolled in Aldine ISD. The Aldine Food Service department received \$7,947,557.71 from the federal government in reimbursements for free, reduced-price, and paid meals and food commodity value in the 1993-94 school year. We serve an average of 12,000 breakfasts a day, and 24,000 lunches a day to Aldine children.

If the block grant proposal is passed as is, with a 30% reduction in the funds provided to Texas, impact on the Aldine Food Service department would be a loss of \$2,384,267.30. This reduction in funds would mean a large increase in breakfast and lunch prices, reduction in labor, and reduction in spending to businesses in this area. Many children in Aldine would not be able to afford the increase in price for lunch and breakfast. Our department has always operated in the black with all excess funds being reinvested into the Child Nutrition Program to benefit students. These cuts would most likely throw us into the red.

We are proud of what we do. Many of the students in Aldine get their best nutrition in the school cafeteria which enables them to perform their best academically in the classroom. The food served at schools goes directly to the child, not through a parent or guardian. A hungry child cannot learn!

These children are already here, so we need to nurture and educate them so that they become healthy, productive members of society. Your support in our endeavor will benefit us all.

Thank you!
Sincerely,

JOYCE H. LYONS,
Executive Director of
Food Services Aldine
ISD.

MELANIE B. KONARIK,
Assistant Director of
Food Services Aldine
ISD.

UNDER THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA WORK IS A PENALTY RATHER THAN A PRIZE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. QUINN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, the Contract With America proposes to put 1.5 million welfare recipients to work by the year 2001.

On its face, that proposal is appealing. Many of us support welfare reform.

The current system does not encourage self-sufficiency and does not always work well.