

of France. The huge Sithe plant pays less than \$1 million in local property taxes. Incredible as it sounds, we are giving tax breaks to foreign investors so they can overcharge American consumers and hurt our industrial competitiveness.

A utility's long-term marginal cost to build and operate a gas-fired power plant is currently 2.5 cents per kilowatt hour, yet the PURPA contract price for most New York state projects is 6 cents per kilowatt hour, with contract lifetimes as long as 25 years. The flat 6-cent rate was canceled in 1992, but all existing and planned projects were "grandfathered" at this absurdly high price.

After 17 years of abuse, Congress has taken a few timid steps to close the door on new PURPA projects, but lawmakers and regulators have been extremely reluctant to revisit existing PURPA rates, on the dubious legal theory that a forced sale constitutes a "contract" between a utility and a PURPA developer. By this logic, so does a mugging. The only difference is scale. American consumers will pay \$37 billion more than the current market price for PURPA electricity over the next five years.

What can Congress do at this point? A solution needs to focus on the most abusive provisions of PURPA, those that permit large-scale, fossil-fueled PURPA projects, as long as a little bit of industrial steam is produced on the side. Small, renewable energy projects represent only 20 percent of PURPA capacity.

A solution also needs to focus on consumers—commercial, residential and industrial—not on the investors and financiers who backed PURPA projects, or on the "sanctity of contracts." Investors were well aware of the risks inherent in an artificial market created by government regulation.

One solution would be to make these projects compete in the wholesale electricity market, as new independent power plants already do. Since the National Energy Policy Act of 1992, the wholesale electricity market has been open to all comers. One-quarter to one-third of the electricity generated in the United States today moves on the competitive wholesale market. Electricity has a market price. This free-market solution would protect non-abusive PURPA projects while offering a fair price to the financially abusive.

Republican Sen. Don Nickles of Oklahoma has opened the debate with a bill in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee that would end new projects but preserve existing rates. This is too timid. Unless these financial boondoggles are ended, several utilities will be in Chapter 11 before this Congress ends.

If the House leadership is serious about getting costly and ineffective regulations off the books, PURPA offers an opportunity to bring together business, labor, and consumers in a \$37 billion reform.

NATIONAL HOME HEALTH CARE MONTH

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 14, 1995

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Home Health Care Month. Illinois has the distinct honor of being recognized as establishing the Nation's first Home Care Association. The Illinois Home Care Council was founded in 1960.

Home care saves money and allows many elderly Americans the chance to spend their

golden years at home with their families. Since its introduction, home care has received broad support across party lines.

Home care has rapidly grown since its start in the early 1960's. Council members sustain its growth through frequent meetings with governmental agencies and other health care associations. By keeping abreast of current issues home care has helped shape different aspects of health care legislation.

Thousands of nurses, therapists, physicians, and home care aides have devoted their lives to providing in-home health care to the sick and disabled. Please join me as I acknowledge all of them for their continued support of home care patients.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF YITZHAK RABIN

SPEECH OF

HON. THOMAS M. FOGLIETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 8, 1995

Mr. FOGLIETTA. Mr. Speaker, Yitzhak Rabin was a noble warrior in his nation's struggle for independence, a cold realist to the dangers posed by her Arab neighbors during times of war, and ultimately a bold statesman in his country's crusade for peace. Today, we mourn the tragic passing of this truly remarkable soldier, statesman, and now peacemaker.

Yitzhak Rabin did not reach the pathway to peace easily. As a young man, he knew all too well the blood, tears and sweat in the fight for an independent Jewish homeland. As a soldier, he was the architect of many of Israel's greatest victories against her Arab neighbors bent on her demise.

Matching his courage on the field of battle, Yitzhak Rabin once again led the Jewish people in the quest for a new tomorrow. Putting down the sword and greeting his former enemies with a handshake, he demonstrated to the world that peace is possible.

His is a noble legacy.

But, to truly pay homage to this legacy, we must continue on the road to peace to which Yitzhak Rabin gave his life. The forces of darkness can only be vanquished and peace brought to this troubled land if we continue the dialogue which has brought former enemies together. However, this road will be difficult and filled with uncertainty, and it is for this reason that now more than ever the United States must stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Israel as we continue this journey.

MOTION TO DISPOSE OF SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 2586, TEMPORARY INCREASE IN THE STATUTORY DEBT LIMIT

SPEECH OF

HON. BRIAN P. BILBRAY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 10, 1995

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, when I was sent to Congress, my top priority was balancing the Federal budget. The people of the 49th district told me over and over again that

Washington's practice of leaving our children debt, instead of a brighter future, was unacceptable.

The new majority in Congress heard this resounding mandate from the public, and we acted. We submitted the first balanced budget since 1969. President Clinton did not submit a balanced budget.

Now we are faced with a stalemate between Congress and the President. I know that there is considerable public anger over what some may see as gridlock. However, I believe that this debate is about principles versus agendas.

In our 7 year Balanced Budget Reconciliation Act, our tax cuts for working families were offset by reducing the growth of non-entitlement spending, while continuing on the glidepath to a balanced budget. We also eliminated the subsidy to the wealthiest senior citizens participating in Medicare part B—single seniors with incomes over \$75,000 and couples with incomes over \$125,000 will begin to pay higher premiums.

President Clinton refuses to embrace our commitment to the principle that we will no longer tolerate mortgaging our children's future; we promised to balance the budget and we kept that promise. President Clinton's agenda is diverting attention from the indisputable fact that he does not support a balanced budget.

The Republican proposal for Medicare part B is included our measure to keep the Government running through December 1. President Clinton's states that his specific objection, and the reason for his veto of this measure, was over Medicare part B.

Medicare part B is the voluntary program which covers doctor's visits and outpatient care. Because the program is voluntary beneficiaries have not paid into a trust fund, as they have for Medicare part A, the hospital portion. Under current law, beneficiaries pay 31.5 percent of the premium for part B. Taxpayers subsidize the rest of the premium.

What we are proposing is to maintain the percentage at its current level—31.5 percent. Because the costs of the program will rise next year, as they have every year, the dollar amount will rise from \$46.10 to approximately \$53 in 1996—an approximately \$8 per month increase.

However, President Clinton is actually advocating dropping the percentage that premiums are calculated at to 25 percent and then raising them substantially again after the 1996 elections. The President is playing election year politics with the Medicare part B issue. He would cut revenues—by dropping the percentage to 25 percent—and then would have to raise the percentage again in order to make up for this shortfall. This is highly irresponsible.

Not only does President Clinton oppose a balanced budget, but this position on Medicare part B means that he believes taxpayers should subsidize a higher share—75 percent—of the costs of this voluntary program. It is exactly this logic which has resulted in the inevitable insolvency of the Medicare program is nothing is done to save it.

We have remained steadfast to the principle of our balanced budget; President Clinton has resorted to a diversionary political agenda rather than negotiating in good faith with Republicans. Nothing less than the future we leave to our children is at stake.

The American people, who sent us here in the first place, know this and, I believe, support our efforts on our children's behalf.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FAIR ELECTIONS ACT

HON. RICK WHITE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 14, 1995

Mr. WHITE. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the Fair Elections Act.

This bill creates a nonpartisan commission which will have 90 days to recommend reforms to the laws that govern congressional elections. The commission's recommendations will be unamendable and placed on a legislative fast track. The time has come for Congress to take itself out of the debate and turn the decisions over to an independent group devoid of politics.

Our current Federal election laws are flawed and have been since they were enacted following Watergate. Several aspects of that initial campaign finance reform effort were found to be unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. However, Congress never substantively revisited the pieces that were left standing. Therefore, the current election laws consist of an incomplete and complex web of regulations—a web which has not worked and is in need of a complete overhaul.

An overhaul is necessary because the current election laws have produced a system that is biased toward incumbent Members of Congress and where special interest financing has a disproportionate influence over the process. These items must be corrected but it must be done in a responsible manner that restores trust and confidence in Congress and those who serve here. We must not, in our haste for reform, further muddle the process by adding regulations which only perpetuate the advantage of incumbency.

Therefore, as we move forward with campaign finance reform, it is important that Congress engage in a substantive debate and approach the process with three objectives firmly in mind: First, we must encourage fair and open elections that provide voters with meaningful information about candidates and issues. Second, we must eliminate the disproportionate influence of special interest financing of congressional elections. And third, we must work to create a system where incumbent Members of Congress do not possess an inherent advantage over challengers.

It is my belief that the Fair Elections Act will result in real campaign finance reform that accomplishes those objectives.

For too long, Congress has allowed partisan politics to influence campaign finance reform efforts. Any campaign finance proposal that has seen the light of day in recent years has essentially been an incumbent protection plan, the bills receiving attention this year not excluded. Congress has not been willing to level the proverbial playing field where incumbent Members of Congress and challengers compete. Nor has Congress been able to move the campaign finance debate above partisan rhetoric and inject legitimate academic discourse and empirical findings into campaign finance reform proposals.

The Fair Elections Act will finally allow Congress to correct the deficiencies of previous

reform efforts. By establishing a 12 member commission in which no more than 4 members may be of the same political party, we will create an environment which is nonpartisan. That is, we will establish an arena where the partisan gloves that have doomed past reform efforts are removed and legislation is produced which incorporates new ideas and solutions rather than recycling the stale rhetoric of recent years.

Real reform is about making sure our Federal campaign finance laws do not protect the incumbent. As a freshman, one of the lessons that I've learned is that Congress is the last body we should count on to do a fair, and quick, job of reforming our campaign finance laws. It has become clear to me that, unless Congress is forced to take an up or down vote on this issue, we are never going to get politics out of the process. No reform passed in this Congress will take effect until the 1998 election cycle. Therefore, rather than simply tinker around the edges, significant reform will only take place by forming a commission to revamp the entire system.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 14, 1995

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the House of Representatives considered a number of bills under suspension of the rules, and I missed two recorded votes.

During the consideration of legislation in the House, I was in California to attend the formal introduction of the International Institute for Surface Transportation Studies, an initiative that was created by Congress as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Infrastructure Act of 1991 (Public Law 102-240).

Had I had been present, I would have voted "nay" on the Archer motion to postpone the vote to override the President's veto on the debt limit legislation, rollcall vote No. 788, and I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 657, legislation to extend the Federal Power Act deadline for construction of three hydroelectric projects in Arkansas, rollcall vote No. 789.

A SPECIAL SALUTE TO FATHER AUSTIN COOPER: MARKING 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 14, 1995

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress, I take pride in acknowledging individuals from my congressional district who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in the community. Today, I rise to salute an individual who has dedicated his life to serving others. For the past 25 years, Father Austin R. Cooper, Sr., has served as rector at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Cleveland, OH. Earlier this month, starting on November 5, 1995, St. Andrew's began a special month-long celebration to mark his tenure as a leader of this historic church. I take special pride in saluting Father Cooper on this important mile-

stone. I want to share with my colleagues some information regarding this gifted individual and his service of ministry.

Father Cooper is the son of the late Benjamin and Louise Cooper, who came to the United States from the West Indies. As a young man, Father Cooper graduated from St. Augustine's College where he received a degree in sociology. He received a master of divinity degree from the Seabury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, IL. On May 13, 1961, Father Cooper celebrated his ordination as a priest. During his ministry, this gifted leader has served in churches located in Florida, New York, and Texas.

Father Cooper was chosen as rector at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church on September 15, 1970. For 25 years, he has been a strong leader of that congregation and a guiding force in the Cleveland community. The church has been a beacon of light, providing programs and services to assist families, the elderly, and youth throughout the community. In addition, under Father Cooper's leadership, St. Andrew's Church was not only able to burn its mortgage 9 years ahead of schedule, but the St. Andrew's Church Foundation which was established in 1983 with \$35,000, now boasts assets in excess of one quarter million dollars.

Mr. Speaker, the awards and honors bestowed upon Father Cooper over the years represent the highest tribute to an individual who has dedicated his life to serving others. Father Cooper is the past recipient of the Distinguished Serve Award and the Black Church Religious Award from the Cleveland Branch of the NAACP. He was also recognized by the executive council of the Episcopal Church for his leadership in the struggle for civil rights.

Father Cooper's name is included in published editions of "Notable Americans" and "Who's Who Among Black Americans." He is the cofounder, first secretary, and past president of the Union of Black Episcopalians. Father Cooper is also the former president of the Cleveland Branch of the NAACP. Other memberships include Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity and the Prince Hall Masons.

Mr. Speaker, Father Austin Cooper is a leader of both national and international prominence. He has visited the White House to participate in briefings and advise leaders on the issues confronting the Nation. In addition, Father Cooper has led delegations to international conferences in East Africa, the West Indies, and other points around the globe.

Throughout his service in the ministry, Father Austin Cooper has benefited from the support of a caring and understanding family. His devotion to his lovely wife of 30 years, Patricia, is unsurpassed. The Coopers are the proud parents of three children: Austin Rellins II, Angela Patricia, and Kimberly Louise. They are also the proud grandparents of Ashley Arianne.

Mr. Speaker, over the years, I have been the beneficiary of the friendship and counsel of Father Cooper. He is a gifted man of God and a devoted leader. On the occasion of his 25th anniversary in service to St. Andrew's, I take special pride in saluting Father Cooper. I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing him Godspeed as he continues on this important mission of service.