

children. Are the children a special interest group Republicans want to do away with?

The voices of the American people are being heard. Do not hurt the children.

CHANGES IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, this is a true story. A man in New York tried to commit suicide by jumping in front of a subway train? He survived, and then he sued the city for damages, and he won \$1.2 million.

This is just the type of case which tells why three-fourths of Americans say that the current liability lawsuit system is in need of major repair.

The American people are sick and tired of our culture of victimization. Murderers go free because they were supposedly abused as children. A woman spills coffee on herself, and then she collects millions of dollars in punitive damages.

Whatever happened to personal responsibility? This is no small matter. Frivolous lawsuits cost Americans \$300 billion in higher prices and in lost wages, but we are going to reform this system, while ensuring that all those with legitimate grievances will have access to the justice system. This is our Contract With America.

SCHOOL LUNCHES NOT JUST A LUXURY, SAYS MISSISSIPPI EDUCATOR

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

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, William Billups, the Principal at the all black Jefferson Elementary School in Jefferson County, MS, rural, poor, and 85 percent black, says that school lunch programs are not just a luxury.

Principal Billups is a Republican, and he says he likes a lot of the changes that are taking place in Washington these days, but ending the Federal School Lunch Program and block granting the money to the States is not his idea of making things better.

Billups calls it a crapshoot. Adding that you just do not know what they will do with the money.

Having watched Mississippi State politics like I have watched politics in my State of Pennsylvania, Billups knows that "They'll take a little here and take a little there. It'll be political." And he adds, we shouldn't be political, about food. Maybe we should send our Republican friends back to Jefferson Elementary School in Jefferson County, MS, to learn that lesson.

PROTECT BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEMS

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

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Norse, chief scientist for the Center for Marine Conservation, reminds us that biodiversity and ecosystems do such things as maintaining climate, removing pollutants from the atmosphere, building soils to sustain the agricultural industry, and protect coastlines, and these are essential, all of the things I just described, to human existence.

Just as our astronauts are absolutely dependent on expensive, engineered life support systems to sustain them in the cold void of space, what sustains the entire Earth in the cold void of space is the life-supporting functions of the world's ecosystems and biodiversity. These things provide the habitat that all species need, including humans.

Unfortunately, our responsibility for being stewards of the land often conflicts with our apparent and obvious need to produce and consume resources.

Just as we would never sell the original Constitution of the United States or the Chesapeake Bay to foreign investors for any amount of money, we should not sell our biological diversity for a percentage. We must reexamine our knowledge on these issues.

SAVE THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM; REJECT CAPITAL GAINS TAX CUT

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I visited three elementary schools in my district, Hamilton and Homewood in Lorain, OH, and Franklin Elementary in Elyria. I talked with students, parents, cafeteria workers, teachers, and administrators about school lunches. The school lunch program, they told me, begun in 1946 by Harry Truman, is a Government program that works. They simply said "Don't mess with it."

Almost one in three children in the Lorain and Elyria public school systems, middle American cities, certainly qualify for some type of assistance in school lunches. That is good, sound, fundamental policy. It helps the kids, for sure. For some of them it is the most nutrition they will get in a day. Just ask some of the physicians and nurses in Lorain County whether they think the school lunch program is a good investment.

I am a budget deficit hawk, but cutting school lunches for working-class and poor kids, Mr. Speaker, simply goes too far. Republican extremists last week, though, increased military spending by \$3.2 billion, and Republican extremists announced that they

will pass a capital gains tax break for the wealthiest 1 percent of our society. Mr. Speaker, this is extremism. It should be rejected.

GOOD NEWS FOR SENIOR COMMUNITIES

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, this week we expect some long-overdue good news for seniors. The Department of Housing and Urban Development will release its new rule defining the "significant facilities and services" requirement for senior communities under the Fair Housing Act. We well remember HUD's first attempt to set such standards—a disaster that sparked vigorous and legitimate protest from seniors across the country. From what we have seen, it appears HUD learned its lesson the second time through. I thank all those who made themselves heard. It made a difference. The new rule recognizes the unique social and physical characteristics of senior communities. And it will enable existing senior-only communities to qualify for the exemption without great expense. It is about time the bureaucracy acts to alleviate the unnecessary fears and anxiety caused by the vagueness in current law. I hope the millions of Americans impacted by this proposed new rule will take a close look and let us know what they think.

UNDER "LOSER PAYS," WINNERS TREATED AS LOSERS

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, the legal bill we are debating today can be summed up in two words.

Loser pays.

Loser pays. An appropriate phrase for this Congress.

Because all across America, people who are winners are being treated like losers.

Hard-working American families who are busy meeting their mortgage and making their car payment and saving for school supplies.

Middle income Americans who are too busy trying to stretch their dollars to attend the thousand dollar a plate dinners for Republican insiders.

Loser pays.

Well, to my Republican colleagues, I guess the people who hold the champagne glasses and wear the designer dresses at their fundraisers are the winners, and the people who serve the drinks and clean up afterward are the losers.

But today we have a chance to preserve the right of Americans to be winners in court by rejecting the lobbyist-sellout the majority calls "legal reform."

When we do, the losers who pay will not be American families, they will be the lobbyists left alone when the lights go out at their party.

THE COMMON SENSE LEGAL REFORM ACT WILL RESTORE THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF LAW

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

Mr. WHITE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to spend just a couple minutes this morning talking about my second year in law school, not the first year; the first year we studied the traditional principles of law and I understood those. In the second year we started to get into the more recent developments that we have seen in our legal system, and those, frankly, I did not often understand.

These are principles, for example, that allow someone who is only responsible for 10 percent of the damages caused to someone to be liable for 100 percent of all the payments that have to be made. It allows someone who is drunk to recover full damages, even though it was his drunkenness or the fact that he was on drugs that caused his own damages.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, that is something I did not understand, and 15 years of practicing law confirmed to me that our legal system is dramatically out of whack. That is why I am so happy to be here today as we debate the Common Sense Legal Reform Act.

This act will do many things, but most important, Mr. Speaker, it will restore the principles that our law used to be based on back to the law today, principles of personal responsibility, principles of right and wrong. I urge my colleagues to vote for it.

A PLEA FOR RESTORED FUNDING FOR LIHEAP

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

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, it is not easy to be poor in this country; it is not easy to be old; and it is not easy to get through a harsh New England or Midwestern winter if you are either.

For that reason, we enacted the low-income energy assistance program, or LIHEAP. In fiscal year 1993, more than 5 million households benefited from funding under LIHEAP. More than 70 percent of these recipients have annual incomes of less than \$8,000.

In my own State of Connecticut, not only are our winters harsh and our economy in deep difficulty—our fuel costs are disproportionately high. The average price of natural gas in Connecticut is 291 percent higher than it is in Alaska. Without LIHEAP, many families may be faced with the starkest of choices: Heat versus gas for the car, or clothes for the children, or a roof over your head.

It is not easy to be poor, or old, or sick. And it's not easy to be overlooked. Let us not ignore these people least able to speak for themselves. Let us restore funding for LIHEAP.

GOP KEEPING ITS PROMISE TO CHILDREN

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

Ms. DUNN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, Republicans are keeping their promises—and that includes the promise to help millions of children currently forced to live on welfare because one of their parents has abandoned them. This Nation's No. 1 natural resource is its children, and they deserve the protection that Republicans offer them in our welfare reform plan.

For decades our Nation has seen a huge welfare bureaucracy continue to grow while Congress stood idly by failing to hold parents accountable for the precious children they have brought into the world and then carelessly chose to abandon. We cannot allow this tragic status quo to continue.

Under the Republican welfare reform bill States will finally get the assistance they need to track down deadbeat parents—especially the 30 percent who move out of the State often to avoid paying child support. Our proposal will help to find these individuals and require them to pay the \$34 billion they owe in child support to the children they have deserted—children who might have been kept off welfare if the parent had kept his commitment.

Mr. Speaker, it is a tough approach but a fair one. And, above all else, it is the approach that can save children from falling into the welfare trap of a lifetime of dependence on the Government.

We can end the status quo. Let us help States find those deadbeat parents, and let's keep our promise to the children.

COMMENDING BISHOP ROY LAWRENCE HAILEY WINBUSH

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

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, when men look through the halls of time, it is leaders in our community who literally stand out, those who shake the very ground on which we walk.

It brings me great pleasure to take this moment to recognize a leader not only in my State, but a leader in this entire Nation, Bishop Roy Lawrence Hailey Winbush, who was recently elected the chairman of the Congress of the National Black Churches, an organization that has an active participation of over 65,000 churches nationwide.

Bishop Winbush took this esteemed position it will be 40 years ago. He

served as a community leader, and made an incredible mark on this country as a leader who recognizes and represented the cities of Alexandria, Lake Charles, Lafayette, Monroe, and Shreveport.

Bishop Winbush also is a general board member of the Church of God in Christ, an organization that represents over 5 and a half million members nationwide. Bishop Winbush is also a public servant. When faced with the problem of crime, community, and family, President Clinton requested his presence, along with others, to address the problem within the African-American community.

I am happy to say this gentleman lives in my community, and I commend him today.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS INCREASED, NOT CUT

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

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, that the other side continues to accuse us of cutting funding for child nutrition programs is ludicrous. I voted in committee to increase the funding child nutrition programs are receiving, yet people are calling my office worried that we are gutting these programs. We are increasing the funding and eliminating the wasteful Federal bureaucracy to send more money to the States. The charge that we are cutting funding is patently false. Mr. Speaker, I would simply ask that Americans look at the facts. It is a fact that we are putting more money in to child nutrition. It is a fact that our bill dismantles part of the Federal bureaucracy. And it is a fact that many Democrats receive significant campaign contributions from Federal bureaucrats every year. All I ask is that Americans consider the facts.

IN OPPOSITION TO CHILD NUTRITION AND SUMMER JOB CUTS

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, I hold in my hands the Constitution of the United States of America, which has in some parts of it the opportunity for all of us to pursue happiness and to establish equality. I simply ask, who is working for the children?

It is interesting to hear expressions about how much these block grants and these votes will provide more dollars for school breakfasts and lunches. In fact, they really do not. What they actually do is cut the dollars, because they do not take into consideration the increased need of our children and our mothers, who are in fact fighting every day to survive.