

deduction and to gradually increase the deduction to 100 percent. This legislation phases in the 100-percent deduction over a period of 4 years. Several bills have been introduced on this issue and it has broad support.

During the committee markup, Mr. CARDIN and I offered an amendment to restore the deduction for 1994 and to increase the deduction to 80 percent for 1995 and 1996. This amendment failed by a vote along party lines.

The deduction of health care costs is an extremely important issue for the self-employed. One quarter of self-employed Americans—3.1 million farmers and craftsmen, professionals, and small business proprietors—have no health insurance. The self-employed are 1½ times more likely to lack essential health care coverage.

We have to do more than increase the deduction to 30 percent. Major health care reform proposals included a provision to allow self-employed workers a 100-percent deduction. The Tax Code should encourage the self-employed to purchase health insurance. This deduction allows businesses to spend more on health care. There are approximately 41 million medically uninsured individuals in the United States. An individual's employment should not determine the tax treatment of their health insurance.

Since I joined the Ways and Means Committee, I have tried to make permanent the deduction of health care costs for the self-employed. It was the first tax issue I undertook as a member of the committee.

Small businesses and the self-employed are the engine of economic growth for our economy. The ranks of the self-employed include the likes of farmers, craftsmen, shopkeepers, day laborers, ranchers as well as accountants, lawyers, and doctors who practice either in partnerships or as sole practitioners. As you can see, this provision affects a wide variety of individuals.

Businesses can deduct the full cost of any health insurance provided to employees. Similar treatment has never been available to the self-employed. Businesses on the average, contribute and fully deduct 80 percent of the total cost of employee health insurance premiums. We should at least consider increasing the deduction for the self-employed to at least 80 percent.

I urge you to support this legislation today and to consider readdressing this issue during this session of Congress. We can do better than 30 percent.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the conference report.

The previous question was ordered.

The conference report was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report just agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

REPUBLICAN CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, Republicans in the House continue to make good on their campaign promises outlined in our Contract With America.

We outlined eight major reforms that we would bring to the House on the opening day and we have accomplished those reforms and many more.

Over these last 86 days, Republicans in the House have brought forward 9 of our 10 bills, meeting our commitment in the contract. Next week we will bring forward the 10th bill, and that bill will be a tax bill to reduce taxes on working families, will cut spending, and help reduce the budget deficit.

Republicans are continuing to work hard, we are keeping our promises, and working hard for the American people who sent us here to change the way Washington does its business. We are attempting to do that.

Next week's bill will reduce taxes on middle-income families, it will reduce taxes on senior citizens and raise the earnings limit on them so those senior citizens can work above the limits that are imposed on them today.

□ 1345

Furthermore, we will reduce capital gains taxes in America to free up capital so that people in America will have a better opportunity at better high-paying jobs.

This is our Contract With America; we are proud to bring it to you, and thank you for your support in helping us move the significant legislation through this new Congress.

TAX CUTS: WHO WILL BENEFIT?

(Mr. WISE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, in responding to the gentleman from Ohio, it is true we are about in the 86th day of the contract for America, a lot of things have happened, and I think we ought to talk for just a moment about this tax cut package because it is kind of like walking in the car lot. And you heard the description of it, it sounds pretty good, it is shiny and glistens; better look under the hood, check the trunk, kick the tires because you may have some problems.

If you are middle income, depending on what your income status is, if you are \$200,000 you are in great shape, you are going to be able to take full advantage of this tax cut. But if you are under \$13,000 a year you are out of luck.

Who are we trying to help around here? If you are the average West Virginia family, income of \$22,000 to \$24,000 a year, not much in store for you. If you are \$100,000, though, 51 percent of the tax benefits are going to go to you; if you are \$75,000 it is around 65

percent, you will like the capital gains tax cut.

If you are over \$100,000 the average amount you will be getting back will be \$1,200; if you are somewhere around \$30,000 a year it is \$26.05, Department of Treasury statistics.

So this is what is on the floor next week. And of course, where would this tax cut go, how do you pay for it? You pay for it by cutting other programs, and so those cuts do not go to reducing the deficit, which in my town meetings is what two-thirds of the people are saying that they want done.

You give a tax cut basically to the privileged few, and you cut the very programs that help the bulk of Americans. School lunch, school breakfast, welfare reform, so many of the other cuts, rescission programs, summer jobs program that put young people to work, those are the programs being cut.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would just urge Members to look very closely at this last item of the contract. If it is the diadem in the crown of the contract, it has a lot of tarnish to it, and it is going to be important to debate it fully next week.

CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT SANE GUN LAWS

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). Without objection, the gentlewoman from Colorado is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, today is a very tragic day because it is the 14th anniversary of the shooting of President Reagan and his press secretary, Jim Brady. And tomorrow is going to mark the beginning of a campaign to protect sane gun laws by 82 national organizations representing 88 million Americans.

Why are these organizations mobilizing? Tomorrow they will speak for themselves, but they are beginning their congressional campaign tomorrow to make sure, to make sure that Federal gun laws that make sense will not be repealed after the 100-day contract period is finished.

Mr. Speaker, I will include for the RECORD at this point an article from Newsweek magazine calling on pulling the trigger on guns.

This article, I think, is a very important one, and tells why these many, many organizations and Americans are very, very frightened, that some of the important gains we made after this tragedy that happened 14 years ago are apparently about to be assaulted and repealed in May of this year, right here in this very House.

So, I hope that everybody thinks about it. When you look at the Brady bill we know that last year it stopped

70,000 felons and other prohibited buyers from getting guns. That is very, very critical.

In my State of Colorado this week we saw all sorts of backsliding on gun legislation, with people trying to push easy access to concealed weapons. This is not what this country needs.

So I salute this campaign to protect sane gun laws, and I certainly hope all of us work very hard to hold the gains we made in these last 14 years after the tragic event that happened 14 years ago today.

Mr. Speaker, today—March 30—marks the 14th anniversary of the shooting of President Reagan and his press secretary, Jim Brady. And tomorrow marks the beginning of a campaign to protect sane gun laws by 82 national organizations representing 88 million members. Why are these organizations mobilizing? Because tomorrow also marks the beginning of a congressional campaign to repeal Federal gun laws, beginning with hearings and culminating in floor consideration in May of a bill to repeal the assault weapon ban.

Take heed, America. Sensible gun laws are at risk. That means that you are at risk. The gun lobby is working hard to weaken the Brady law's waiting periods and background checks that screen out criminals, as well as the assault weapons ban and the enforcement of Federal firearm laws. Yet we know Brady works—last year it stopped about 70,000 felons and other prohibited buyers from getting handguns over the counter.

In my State of Colorado, the House this week passed a bill to ease access to concealed weapons. It would require the State to issue concealed weapons permits to anyone who meets minimum qualifications. We hear the sheriff of El Paso County is handing out concealed weapons like candy. The bill led one Democratic House Member to predict that traffic altercations and arguments in bars would turn into homicides in a floodgate of lawlessness. We might as well return to the Wild West.

This backsliding from sane guns laws is troubling. Putting more guns on the street will not make our communities safer. And it certainly won't make our children safer.

PULLING THE TRIGGER ON GUNS

Even as States ease restrictions on concealed weapons, the gun lobby is eyeing a far-reaching rollback of federal gun-control laws. Although top priority is repeal of last year's assault-weapons ban, another measure being eyed by a task force appointed by House Speaker Newt Gingrich would wipe out all other gun-related sections of last year's crime bill—even the ban on juvenile handgun possession. "The sooner we get rid of that iniquitous bill, the better," says a top National Rifle Association official.

To smooth the way, House Republicans plan a series of hearings beginning this week at which crime victims will testify how firepower saved their lives. One woman shopkeeper, for example, is expected to tell how she blew away an assailant with an AR-15 assault weapon. "The idea is to show firearms are an important part of public safety and self-defense," says a GOP staffer. Gun-control advocates predict the hearings will backfire. "They're playing to a small band of extremists," says New York Rep. Charles Schumer.

NAMING CERTAIN ROOMS IN HOUSE WING OF THE CAPITOL IN HONOR OF FORMER REPRESENTATIVE ROBERT H. MICHEL

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Oversight be discharged from further consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 65) naming certain rooms in the House of Representatives wing of the Capitol in honor of former Representative Robert H. Michel, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I would ask the gentleman from California if he would kindly explain the purpose of the resolution and the three amendments that he wishes to offer which are at the desk.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FAZIO of California. I am happy to yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding. House Resolution 65, which was unanimously approved in the Committee on House Oversight on March 8, 1995, with the three technical amendments that we will offer, is a resolution that was introduced by Speaker GINGRICH on February 8, 1995, to do as we sometimes do in this body, name certain rooms after a figure who indicates a significant benchmark or milestone in the history of this House, and the resolution by Speaker GINGRICH asks that the House wing in the Capitol be named after former representative Bob Michel.

Clearly, by unanimous agreement the committee thought that it was most appropriate to do. Mr. Michel retired after 38 years of distinguished service in this House, including 14 years as the Republican leader, the longest tenure of any Republican in that capacity.

The rooms to be so designated will be H-230, 231, and 232. Those are the rooms that Mr. Michel occupied as the minority leader and are currently the rooms occupied by the Speaker of the House.

I will offer the technical amendments to the title, preamble, and text of the resolution which were recommended by legislative counsel after the gentleman withdraws his reservation.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I yield to the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT], the leader for the Democratic side.

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, it is with tremendous pleasure that I join in supporting this resolution which would name a suite of offices in the honor of our friend and colleague, Bob Michel, who retired last year from his post as minority leader.

Undoubtedly true, that Bob and I disagreed on most legislation, and when

we disagreed he was a very tough adversary, but he was the very best the Republican Party had to offer. In times of conflict as in times of consensus, Bob Michel led his party with grace and class and decency that inspired confidence on both sides of the aisle.

Maybe it was the depth of his understanding of the legislative process and how to make that process work for the people, an understanding that he honed over 38 years of dedicated service to the people of Peoria, IL.

Maybe it was the way that he worked for consensus within his own conference, bridging differences to be sure at the end of the day we could make progress on important legislation.

Or perhaps it was the way he knew when to fight for his party or when to put partisanship aside and work to advance the goals that transcend party or politics.

Or maybe it was simply his love for this institution, his faith in our democracy, and the way he became part of all of our lives.

But I know that the House will never be the same without a Bob Michel. And he should know that he has earned the admiration of both his colleagues and his constituents. I am grateful for his 38 years of service to the United States of America, and I am grateful that all of us can call him a friend, and I am delighted that we will be naming these rooms he once occupied in his own name so that his name, his memory, and his example will forever inspire all who will walk through these halls.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, and I obviously do not intend to, I want to speak out of the deepest possible respect for the wisdom and leadership of former minority leader Michel as well. Bob Michel exemplified the highest ideal of bipartisanship. When he gave his word, you could rely on it. He was fair and compassionate.

His door was open to Members of both parties, junior and senior Members alike. He was a bridge builder. And as minority leader he was an honest and straightforward person.

He was a staunch defender of minority rights and now we in the Democratic Party know better than ever just how important it was to have someone of Bob Michel's stature be the person who continued to insist on the rights that the minority in this Congress will always maintain.

I have nothing but praise for Bob Michel and believe this resolution is a fitting way for the House to recognize the contributions of one of its most exemplary Members in its modern history, and I look forward to the actual dedication.

Further reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. LIVINGSTON].

Mr. LIVINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding. I want to add my thoughts to the accolades given