

professional and administrative roles including planning hearings, producing studies, and generally making the trains run on time.

Nita has worked with a number of JEC members including our distinguished majority leader, Mr. ARMEY, Senator ROTH, Congressman "BUD" BROWN, and many others.

Over the years Nita has impressed all of us with her dedication, creativity, and professionalism.

Nita has worked on the most successful JEC projects from the formation of what would become the Reagan Economic Revolution to the New Republican Renaissance.

Nita Morgan will be sorely missed. But we do wish her nothing but the best in her new position with the Business Leadership Council.

Nita, good luck and godspeed.

TIME TO APPOINT OUTSIDE COUNSEL TO INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS AGAINST SPEAKER

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

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to once again appoint an outside counsel, for the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct has not followed the process as described here in the Rules of Official Conduct.

These rules state that after receiving a complaint, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct then determines whether the complaint, here against the Speaker, merits further inquiry and then it issues a preliminary inquiry. That is found in rule XV.

If so, then a subcommittee is appointed to investigate, under rule XVII, whether there is reason to believe a violation has occurred. Then the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct conducts a trial-like hearing.

Unfortunately, the resolution for a preliminary inquiry has never been filed. But the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, according to its chairperson, has begun a process that is "flexible" and "a process that its own committee Members can feel good about."

Madam Speaker, ethics should not be flexible because the subject of the investigation is the Speaker. I want all Members and the American people to feel good about this investigation and to restore the faith and confidence in this institution.

Please appoint an outside independent counsel.

TIME TO CUT SUGAR SUBSIDIES

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, one thing maybe we can agree on, on a bi-

partisan basis, is the sugar program. In a Congress where we are revising and cutting and reducing welfare, education, farm programs right and left. We are restructuring Medicare and the School Lunch Program. We are going after all commodities: Peanuts, cotton, wheat, the Market Promotion Program. The list is endless.

But, Madam Speaker, what stands alone as the sweetest deal of all? Sugar. And the result: The world price of sugar is 11 cents per ton; the domestic price is 24 cents a ton.

But does it really cost the taxpayers? Not directly, because they have got the USDA in on the thing. Who pays the difference though? Shoppers at the grocery stores, and it costs American consumers \$1.4 billion.

Who is getting rich on it? Plenty of sugar farmers out there. There are 33 farmers involved in the sugar program in Florida alone that receive over a billion dollars in payments. One gets about \$65 million a year.

Madam Speaker, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MILLER] and the gentleman from New York [Mr. SCHUMER] have a bill to eliminate the sugar program, and I believe, Madam Speaker, we should bring this debate to the floor of the House for a yes-or-no vote.

FULL INQUIRY INTO ETHICS COMPLAINTS IS MERITED

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

Mr. WARD. Madam Speaker, I want to share some newspaper quotations from the Hartford Courant, the newspaper in Hartford, CT. In an article in Wednesday's edition, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct chairman, NANCY JOHNSON, was asked why she was treating ethics cases this year differently than she, in a 1988 letter, said such cases should be treated.

In 1988, Chairman JOHNSON insisted that the committee conduct a full inquiry into every complaint against then Speaker Jim Wright. Mrs. JOHNSON's explanation in the article is that, and I quote from the article, "This is Newt speaking." In 1988, she said that.

Yes, the very man today who is of a different opinion now than he was then; than he and Committee on Standards of Official Conduct Chair JOHNSON were then.

Madam Speaker, if in 1988 we should have had a full, no-subject-areas-ignored-and-avoided inquiry, then we should today. We should do it the same today as they insisted we do it in 1988.

DEMOCRATS REMAIN COMMITTED TO LEVELING IMPULSE

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

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, since the mid-1800's, Western intellectuals

have been consumed by what is known as the leveling impulse. The leveling impulse is the idea that Government can create a more just society by redistributing wealth. Today, the modern Democrat Party is grounded in the leveling impulse. To Democrats, any talk of a tax decrease is absolutely sinful.

This is why they rail at any attempt by this Republican Congress to give working American families a \$500-per-child tax credit. That is why they scream when reduced capital gains are mentioned. And that is why they fight to preserve every silly Government spending project ever devised.

Madam Speaker, Democrats claim we are raiding Medicare to give tax breaks for the rich. This is beyond ludicrous. Our tax cuts are more than offset by shrinking the bureaucratic government. The real problem here is that Democrats are still convinced that all money belongs to them and that government is a miracle worker.

INDEPENDENT COUNSEL NOW FOR COMPLAINTS AGAINST SPEAKER

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Madam Speaker, with September drawing to a close, troubling ethical questions concerning the process of ethics in this House linger on.

As a recent supreme court justice, I am concerned about the rule of law, about ethical standards, about the precedents of this House. The precedent of this House is that in every significant case since 1979, before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, an independent counsel has been proposed and has been implemented.

The words of the gentlewoman who heads that Committee on Standards of Official Conduct today are that she thinks that naming an outside counsel could get in the way of the committee. And she says, and these are really her words this week, "The letter of the law is not compelling to me. My goal is to have a process that the committee members feel good about."

We do not need to feel good. We need the letter of the law. We need the rule of law.

There is another precedent. It's called the Packwood precedent. Delay, delay, delay, until the people of this country demand action. That is what they need to do about Speaker GINGRICH.

AMERICA MUST REJECT REPUBLICAN MEDICARE PLAN

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

Mr. HILLIARD. Madam Speaker, after only 1 day of hearings, the Republicans have finally released their plan

to kill Medicare. The American people know exactly what the Republicans are doing.

The Republican plan is to cut \$270 billion out of Medicare to pay for a tax cut for the rich. Because of this, seniors' premiums will be increased, seniors will be put out of nursing homes, medical services will decrease, drug costs will increase. Finally, Madam Speaker, under the Republican plan, the elderly will die prematurely.

America must reject this cold, this cruel, and this heartless Republican plan to kill Medicare.

APPOINTMENT OF ADDITIONAL CONFEREES ON S. 440, NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM DESIGNATION ACT OF 1995

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WALDHOLTZ). Without objection, the Chair appoints the following additional conferees on the Senate bill (S. 440) to amend title 23, United States Code, to provide for the designation of the National Highway System, and for other purposes.

As additional conferees for the consideration of sections 105 and 141 of the Senate bill, and section 320 of the House amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. BLILEY, BILIRAKIS, BARTON of Texas, GREENWOOD, DINGELL, WAXMAN, and BROWN of Ohio.

As additional conferees for the consideration of section 157 of the Senate bill, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. YOUNG of Alaska, HANSEN, and MILLER of California.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will notify the Senate of the change in conferees.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1977, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

Mr. REGULA. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 231, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 1977), making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUNNING). Pursuant to the rule, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of September 21, 1995, at page H9431.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. REGULA] will be recognized for 30 minutes, and the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. YATES] will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. REGULA].

(Mr. REGULA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today with somewhat mixed emotions. I had hoped to bring my first Interior appropriations conference agreement, as chairman, to the floor with unqualified support. Unfortunately, there are some divisions among conferees as you will note from the conference report.

Mr. Speaker, the essence of democracy is compromise. In my 9 months as chairman I have learned that our form of government is truly a democracy, and I would not change that. Despite that fact, I, like many of our conferees, am not happy with every provision in the bill. However, the conference agreement before you today is an excellent example of how we on the Committee on Appropriations have taken our pledge to balance the budget very seriously.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before you today charts a new course, a fiscally responsible course, but a course which also provides for the protection and enhancement of our public lands, preserves the critical science and research capabilities, and maintains health and education programs for native Americans and, I would add, very important, respects private property rights.

While I believe this bill is fiscally very responsible and represents common sense, the action of the conferees with respect to mining is in direct opposition to the views of a bipartisan majority of this body, as was evident by the vote on the Klug amendment. I understand there will probably be a motion to recommit and each Member will have to make his or her own decision on the mining policy issue.

Mr. Speaker, the bill is 10 percent, or \$1.4 billion below 1995 spending levels. This represents real savings, both now and in the future. By not starting new programs or construction, we save costs in future years. The bill terminates agencies and programs and puts others on notice that Federal funding will terminate in the near future. This bill is not business as usual.

We are not cutting at the margins with the hopes that we can keep programs on life support until more money becomes available in the future. Instead, we have terminated lower priority initiatives to provide scarce resources to meet the many critical needs of our public lands, to ensure quality health and education for native Americans and to promote quality science and research in energy and public land management.

Specifically, four agencies are eliminated: the National Biological Service; Bureau of Mines; DOE's Office of Emergency Preparedness; and Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. In addition, more than 35 individual programs have been eliminated.

With respect to the National Biological Service, an issue of some interest to many in this body, let me reiterate that the NBS has been eliminated. However, as many agreed, the core nat-

ural resource research activities, critical to responsible stewardship of our public lands, has been preserved and will be carried out by what is widely recognized as the premier unbiased, credible, specific agency, the U.S. Geological Survey.

This will ensure that critical research, critical scientific information will continue, and that it will be conducted independent of regulatory influence or agendas and will ensure scientific excellence.

In keeping with our commitment to reduce spending, we have also cut funding for this activity by 15 percent.

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As to the endangered species program, we are waiting on the authorizing committee inasmuch as the authorization for the Endangered Species Act has expired and we hope that the Committee on Resources will bring out a bill. The appropriation recognizes that we are waiting for that action.

The National Endowment for the Arts is funded at the House-passed level of \$99.5 million. The statement of the managers also makes it clear that it is the intent of the House to terminate Federal support for the NEA after fiscal year 1997. Again, this is consistent with the authorizing bill that has come out of the committee of jurisdiction.

Funding for land acquisition, as in the House-passed bill, is not earmarked and is funded at 40 percent below last year's funding levels. This ensures that the limited funding will be directed only to high priority projects for the four land management agencies. If there is a critical piece of land, there will be funding available, but we do no earmarking.

Contrary to what Members may have read in their local press, passage of this bill will not force the closure of one single national park or recreation area. No park will be forced to close under this agreement, as funding for park operations is over 1995 levels by \$5 million. I would point out that this is in the face of a 10-percent reduction overall. We have kept the funding for those agencies, those facilities where the public interfaces at pretty much 1995 levels in terms of operations. In the case of the parks, it is \$5 million over 1995. There certainly is not reason whatsoever to close any park.

To achieve that, increased savings were made in lower priority park programs such as land acquisition and construction. Those things are nice to do, but we did not have the funding to achieve that. Initially, I tried to divide the responsibilities into three categories, must-do's, need-to-do's and nice-to-do's. Some of these are nice to do, but we had to take care of the must-do's.

Construction has been reduced by more than 14 percent, and land acquisition is down nearly 44 percent. Overall—and that is including every dimension of the park activity—funding is