

eager to invest in our Nation's natural heritage." I agree. The American people don't want to see their national parks succumb to the ravages of time and use. But neither are they willing to see the integrity of the parks compromised by commercial exploitation. Let's give the National Park Service the same financial opportunities that our schools and community water systems currently possess—the ability to utilize capital development bonds. I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

A NATURAL DISASTER PROTECTION PARTNERSHIP ACT

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 12, 1996

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a Natural Disaster Protection Partnership Act. This legislation was introduced by the late, distinguished Member of this body who we now greatly miss, Mr. Emerson. It is imperative that we take Mr. Emerson's lead and continue to work for the passage of this disaster plan into law. Without a natural disaster protection partnership plan, this country will face a severe financial crisis.

As a Representative from Florida, I am very concerned with the destruction caused by natural forces such as hurricanes and tornadoes. Last year was one of the most active hurricane seasons ever. The destruction caused by these hurricanes is tremendous, as can be seen by Andrew and Opal. Moreover, extensive damage is seen every year by other types of natural disasters such as earthquakes in California and floods in the Plains States.

As a result of the rising costs of these natural disasters, consumers in these disaster prone areas face difficulty obtaining affordable homeowner's insurance. Moreover, taxpayers have been forced to spend \$45 billion in 6 years for these disasters because homeowners and States have been unprepared to handle these catastrophes. Clearly, we must act now before FEMA's funds are depleted and homeowners cannot purchase insurance to protect them from these disasters.

In light of Hurricane Bertha, which is threatening the southeastern coast, we must pass a disaster plan that mitigates physical damage, provides insurance protection for homeowners and businesses and reduces Federal disaster costs. I encourage each of you to contact Chairman BOEHLERT and express your support for passing this legislation this year.

SUPPORTING THE NATURAL DISASTER PROTECTION PARTNERSHIP ACT

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 12, 1996

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my Florida colleagues in supporting H.R. 1856, the Natural Disaster Protection Partnership Act. As the east coast battens down the hatches to brace for Hurricane Bertha, the time is ripe for passing legislation de-

signed to promote a responsible Federal disaster policy.

Last Congress, in the aftermath of the Northridge, CA, earthquake, the bipartisan House leadership appointed a task force on disasters on which I was proud to serve. As part of this task force, we met with various experts on disaster management policy, and through the leadership of Bill Emerson, we were able to turn many of this task force's recommendations into legislative language in the form of H.R. 1856, the Natural Disaster Protection Partnership Act.

I believe all of us here today recognize the need for an efficient, effective Federal disaster policy. There is no doubt that we must assist victims when a disaster strikes, but business as usual just isn't acceptable now as our enormous Federal deficit continues to grow. Those of us in Florida who survived Hurricane Andrew know firsthand how destructive the forces of nature can be, and how costly. Hurricane Andrew, at the time the task force was formed, had the illustrious honor at roughly \$20 billion of being the costliest federally declared natural disaster of all time in the United States.

By emphasizing personal responsibility through private insurance, promoting sensible, cost-effective disaster loss mitigation programs and encouraging the creation of a privately-funded pooling mechanism that allows for the spreading of disaster risk and minimizes the liability of the Federal Government, we can lessen the costs incurred by the Federal Government and in turn the individual taxpayer.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Natural disaster Protection Act and helping the Federal Government achieve a sound national disaster policy that can help prevent loss of life and personal injury as well as reduce costs.

ELECTRONIC FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AMENDMENTS OF 1996

HON. RANDY TATE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 12, 1996

Mr. TATE. Mr. Speaker, in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Freedom of Information Act [FOIA], joined by my colleagues on the Government Management, Information and Technology Subcommittee, including Chairman STEVE HORN, Ranking Minority Member CAROLYN MALONEY, and Representative COLLIN PETERSON, today I introduce the Electronic Freedom of Information Amendments of 1996.

The Freedom of Information Act [FOIA] was enacted in 1966 in order to provide the public with a presumptive and clear right of access to government information. In the 30 years since the implementation of the original Freedom of Information Act, our Nation has witnessed enormous technological advances. The laptop computer, cellular phone, fax, and Internet are just a few of the technological achievements that have brought us into the information age.

The Electronic Freedom of Information Amendments of 1996 [EFOIA] makes it clear that FOIA applies to Government records in any form, including electronic records, while increasing on-line access to Government information. This legislation successfully harnesses

the benefits of computer technology and, with common-sense reforms, delivers to the public increased Government efficiency, accessibility, and responsiveness.

The Freedom of Information Act turns 30 this year—it is time to bring the law into the modern information age, using cutting edge technology to deliver cutting edge service to the American people. We in Congress, as their public servants, should aspire to nothing less. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support enactment of this bipartisan and important legislation this year.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 11, 1996

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3755) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997, and for other purposes:

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the fiscal year 1997 Labor-HHS appropriations bill. While it is much improved over last year's bill, this legislation does not meet the needs of millions of Americans who rely on this funding for education, job training, workplace safety, and family planning.

On the positive side, I am pleased that this legislation increases funding for health research at the National Institutes of Health and related agencies. This bill provides \$12.7 billion for the NIH, an increase of 7 percent over fiscal year 1996. This investment in medical research is cost-effective and will help improve our Nation's health. As a result of this research new medical treatments will be discovered that will lower health care costs and improve the lives of patients with AIDS, cancer, heart disease, Alzheimer's, and other illness. As the representative for Texas Medical Center, I am keenly aware of the tremendous advances being made by medical researchers and of the funding pressures researchers face for the health of our Nation and for the good of our economy, a strong NIH budget is one investment we must continue to make even as we seek to balance the Federal budget.

But the rest of this bill fails to set the right priorities, especially in the area of education. Our constituents do not want this Congress to cut funding for education. In the Houston area, cuts of over \$475 million in title I compensatory education for economically disadvantaged children will hurt every one of our school districts, including Fort Bend, Houston, Pasadena, and Goose Creek. These cuts could result in fewer teachers, larger classes and higher local property taxes.

Furthermore, cuts in bilingual education and the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program will dramatically hurt the ability of schools to provide adequate education for thousands of Hispanic-Americans and to meet the safety needs

of all Houston area students. The complete elimination of the Goals 2000 and Eisenhower Professional Development Programs will also prevent schools from incorporation innovative, locally developed teaching techniques into the classroom.

This bill also dramatically cuts Student Financing Aid Programs. Too many Americans are already struggling because of the high cost of higher education. As American workers face increased foreign competition, higher education is more necessary than ever before. Over 82 percent of undergraduates at Houston's Rice University, one of the premier universities in the United States, receive financial aid by cutting Perkins loans and eliminating State student incentive grants, we are sending a message to America's youth that higher education will be harder to afford. That is wrong.

This legislation also reflects the Republican leadership's disdain for American workers. It recklessly and foolishly cuts the Occupational Safety and Health Administration budget by 13 percent and the National Labor Relations Board by 20 percent.

The two agencies responsible for ensuring worker's safety and rights are singled out for dramatic and unnecessary cuts. The Republican leadership places unnecessary restrictions on both OSHA and the NLRB on how the perform their mission.

Finally, I would like to point out that members of this Congress once again have attempted to gut our Nation's Family Planning Program. Title X provides essential health care services for thousands of low-income women each year. Without family planning, American women would not have access to the safety medical care possible, and I am pleased that the Congress rejected any attempt to limit or eliminate this vital program.

In summary, I urge my colleagues to oppose this misguided legislation because of its dramatic effects on the America's working families. It does not meet the needs of millions of Americans who rely on funding for education, job training, workplace safety, and family planning, and should be rejected.

LET US EXTEND MFN FOR CHINA

HON. JACK FIELDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 12, 1996

Mr. FIELDS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to endorse the extension of most-favored-nation trading status with China. I believe that only by doing so can the United States play a role in promoting democracy, individual freedom, and free market economics in China. Extending MFN for China is in the mutual interest of China and the United States.

Most favored nation [MFN] is merely a term used to indicate the standard or general tariff treatment the United States extends to virtually all countries in return for reciprocal tariff treatment for American exports.

Currently our fifth largest trading partner, China accounts for \$12 billion in annual American exports. Our farmers, industrial equipment producers, high technology firms, and others all export American goods to China. Last year, the United States sold China 10

percent of our wheat and corn, 40 percent of our fertilizer, \$270 million in heating and cooling equipment, \$330 million in industrial machinery, \$710 million in telecommunications equipment, and \$1.2 billion in civilian aircraft.

Manufacturing these goods has created over 200,000 high-skill and high-wage American jobs. In Texas alone, foreign trade has produced more than 45,000 such jobs. If we fail to extend MFN to China, the United States will lose the reciprocity that MFN status makes possible. This would increase tariffs paid by American firms selling their products in China from an average rate of 5 percent to an average rate of 50 percent, and in some cases 100 percent. As a result, American exports to China would be dramatically reduced, many of the 200,000 American jobs could be lost to overseas competitors, and imports from China—including footwear, toys, and apparel—would become more expensive for American consumers.

China's economy is expanding at an astounding rate. It is estimated that by the year 2002 China will have the largest economy in the world and will continue to be a major importer of American products. The World Bank projects that China will spend \$750 billion on infrastructure in the next decade. If the United States scales back its trade relations with China, American firms will not be in a position to participate in this rapidly expanding Chinese economy in the years ahead. Europe and Asia will enjoy unrestricted access to the rapidly growing Chinese market, putting the United States at a competitive disadvantage.

I recently traveled to China and witnessed firsthand the positive impact the information age is having on the Chinese people and the Chinese government. China is predicted to become the largest market for American exports of telecommunications equipment in the next decade. Not only are the economic implications behind this new openness important, but the social ramifications as well. China's increasing desire for high technology products and information will be mutually beneficial to both the United States and China economically, politically, and socially.

Human rights and democracy are not promoted or enhanced by shutting off the flow of technology and information. Open, fair, and competitive trade is the most effective means by which the United States can play a role in enhancing the economic and political well-being of the Chinese people.

MFN should not be an issue the Congress addresses on an annual basis. This trade status has been extended to virtually every nation around the world. In order to strengthen Sino-American trade relationships, the United States should treat China no better—but certainly no worse—than we treat our other trading partners.

Congress should end the practice of linking human rights conditions in China to the issue of MFN status for China. The United States maintains mutually beneficial economic relationships with many countries around the world with which we have political or cultural differences. These differences should be addressed in the diplomatic arena, not by taking actions likely to trigger a trade war between two great trading partners.

For all these reasons, it is imperative that the United States maintain MFN trade relations with China now and in the years to come. The revocation of China's MFN status

is not in the best interest of the United States. Mr. Chairman, let us do what is best for American and Chinese workers, democracy in China, and free trade. Let us extend MFN for China.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 11, 1996

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3755) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997, and for other purposes:

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak in opposition to the Istook amendment.

Title X is the only Federal program that prevents unintended pregnancy and reduces the need for abortion. In my State alone, 300,000 women and teens rely on title X for their only reproductive health care.

The radical right is once again putting politics ahead of people by attempting to require young people to obtain their parents' consent for family planning and other health care services. This requirement will cause many teens to delay, or, worse yet, avoid seeking essential health care services—placing their health, future fertility, and even their lives at risk.

I agree that ideally, teens should be encouraged to talk to their parents about all health care decisions, including those of reproductive health. But, we don't live in an ideal world, and millions of teens don't live in ideal families. Study after study has shown that when parental consent is mandated by law, adolescents will delay or avoid seeking needed care.

How can anyone oppose such an essential program? Whose best interests are being served? Certainly not those of American teenagers, families, and women.

Once again, the new majority has put the radical right's agenda ahead of good government.

Consent to give teens the right to make good health decisions, and the right to basic health care services. Oppose the Istook amendment.

LET'S MOVE FORWARD WITH THE PORTABILITY BILL

HON. J. DENNIS HASTERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 12, 1996

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, allow me to quote from an article in this past Tuesday's Washington Post: Senator Kennedy told his health care aide, "My political sense is that Clinton gets something—if the health reform bill is enacted—but Dole does, too." His aide replied, "If it fails * * * it helps us more than