

The Members who vote for the repeal of the assault weapons ban are voting for a bill that will resume manufacturing and importation of killing machines. After President Bush banned the importation of assault weapons in 1989, the number of imported assault weapons traced to crime dropped 45 percent the next year. If we vote against repealing the ban, we will be giving the assault weapons ban the time it deserves to reduce gun violence and save more lives.

I ask that my colleagues vote against this bill. We can save more lives by keeping assault weapons off our streets.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: CONTRIBUTIONS TO A STRONGER, MORE PROSPEROUS ECONOMY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 29, 1996

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as we celebrate Women's History Month, to honor the contributions of women to our economy as part of the labor force and as business owners around the country and especially in the State of New Jersey.

In some ways, the facts speak for themselves. The number of women in the paid work force has almost doubled in the last 20 years. Women in the work force grew from 36.2 million in 1974 to 60.2 million in 1994.

There are many talented women that are making enormous contributions to business and industry in the State of New Jersey. During a recent series of visits to companies located in the 11th district of New Jersey, I had the opportunity to meet and speak with many women who have risen or are climbing to the top positions and management in their respective companies.

In addition to those outstanding women in corporations, the State of New Jersey is ranked ninth in the Nation in the total number of women-owned businesses with a recent total of 164,798. I am especially encouraged because this number increased in my own State by 40 percent over a period of 5 years.

Nationally, women are starting businesses at twice the rate of men and the Small Business Administration anticipates that women will own 50 percent of all small businesses in America in the 21st century. These women-owned businesses employ more people than all Fortune 500 firms combined. Women employers are also bringing more than their economic achievements to the workplace; they influence and change the workplace for all employees by being more likely to offer flexible work arrangements, child care and health care benefits.

As women continue to make their mark in the workplace as employers and employees they face many challenges—access to child care, pay equity, educational opportunities, and access to capital and investors. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor these achievements. As our economy continues to change and we face new challenges as we enter the 21st century, I believe we can count on these entrepreneurs and executives to help lead the way to a stronger and more prosperous America.

LIVABLE WAGE ACT

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 29, 1996

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation intended to take a major step forward toward a livable wage for working men and women in our country. Too often American workers are forced to take jobs that pay substandard wages and have few or no health benefits. At a time when U.S. corporations are making record profits and the economy is strong and stable, it seems unreasonable that working families must struggle and cannot make ends meet. It is unconscionable for corporations to sacrifice fair wages for their workers in pursuit of inflated profit margins, and it is doubly so when these businesses are performing work on behalf of the Federal Government—when the workers' taxes which pay for Federal services and products perpetuate such depressed compensation.

My legislation is straightforward, simple and just; if you are a Federal contractor or subcontractor you will be required to pay wages to your employees that exceed the official poverty line for a family of four. This would be fair and equitable compensation achieved by law. When a business works for the Federal Government and benefits from working families' taxpayer dollars, at the very least it should be required to pay its employees a livable wage.

As of March 4, 1996, the official poverty line for a family of four is \$15,600. This is obviously not an exorbitant wage. Imagine a family of four trying to live on this amount or less. It may not seem possible, but it is done everyday in this country. There is a serious problem in our society when hard-working men and women, holding down full-time jobs, cannot earn enough to bring their families out of the poverty cycle, while company executives earn an average of 70 times that of their average employee.

My bill does not attempt to alleviate this disparity throughout the business sector, but it does require those corporate entities receiving taxpayer dollars to be accountable to their workers. This is a reasonable and practical bill. It allows companies to count any benefits, such as health care, which they provide for employees as part of their wage determination, and it provides an exemption for small businesses and bona fide job training or apprenticeship programs.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation to help ensure the American worker receives a fair day's pay for a fair day's work.

REMOVE FEDERAL BARRIERS TO INNOVATIVE HIGHWAY FINANCING

HON. DAVID MINGE

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 29, 1996

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, as an original co-sponsor of the coalition's balanced budget plan, I am committed to balancing the Federal budget as soon as possible. However, I understand that in working to balance the budget, we cannot simply cut, cut, cut and leave the

Nation to deal with the repercussions of lower Government spending. We must simultaneously make prudent policy changes to help empower the Nation during this fiscally trying time. One of those changes could be to allow the private sector of the transportation industry to use innovative financing methods to maintain our Nation's highways. Currently, there are barriers in Federal law that preclude such activity. I believe that innovative highway financing by the private sector could prove to be an important tool for preserving our transportation infrastructure. For information on this important subject, I commend to your attention the recent testimony of Robert Zauner, chairman of the Minnesota Transportation Group before the Joint Economic Committee. Mr. Zauner's testimony lays out an excellent explanation for why the private sector should be able to utilize innovative financing for maintaining our highways. I am submitting a copy of that testimony for printing in the RECORD.

TESTIMONY OF ROBERT ZAUNER BEFORE THE CONGRESSIONAL JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Mister Chairman, my name is Robert Zauner. I am a registered professional engineer, vice-president of Hughes Transportation Management Systems (HTMS) and the chairman of the Minnesota Transportation Group (MTG). I have been involved in the transportation industry for twenty-five years. During the past six years I have been involved in the development of privatized toll highways. I have served as a member of the Board of Directors and as Vice President of the Highway Division of the Associated General Contractors of Minnesota. I also chaired its bridge committee. I currently serve on the Boards of Directors of the Minnesota Transportation Alliance, a transportation advocacy group, and the Intelligent Transportation Society of Minnesota, as well as the Advisory Council of the University of Minnesota's Center for Transportation Studies.

The MTG is a team of technology, construction, engineering, and financial companies that personifies the private sector's capability, desire and interest in the privatization of highway infrastructure. For the past six years we have worked with state legislators, local officials, and state departments of transportation in the development of enabling legislation, privatization programs and privatized highways. Our team members have been involved in privatization efforts in California, Washington, Arizona, Virginia, South Carolina, and Minnesota where we recently submitted proposals to develop three highway projects totaling over \$700 million.

In my testimony today I would like to share several issues I have encountered in my efforts to privatize highways. Some are institutional barriers others are perceptions or prejudices created by the present funding system that are as difficult to overcome as institutional barriers themselves. They include:

1. Reconstruction and improvements to the interstate system are exempt from tolling.
2. State and local government see little benefit to privatizing or implementing toll financing due to their perception that they are receiving no additional funding for doing so.
3. The disparity between taxable and tax exempt financing.
4. Privately financed highways are at a disadvantage when competing for investor dollars.
5. Tolling represents double taxation.
6. Unrealistic expectations for low cost roads: Roads are free; Roads are paid for; My road is the most dangerous road in the state

it should be fixed now; Its not fair, I paid for everyone else's road they should pay for mine; Toll roads mean toll booths and having to carry a jar of quarters in my car; Toll roads create safety problems at toll plazas; and We have waited long enough its our turn.

The Interstate Highway System is a critical link in the nation's transportation network. It is truly one of the greatest and most expensive public works projects ever undertaken. While the interstate system includes only 2.5% of our highway lane-miles more than 22% of our travel is on it. It will also require nearly a third of our annual capital expenditures to improve it in the future. Yet reconstruction or capacity expansions on the interstate system cannot be toll financed. The privatization and tolling provisions of ISTEA an the NHS Act should be expanded to allow the use of tolls on the Interstate System if a road, bridge, or tunnel, is reconstructed, substantially improved, or its capacity is expanded. This will attract the investment and expertise of the private sector to complete needed, major reconstruction projects, improvements, and expansions to the system faster and at less cost. It will also relieve the large financial burdens these projects place on many State Departments of Transportation.

State and local governments have not yet accepted private equity as additional money to meet their transportation needs. I believe Congress could create a better environment for the private sector by requiring that alternative financing, including but not limited to tolls, congestion pricing, mileage pricing, and public-private partnerships, when the cost exceeds \$10,000,000. Such a provision would make it more likely for government entities to pursue alternative financing.

The private sector is at a disadvantage to government in financing infrastructure due to the disparity in rates between taxable and tax exempt financing. The federal government also loses tax revenue when tax exempt bonds are used to finance improvements. eliminating this disparity would make taxable financing more competitive and the federal government would increase its tax revenues.

Unlike the power and telecommunications industries there is no clear track record of private involvement in the delivery of transportation infrastructure. As a result, the financing of such investments can be difficult to close. By making the unobligated balance in the Highway Trust Fund available as a guarantee for transportation infrastructure loans, financing would be more easily obtained and investment of private equity in transportation projects would increase. Regarding this provision the Office of Management and Budget has advised the Federal Highway Administration that portions of the unobligated balance in the trust fund actually committed as a debt reserve would be scored at ten cents on the dollar for budget purposes. Such use of the unobligated balance would have a minimal effect on the deficit.

The payment of tolls to finance specific projects does not constitute double taxation. the situation is similar to a homeowner who needs or desires to make repairs or improvements to his, or her, home. A homeowner's monthly mortgage payment allows him, or her, to live in a home while it is being paid for. Similarly, the gas tax is being used to maintain and make limited improvements to our existing road system. If a homeowner desires to make repairs or improvements additional funds outside his monthly payments are needed. Similar to the homeowner, if we want to make specific improvements to our road system we must find an additional source of funds. By using tolls, the revenue

raised is targeted to a specific need. A need created by a specific demand and the investment made is tailored to meet that need. This is an efficient and equitable way of making investments. It introduces market forces into transportation infrastructure investments. The improvements made are also paid by those who benefit most from the improvement. This a fair and equitable means of paying for improvements.

The public's unrealistic expectation that traditional transportation funding can meet their needs is evidenced by the statements listed above. The current system is unable to meet those expectations due to major changes in automobiles and our travel patterns. Increased fuel efficiency and life-span of vehicles coupled with increases in the number of trips and trip length has contributed greatly to our current funding situation. Neither the gas tax nor license fees is increasing. Moving away from these funding mechanisms to charging for the space used on a road would help change these expectations. Charging for highway travel by the mile would make us more aware of the cost of travel and would assess costs to the largest users. This would result in more prudent use of highway capacity. Such a move would also permit the introduction of congestion pricing to highway travel. Most commodities are paid for in this fashion. Introducing it into highway travel would improve utilization of the existing system and lessen demand for additional capacity.

Drivers have not liked paying tolls because they do not like fumbling for quarters, stopping and paying the tolls. This is no longer necessary. My company, Hughes Transportation Management Systems, has adapted defense-related technology to collect tolls at freeway speeds on the open road without toll plazas. Eliminating toll booths and stopping to pay tolls eliminates most driver's objection to toll financing.

In closing, I would like to state that I am very positive on the opportunities and benefits of highway infrastructure privatization. This optimism is buoyed by continued bipartisan support of the Minnesota legislature, business, and labor. We are continuing our efforts despite the fact that we are charging a fee for a service that our competition, government, is giving away "free". We would like to participate more fully. Addressing the issues I have outlined today would improve the competitive disadvantage we now face. I would be happy to answer your questions.

HEALTH COVERAGE AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 28, 1996

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Kennedy-Kassebaum substitute to be offered by the Democratic leader, and in opposition to the bill as a whole. Unfortunately, radical members of the majority conference have hijacked this bill and turned it into a special-interest Christmas tree, which could very well jeopardize its passage in the Congress.

Health insurance reform is long past due. Millions of Americans are still routinely denied health care coverage because of preexisting conditions. Some are forced to remain in stagnant jobs and turn down promotions or other

job opportunities in order to insure the continuation of their employer-sponsored health care benefits.

The Senate has introduced legislation with wide bipartisan support to address the issue of portability of insurance. That legislation, the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill, ensures health insurance portability when individuals move from one employer to another. President Clinton voiced his support for this legislation during his State of the Union Address. In the House of Representatives, my colleague, Representative ROUKEMA has introduced similar legislation, and 192 of my colleagues have joined me in cosponsoring Representative ROUKEMA's legislation.

With the broad bipartisan support of this health insurance reform, it is a disgrace that the Republican leadership has sabotaged the enactment of this legislation by adding controversial provisions to the bill. Some Members in the Senate have suggested these provisions may end the chances of passage of this legislation, which is why I will vote for the Kennedy-Kassebaum-Roukema substitute and against final passage. This issue is too important to let partisan politics jeopardize the health care of the American people. We have waited for too long. The time is now to pass and enact a clean health insurance reform bill that will assure the portability of health insurance when individuals change jobs.

PROMISES MADE

HON. BILL BAKER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 29, 1996

Mr. BAKER of California. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to submit for the RECORD a section of the public law which enumerates the statutory obligations the Department of Energy has toward its employees at defense nuclear facilities, concerning workforce restructuring.

The Department of Energy faces some tough budgetary and programmatic decisions in the coming weeks and months. Many of these decisions will no doubt be important to our Nation in safeguarding our nuclear stockpile, in ensuring our energy security in the future, in advancing the pace of energy sciences, and in stewarding our national resources. It is this stewardship role I speak of today, specifically the stewardship of the valuable, competent employees at DOE's nuclear facilities.

Mr. Speaker, these workers are truly national assets. They work on the cutting edge of science and engineering, bolstering our Nation's security status and it energy future. These men and women do yeoman's work for our country in areas of science you and I can barely comprehend. Though perhaps rarely appreciated or understood by the average American taxpayer, these people give their all at national laboratories like Sandia, Lawrence Livermore, and Los Alamos. Our Nation is the richer for their sacrifice and commitment to our collective good.

In light of recent statements by DOE officials indicating an intention to downsize workforces at some national laboratory sites in the coming months, it is essential that the bureaucracy that administer our Government's policies respect the value these workers add