

CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN AND ELDERLY INCREASED PUNISHMENT ACT

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

Mr. CHRYSLER. Mr. Speaker, day after day, we see news accounts of criminals committing violent acts throughout our communities, only to walk away with little or no punishment. We only need to watch the evening news on any given night to see the havoc criminals wreak in our neighborhoods. Recently, I authored and introduced the Crimes Against Children and Elderly Increased Punishment Act, legislation that will provide for an automatic increase in the length of sentences for such criminals. This legislation amends the Violent Crime Control Act of 1994 to increase punishment for Federal crimes committed against youth ages 12 years and under and seniors ages 65 years and older.

The bill aims to send a clear signal to those who would prey upon the vulnerable in that their criminal actions will not be tolerated and will result in certain and severe punishment. Our children are the seeds of our Nation's future. Our seniors are the roots of our heritage. Increasing the penalties on those who would hurt our children and elderly will give them the protection they need and give the criminals the punishment they deserve.

THE BUDGET AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

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

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to speak for American families and for the failure of this Congress to come to grips with dealing with the budget and fiscal responsibility. The fact is that the answer that was brought to us by this Republican Congress is the wrong answer. Cutting Medicare, cutting Medicaid, cutting our education and health programs, and assaulting the environment is not the answer. What our families need are the tools to take care of one another.

They need the health care. They need sound education and retirement programs. They need their rights on the job so that they can receive a living wage. The fact is that families in this country are going to continue to suffer. We are going to continue to see the income disparity without some change to empower workers. This Congress has to wake up and smell the coffee in terms of where the American people are and what they want and what we need to do as a Congress, to get on and pass our necessary appropriation bills, to make the types of compromises that provide for meaningful welfare reform and provide for a sound fiscal policy for the next 7 years, not the Republican major-

ity walking away from the task because they cannot get there way on tax breaks for those that are well off.

That is what is happening in this country and in this Congress today. These issues ought to be the subject of congressional and Presidential debates. They ought to be the subject of this Congress. We ought to get to work and get the peoples, work done right and stop the Republican pea and shell game that is being presented as a budget solution.

THE 5-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF PERSIAN GULF WAR

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

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, 5 years ago this month, this country put the lives of thousands of young Americans at risk in the Persian Gulf war. The war with Iraq was fought to restore Kuwait's independence, but it was also fought to preserve and protect the energy security of this country.

Five years later, we are still dependent on foreign oil for our energy needs—in fact far more dependent than we were 5 years ago.

Last year, for the first time in our Nation's history, we imported more than 50 percent of the oil consumed in this country. Meanwhile, I have domestic producers in my home State of Oklahoma who are capping marginal wells every day—burying oil and gas that will never again be recovered. It is putting Americans out of work and it is threatening our national security.

What can this Congress do to revive our domestic oil and gas industry? The first step is to allow domestic producers to compete on a level playing field. In a few days, we will be voting on this floor on a bill to reform the regulatory process in this country. Excessive regulations have strangled domestic oil and gas producers, raising their cost of production and diminishing their chances to compete. A vote for regulatory reform is a vote for the health of our domestic oil and gas industry.

I urge this Congress to release the domestic oil and gas industry from the excessive taxes and regulations that threaten our domestic energy supply and our national security.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET CUTS

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, these followers of Speaker GINGRICH have threatened the health care security of millions of seniors in America with Medicare cuts. They demonstrated, as Gingrichites, such indifference to the job insecurity of American working families that now they are even being criticized within their own party.

But to top it all off, they come to this Congress today proposing to place

more hurdles in the way of our youngest Americans with reference to educational opportunities. Yes, the cuts that the propose in education are very real.

In my home town of Austin, the school district is contemplating having to cut the opportunity in half for 2,200 young Austinites with reference to their prekindergarten program, just slashing it in half solely as a result of these Federal cuts.

As one AISD official, Gloria Williams, said, if the pots gets smaller and the number of kids gets larger, we will not be able to support a full day prekindergarten program. There is no doubt we have an education deficit in this country because these followers of NEWT GINGRICH just cannot seem to learn.

AWOL CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

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

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, just allow me to point out that the liberal House Democrats just do not get it. As we have spent more and more money on public education, test scores have dropped in America, but they do not see the correlation.

Mr. Speaker, the Clinton administration is AWOL in the war on drugs. Recent surveys have shown that drug use among teenagers has skyrocketed. In fact, the age of first use of drugs has gone down to age 13 and in some cases even younger than that. That really hits home with me, because I have a 14-year-old son.

Mr. Speaker, there is a reason for this though. The Clinton administration has slashed enforcement and interdiction programs and they have appointed liberal judges. The President has appointed liberal judges who care more about criminals than basic justice.

Case in point: One judge in New York, a Clinton appointee by the name of Baer, recently released an admitted drug dealer who was caught red-handed with 75 pounds of cocaine and 4 pounds of heroin.

Mr. Speaker, the President claims he never inhaled. But our children are inhaling and it is destroying their lives. The answer to our youth drug problem is not fancy press conferences. It is a President willing to institute real drug enforcement, real drug interdiction and real punishment of drug dealers.

ON EDUCATION CUTS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to follow up on these education cuts.

As was stated previously, today the Republican leadership is putting forth a continuing resolution that would fund education programs for the rest of this year. But the bill is the largest cut

in education in the history of this Nation, 13 percent below last year's level, \$3.3 billion less in education funding.

Do my colleagues know what that means? It means higher taxes in the municipalities that we represent around the country. In my home town, the school budget, they are talking about an increase of 9 cents per 100-dollar assessment. If this level of Federal education cuts continues, the only ones that are going to suffer are the local property taxes or the children in the schools, because the local school boards will have the choice of either cutting the programs, increasing the class size, decreasing the quality of education, or increasing local taxes to pay for it.

This notion that somehow if the Federal Government cuts back that that is something that is not going to have an impact locally, it does have an impact locally. It has an impact in every one of the municipalities that we represent around this country, either taxes are going to go up or the quality of education will decrease.

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND THE WAR ON DRUGS

(Mrs. CUBIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, while President Clinton claims that he is doing everything he can do to fight the war on drugs, I would like to respectfully give some examples refuting that claim.

If President Clinton was doing all he could, he would not have issued the executive order reducing military interdiction efforts including the elimination of 1,000 antidrug positions.

If President Clinton was doing all he could, he would not have cut interdiction funds for the Customs Service and the Drug Enforcement Administration. If he was doing all he could, he would not have shortened minimum mandatory sentences for drug traffickers.

If President Clinton was doing all he could, he would not have disbanded Operation Snow Cap which helps foreign countries with DEA agents in cocaine-producing countries. If he was doing all he could, he would not have dropped the drug issue from the top to the bottom of the 229 priorities of the National Security Council.

Obviously, the President is not doing all that he can do, even though it was his promise when he ran for President.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF A HEALTHY DOMESTIC ENERGY INDUSTRY

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

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, the question this morning is, Do we think it is smart to import over half the oil

which fuels the economy of this Nation? Is it smart not only economically, but militarily, to be that dependent on foreign oil? And is it smart to continue doing that when we have domestic oil producers such as the hundreds of small companies operating in my district and across Illinois, across this Nation, who could help balance the budget with increased domestic production?

I am joining my colleagues in the bipartisan Oil and Gas Forum to ask some of these questions over the next few weeks as we try to focus on a sound energy policy for this Nation which recognize the resources we have here at home, recognizing the importance of jobs created by a healthy domestic energy industry.

We are talking about Main Street America, from Casey to Carmi in my district, from Pennsylvania to California in this country, small businesses employing a dozen or so people who want to do business in an environmentally responsible way to help our economy, not making it more dependent on forces outside our control.

HOW ABOUT UNIFORMS FOR DRUG DEALERS?

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

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, this week, Bill Clinton will be holding a forum on youth, crime, and drugs. My hometown of Omaha, NE, saw juvenile arrests for major crimes spike by 20 percent last year. In fact, by last year alone juveniles accounted for almost half of all the major crimes. In Omaha, there were 41 killings, 8 more than in 1994. We even lost one of our police officers to this tide of crime.

Unfortunately, President Clinton is AWOL on the war on drugs. He passed a hug-a-thug crime bill with funding for dance lessons for criminals, and then he cut funding for his own drug czar by 84 percent. His top public health official once suggested that we should legalize illicit drugs.

Instead the liberals are focused on another reform: uniforms for students. Mr. Speaker, I think that is a great idea, but I fully support it at the local level, not the Federal Department of Education level.

But I support another uniform as well: orange prison jump suits for those drug dealers and violent felons terrorizing our communities; as my colleagues know, the drug dealers and violent felons that get off on technicalities because of slick criminal trial lawyers. Hopefully, we can come together with this Youth Crime Violence League and we can come up with a bipartisan answer to solve America's problems together.

THE GINGRICH SOLUTION IS WRONG

(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, Scott Paper lays off 11,000 workers; their top executive gets millions of dollars in stock options. AT&T lays off 40,000 employees; its top management gets huge bonuses. Revco Drugstore in Twinsburg, OH, lays off 1,100 people; 4 of their executives get \$1 million each.

The Newt Gingrich response: Cut education by \$3 billion, cut Medicare by tens of billions of dollars, cut student loans by \$4 billion. Why? Just to give tax breaks to the wealthiest people in this country.

Mr. Speaker, the Gingrich solution is wrong.

CLINTON'S WAR ON DRUGS A FAILURE

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

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, a month after taking office, President Clinton eliminated 83 percent of the staff at the Office of National Drug Policy. Now, in an apparent campaign year move, the President announced he is doing a complete about-face and will increase staff in that office.

Even though he is 3 years late, I'm glad the President has finally recognized the importance of a strong national drug office. But let us look at what has happened in the years that the President sat on the sidelines and watched the drug world go by.

Drug use among teens has skyrocketed. According to the household survey on drug use, marijuana use by 12- to 17-year-olds has gone from 1.6 million in 1992 to 2.9 million in 1994. The survey also found a 137-percent increase in marijuana use among 12- to 13-year-olds.

Mr. Speaker, actions speak louder than words. President Clinton may be saying a lot now that he is on the campaign trail, but his actions show he has failed in the war on drugs.

STOP PLAYING BUDGET GAMES

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, today the House will consider yet another temporary spending bill to fund the Government. While the Republican congressional majority is operating the Government in fits and starts, they have been consistent in the targets of their cuts. Their agenda hurts working families.

Just take a look at education. The bill on the House floor today will cut \$3.1 billion from education. That is a \$1.2 billion cut in training for basic reading and math skills.

How does this help our children to succeed? It does not. It hurts our kids. In my State of Connecticut it means