

This is an agency known as one of the most efficient in the District of Columbia. They have already made sizable cuts. They are going down to \$369,000 in cuts. They have made \$239,000 very rapidly. But the rest requires, obviously, local legislation and the following of personnel rules.

We are today, at 2:15, to have the fourth cloture vote on the D.C. appropriation in the Senate of the United States, the fourth. Each time there has been a cloture vote on whether to pass our appropriation, it has gotten fewer votes than it got the last time. Somebody is playing games, here. But the folks who are suffering are not represented by anybody in this body except me, so I have to come before this body to say that the CR that is due out Friday simply must contain the District of Columbia, or you will have to suffer the consequences. You will have to suffer the embarrassment. My constituents and I have already suffered the pain.

Congress is fond of saying that it is acting in the District with less democracy than other jurisdictions because "It is the Capital of the United States, and it is our responsibility." When is the Congress going to perform like it recognized that it has a responsibility? The residents I represent are second per capita in taxes paid to the Federal Treasury, and yet have no voting representation in this body, and no representation whatsoever in the Senate. Put yourself in their position, when the money being held up is their money, not this body's money, money owed them for taxes.

If this is everybody's city, which is why the Congress says it exercises jurisdiction over it, then it is time for the Congress of the United States to act like it.

URGING SUPPORT FOR THE ROUKEMA HEALTH CARE REFORM LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, last week over 150 Democrats signed a letter of support for positive health care reform legislation sponsored by the Republican congresswoman, the gentlewoman from New Jersey, MARGE ROUKEMA. Her bill is similar to the Kennedy-Kassebaum legislation that has been introduced in the Senate, and has gained wide bipartisan support. In fact, Senator KASSEBAUM already has a commitment to bring up her bill in mid-April, and a number of health care organizations, providers, including the American Medical Association, have signed on and said that this is a good bill.

Essentially that we have now is bipartisan support, both Democrats and Republicans, both House and Senate Members, and the President of the

United States, President Clinton, who said that if this bill comes to his desk he will sign it.

The Roukema bill essentially would ensure that Americans will no longer have their health coverage denied or limited because of so-called preexisting conditions. The bill also helps people keep their health coverage if they get sick, lose their jobs, or change jobs. This is a bill that could pass the House of Representatives if the Republican leadership in this House would only let it come to the floor.

In fact, it is now my understanding that the House Republican leadership, under Speaker GINGRICH, is taking a different tack and plans on introducing health care legislation that includes controversial provisions to pander to various special interest groups. In other words, instead of letting the Roukema or Kennedy-Kassebaum bill come to the floor with everybody's support and have it signed by the President, they are now going to bring in another bill loaded with all kinds of special interests, special interest provisions; for example, increasing tax-free medical savings accounts, limiting malpractice awards, a number of things that are very controversial and that would prevent any kind of health insurance reform from passing this House and being signed into law.

I just wanted to mention one of the provisions that GINGRICH and the Republicans have talked about, and this is the Medical Savings Accounts, or MSA's. The Speaker tried to include MSA's when they are trying to cut Medicare last year, and now they are trying to insert this untested idea into the health care reform bill, which would provide a financial windfall for the Golden Rule Insurance Company, whose top executive has given Republican political committees excessive contributions in the past few years.

During the Medicare debate it was found that the MSA would cost Medicaid an additional \$3 billion. How can the Republican leadership believe they can try to pass this in health care reform? It is not a reform; it is actually catering to special interests. In the end it means health care costs will increase for the average working family.

Serious health care reform was attempted 3 years ago and failed because Congress tried to overhaul the whole system with one piece of legislation. I would maintain that the lesson from that experience is Congress needs to take a step-by-step approach to decrease the number of uninsured Americans. I think that is what we would accomplish in a small, modest way with the Roukema bill.

Again, however, the Republican leadership does not really want health care reform. If they did, then they would not be loading up a bill that benefits the special interests over the uninsured. If they wanted health care reform, why did they bring up this illustrious Contract With America last year?

Essentially what we are seeing here is the same old Republican leadership games. There is bipartisan support for the Kennedy-Kassebaum Senate bill. One hundred and thirty respected business groups, insurance groups, and health care providers have endorsed it. The House version, sponsored by the gentlewoman from New Jersey [Mrs. ROUKEMA], a Republican, has bipartisan support and will reduce the number of uninsured by millions. It is a positive step that will help working families by increasing portability and eliminate preexisting conditions.

If the Republican leadership truly wanted health care reform, they should consider using the Roukema legislation as the vehicle for it. It is irresponsible to try to please all the special interests when Congress can be working together to reduce the number of uninsured Americans.

What I am simply saying, Mr. Speaker, is this: We know that the Roukema bill can pass and address the issue of preexisting conditions and portability. Let us bring it to the Committee on Commerce, let us bring it to the floor. Let us not load it up with all these other things that will make it impossible for it to pass. I think it is incumbent upon the Republican leadership to allow this bill to come out and be considered in a simple form, rather than this new grab-bag package that they are now proposing to introduce and bring before various congressional committees.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. There being no further requests for morning business, pursuant to clause 12, rule I, the House will stand in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), the House stood up in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

As the Sun rises to greet each day and gives light and warmth to every person, so may Your word of grace, O God, greet us each morning and guide us on our daily walk. We recognize that when we look only to ourselves and our own vision, we often falter and faint and we can lose our bearing and drift with the winds of time and the tides of the moment. Speak to us, O God, in the depths of our hearts, nurture our souls, enlighten our minds, and encourage us to use our hands in the works of justice and of peace. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New York [Mrs. KELLY] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. KELLY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR H.R. 2202, IMMIGRATION IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST ACT

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, March 8, the chairman of the Rules Committee, the gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON], sent out a "Dear Colleague" letter to all Members of the House, committee offices, and leadership offices providing notice of the amendment process to be used on H.R. 2202, the Immigration in the National Interest Act.

This announcement is intended to serve as a reminder of that process. The Rules Committee is planning to meet Thursday, March 14, at 10:30 a.m. to grant a rule on the immigration bill. This rule may include a provision limiting amendments to those specified in the rule.

Any Member who desires to offer an amendment should submit 55 copies and a brief explanation of the amendment by noon on Wednesday, March 13, to the Rules Committee at room H-312 in the Capitol.

Amendments to the portions of the bill in the jurisdiction of the Judiciary Committee should be drafted to the text of H.R. 2202 as reported by the Judiciary Committee.

Amendments to the portion of the bill in the Agriculture Committee jurisdiction, the guest worker program, should be drafted to the text of the Agriculture Committee reported amendment.

Both of these texts are in the Office of the Legislative Counsel.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel to ensure that their amendments are properly drafted and should check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain their amendments comply with the rules of the House.

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

(Mrs. KELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to share a few names with you and hopefully our President: Adam Kopald, Bridgit Mennite, Liesl Himmelberger, Amy Ziegler, Emily Nytko, and Kellie Erzen.

These are just a few of the names that our President is planning to veto this Friday.

Those six young men and women are the top honor students at James O'Neill High School in Highland Falls, NY.

Their school district vitally depends on the Impact Aid Program. Last week this House stood up for these children and their school district by funding this program—despite the White House's attempts to zero it out.

If the President vetoes our measure, which adds an additional \$3.3 billion for education and environmental programs, he vetoes the education of those six students. It's that simple.

The President can talk all he wants about children, but the fact will remain that he abandoned them—not this House.

Mr. Speaker, my mother used to tell me that actions speak louder than words. So, I urge the President to hear the pleas of these children, and help us save the Impact Aid Program.

TRIO OF TRADE EXPERTS RECOMMEND CONTINUATION OF MFN STATUS FOR CHINA

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, China denies American products. China steals American videos and software. China tortures their own citizens, China imprisons their political opponents. China has slave labor camps. China has a 17-cent-an-hour labor wage. China still has slave labor camps. China sells nuclear technology and missiles to America's enemies, and China is now threatening to nuke Taiwan. After all this, American government trade experts say it is in the best interests of America to continue most-favored-nation trade status for China.

Unbelievable, Mr. Speaker, I say it has finally dawned on me. These American trade experts are actually Larry, Moe, and Curly, and they inhaled all the time.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. I yield back the balance of any jobs left over.

WHITE HOUSE REQUESTS ADDITIONAL \$8 BILLION

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, wages are down and taxes are up. The middle class is slowly being squeezed by liberal economic policies put in place by the Clinton administration. Now we

hear that the White House has requested an additional \$8 billion for corporate welfare and social engineering programs.

This is basically a Clinton reelection pork package. What really rattles me about this request is that the Clinton administration wants \$10 million more for the National Endowment for the Arts. This is outrageous.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are tired of seeing their hard-earned tax dollars wasted on projects that go out of their way to offend traditional values. It is outrageous that Bill Clinton would ask for an additional \$10 million for this program in order to please the extreme liberal wing of the Democratic Party.

CONGRESS SELLS OUT TO SPECIAL INTERESTS

(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, my Republican colleagues continue to confuse the onset of spring with the continuation of Halloween. They continue to masquerade as the friend of working Americans but are still the defenders of the special interests.

They unveiled their new health care reform plan. They are loading down a bipartisan straightforward health care reform bill with lots of special interest goodies.

Who benefits from these provisions? Is it the working families struggling to pay health care bills? No, that is not who. Their proposal would provide a financial windfall for the Golden Rule Insurance Co., providers of over \$1 million in contributions to Republican political action committees.

This attempt to appease special interests is particularly disappointing because it wastes an opportunity to pass real bipartisan health care reform in this Congress. Sadly, when the gavel drops to open debate on this legislation, it will mark the start of yet another auction where this Congress sells out the public interest to the special interests.

THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNING

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman from New York State said it all when she quoted her mother: Actions speak louder than words.

Now unfortunately as the calendar gives way to spring and ultimately to November, our campaigner in chief seems to be willing yet again to shut down the Federal Government in a bald-faced political tactic. Mr. Speaker, he is trying to bully this Chamber into spending \$8 billion in additional taxpayers' dollars in a cynical attempt to be reelected.