

turned over to the Federal Government through the Department of Education, and they will not only process the applications, they will become bankers collecting the money for the taxpayer, lending the money as a bank would do. I suggest to you, Mr. HOEKSTRA, that would be a disastrous event, that they have a 900,000 backlog in just processing applications.

Can you imagine if they also lent the money and had to collect the money?

And their excuse for a 900,000 backlog is it snowed and the Government shut down 21 days. Both are false. The private sector gets up and goes to work when it snows because they are in it as a way of making their living. The Government shutdown did not effect the ability to process these loans because contractors are the main source of doing the processing. It just shows how inefficient the magic bureaucrats are, and, when analyzed against the facts, they do not do very well.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. These are just 2 examples: The Corporation for National Service, the direct lending program. There are many more. Bureaucrats at the Commerce Department know another myth is that the bureaucrats at the Commerce Department know how to create high-skilled, high-paying jobs better than American entrepreneurs, that bureaucrats at the Department of Education know better than parents, and teachers, and local schools how to run a tutoring or mentoring program in their local community.

The bottom line is who pays for these magic shows? It is the American people. It is you and I. How much have we spent? Trillions.

The real question that the American people have to ask is can we afford any more of these shows. You be the judge.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. GRAHAM. While you are conducting hearings, there is another area that I would like you to look into that I have asked the GAO to investigate, and that is that there are millions of dollars of unreconciled money responsible by the Department of Education. We need to find out where the money is at.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I thank the gentleman for his suggestion. We will pursue that.

DETERMINING WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO WORK LEGALLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mrs. SEASTRAND] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, few current events affect our Nation so dramatically as does the record-breaking number of illegal aliens entering our country year after year. Illegal immigration is a national crisis. Although my State of California bears the brunt of this problem, illegal immigration is a national dilemma. It affects every hard-working, taxpaying citizen of our country.

Tomorrow, with several of my colleagues, I am going to be offering an amendment to the immigration bill, H.R. 2202. Our amendment would call for a mandatory pilot program in five of the seven States most impacted by illegal immigration. It would require that employers call a 1-800 number to check the eligibility to work of a newly hired employee. This amendment simply puts back into the bill the original language that was passed by the House Committee on the Judiciary.

The requirement that illegal aliens be verified for work eligibility is crucial to true immigration reform. Contrary to much misinformation, this amendment does not, and I repeat, does not, establish a national ID card or even a system by which a worker can be tracked throughout their career. In fact, this amendment does none of the following:

It does not require any new data to be supplied by the employee.

It does not require any new personal information of the employee.

It does not create a new Government data base.

It cannot be expanded into a national program without a specific vote by Congress.

Now those of you that know me and have followed my voting record are well aware that I am very much opposed to any more Government intrusion into our lives. I have stated time and time again that I am opposed to any sort of tracking system or national ID card, and I firmly hold these beliefs.

This amendment would simply use information that is already required by the Social Security Administration. The opportunity to work in the United States has acted like a magnet, drawing hundreds and thousands to this country. Unfortunately, many of those who have come to this country seeking employment have skirted our legal immigration system and have made a mockery of our current laws.

This amendment is about jobs, American jobs. Those that come to this country illegally should not be granted the opportunity to take the jobs of American workers, and recent studies demonstrate that illegal aliens often take jobs that could otherwise be filled by American workers. Our amendment allows an easy, reliable enforcement mechanism for verifying worker eligibility.

Now for the past decade employers have been prohibited from knowingly hiring illegal aliens. To verify new hires, current law requires employers to check the identity and work eligibility documents of all new employees. The system, the current one for verifying worker eligibility, has been a complete failure. Not only has the current system failed to discourage legal aliens from seeking jobs in America, but it also has turned employers into de facto INS agents, and without the means to effectively determine a worker's eligibility, employers have had to face a double-edged sword. If they hire an ille-

gal alien to work for them, well, employers are faced with civil penalties imposed by the Federal Government. If they question a prospective employee about their eligibility, employers face the possibility of a lawsuit charging discrimination.

Further adding to this dilemma, the easy availability of counterfeit documents has made verification of authentic documents a joke. In southern California alone, Federal agencies, 2.5 million fraudulent documents from 1989 to 1992.

Now the amendment we are offering will correct this problem. Employers would simply make a toll free inquiry through telephones or electronic means to match new employee's names, Social Security and alien identification numbers against existing Social Security Administration and INS data. This type of verification would be easy, effective since employers would already have to check for every new employee that they hire. Employers would not be tempted to hire only those who look for sound American. In addition, this type of verification would take the onus off the employer to determine who is eligible to work legally.

Now I have talked to business men and women and constituents of my district, and there is overwhelming support for this amendment. It is an effective tool. In fact, in southern California there has been a program that has been tested over the past year by 220 employers with more than 88,000 workers.

□ 2300

In more than 25 separate verifications, 99.9 percent were satisfactorily resolved within a 5- to 10-day period. So, because of this, I just would urge my colleagues to look at this amendment, and I hope that they will support this amendment tomorrow.

THE NEED TO SPEED UP THE PROCESS OF FDA REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX] is recognized for 30 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss with my colleagues some very important issues that will be facing the 104th Congress in this second session. Mr. Speaker, I speak of FDA reform, Food and Drug Administration reform.

We know that many Americans are waiting for the approval of drugs or medical devices, because FDA has been so far mired down in overregulation and delay. I believe that it is a bipartisan effort that we are undertaking here in the House to make sure we speed up the approval of medical devices and pharmaceuticals. The legislation which I have introduced, H.R. 1995 and H.R. 2290, will in fact address for the biotech and the pharmaceutical fields speeding

up those processes of FDA reform, which we think is legislation whose time has arrived.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to note that the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. BLILEY], chairman of the Committee on Commerce, has appointed a fellow Pennsylvanian, Mr. GREENWOOD, to head up the FDA reform effort. With him working on this effort will in fact be the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BARTON], the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. KLUG], and the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. BURR], in fact working not only on medical devices, but pharmaceuticals and foods as well.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell the Members from testimony in my town and my county seat in Norristown, PA, that we had just in June 1995 many witnesses, patients, doctors, hospitals, discussing the need for speeding up the approval process for FDA in drugs and medical devices. We had patients with ALS, with AIDS, with cancer, with epilepsy, to name a few.

In each of these cases, the patients have said that while they are waiting for a cure or they are waiting for a vaccine to help extend their lives, to improve the quality of those lives, to extend the years of those lives, they need to have the Congress, working with the White House, make sure we do what we can, working with the FDA, to make sure that we speed up the process.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that the main job of the Food and Drug Administration is to protect us, to look out to make sure that drugs are not only safe but they are efficacious, that they are effective, for what they were intended. I know in my travels in Montgomery County and in parts of Delaware Valley, PA, and in other parts of the country, we need to make sure that we work together in a teamwork fashion to make the kinds of innovations in FDA, working with the agency, to make sure that we can speed up the process, whether it is from a personnel point of view, allowing us to use outside companies for the testing, or working with international harmonization, whereby we allow some of the clinical trials and testings from other countries whose results we can verify as being accurate, we can apply that understanding and that research to speed up the process for the approval.

Mr. Speaker, we are a long way in this process already by the fact that many bills have been filed, and I was pleased to work with my colleagues to introduce the bills that I have thus far in Congress.

But beyond the health care benefits of living longer and living better, Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring to the attention of my colleagues that there are many jobs now in the pharmaceutical, biotech, and FDA field for which we need to make sure we keep the process moving and to speed up the FDA reform, because, Mr. Speaker, if we do not speed up the process and we do not make the accurate and appropriate reforms, not only will the discoveries go

overseas about medical devices and drugs, but the jobs will go overseas as well. America has worked too hard, done too much right, and been too creative and been too smart in their approach to the discoveries of these important drugs and medical devices to let it slip through our fingers now.

By working together, the Congress and the White House, the private and the public sector, patients and hospitals, we can, in fact, have FDA reform achieved in this Congress, in this session, which will improve the quality of life for our constituents, and make sure we keep the jobs here as well, to improve America and to improve our communities.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today and the balance of the week, on account of medical reasons.

Mr. STOKES (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today through Friday, March 29, on account of medical reasons.

Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today and the balance of the week, on account of official business.

Mr. WALKER (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today, on account of personal reasons.

Mr. RADANOVICH (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today and the balance of the week, on account of a death in the family.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. BRYANT of Texas) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. UNDERWOOD, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GORDON, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. TATE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. GRAHAM, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCINNIS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CHRISTENSEN, for 5 minutes, on March 20.

Mr. FORBES, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EHLERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DUNCAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHAYS, for 5 minutes each day, on March 19 and 20.

Mr. HOEKSTRA, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. BRYANT of Texas) and to include extraneous matter:)

Mrs. MEEK of Florida.

Ms. PELOSI.

Mr. STOKES.

Mr. ACKERMAN.

Mr. LANTOS, in two instances.

Mrs. KENNELLY.

Mr. FROST.

Mr. HAMILTON.

Mr. TOWNS.

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts.

Mr. BERMAN.

Mr. PASTOR.

Mr. SABO.

Mr. WATERS.

Mr. DEUTSCH.

Mr. ORTIZ.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. TATE) and to include extraneous matter:)

Mrs. VUCANOVICH.

Mr. MCINTOSH.

Mr. BAKER of California.

Mr. COMBEST.

Mr. PACKARD.

Mr. NETHERCUTT.

Mr. GOODLICH in two instances.

Mr. CHRISTENSEN.

Mr. GINGRICH.

Mr. GILMAN.

Mr. FAWELL.

Mr. WELDON of Florida.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Oversight, reported that that committee had examined and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.J. Res. 78. Joint resolution to grant the consent of the Congress to certain additional powers conferred upon the Bi-State Development Agency by the States of Missouri and Illinois.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The SPEAKER announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 1494. An act to provide an extension for fiscal year 1996 for certain programs administered by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and the Secretary of Agriculture, and for other purposes.

BILL AND JOINT RESOLUTION PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Oversight, reported that that committee did on the following day present to the President, for his approval, a bill and joint resolution of the House of the following titles:

On March 15, 1996:

H.R. 2036. An act to amend the Solid Waste Disposal Act to make certain adjustments in the land disposal program to provide needed flexibility, and for other purposes.

H.J. Res. 163. Joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 1996, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.