

guaranteeing portability, which prevents health care fraud and abuse and establishes a senior citizen incentive to turn in fraud, which creates administrative simplification to save on red-tape, which passes medical liability reform to reduce the number of lawsuits and increase the amount of care that is focused on health care rather than legal behavior, which has tax-related concerns that guarantee deductibility for long-term care and which establishes the deductibility of medical savings accounts.

All of those were done in 1 legislative day.

I think this Congress can be proud of its commitment to reform and the serious, practical, commonsense work we are engaged in to give the American people a better government at lower cost with better services.

#### THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA IS ON TRACK

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues may not have seen this, but today's Washington Post features a neat little chart showing the progress in the Contract With America.

Congressional compliance—signed into law; unfunded mandates—signed into law; Defense spending increases—signed into law; and on and on.

Mr. Speaker, just this week, Congress gave the President the line-item veto, we lifted the regulatory burden on small business, we started reversing the Clinton Social Security tax on the elderly, and we passed commonsense health care reform.

We have a solid record of achievement in the 104th Congress. Our Contract With America is on track—just like it says here in the Post—and, in addition, we have changed the terms of debate here in Washington.

It is no longer about should we do the right thing, it is about how we do the right thing. I am honored to be in the party that stands for America's values, not Washington's values.

#### THE PRIDE OF KENTUCKY

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

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, I stand before this body today to share my pride in Kentucky basketball. This past Saturday night, Sullivan College in my hometown of Louisville, won the National Junior College Athletic Association national championship basketball tournament in Hutchinson, KS—the first Kentucky team to win this championship since 1969. Sullivan defeated Allegheny College of Maryland by a score of 104 to 98 in overtime. All of us in Louisville are very proud of this team and their head coach, Gary Shourds, and president, A.R. Sullivan.

This has been a phenomenal year for Kentucky basketball. You know we are very proud of our basketball in Kentucky with the University of Louisville and the University of Kentucky both in the NCAA Division I tournament. This weekend UK, my alma mater, goes for the NCAA national championship in New Jersey. In addition, Georgetown College of Georgetown, finished second in the NAIA national tournament and Northern Kentucky University finished second in the NCAA Division II national championship.

I also share with pride that Coach Gary Shourds of Sullivan College has been selected as the National Junior College Coach of the Year and will receive his championship award at the National Basketball Coach's Association luncheon this Sunday in New York City.

So I raise this declaration to all present that Kentucky is still the grandest State for basketball in all of these United States.

#### MISMANAGEMENT OF USDA FOOD AND CONSUMER SERVICE

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

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday, in the Agriculture appropriations hearing, I examined what can only be described as gross mismanagement in the agency that oversees our Nation's food programs. Without clear explanation, the USDA's Food and Consumer Service could not specifically account for \$13.5 billion, one-third of their budget in 1994. We do know that the agency spent \$500,000 on gourmet chefs to design food for kids and \$400,000 for the Disney Corp. to promote "Lion King" commercials in the name of child nutrition.

While Republicans have been attacked for trying to make certain that Federal agencies use taxpayer money efficiently and effectively, the Food and Consumer Service has in fact had so much money they don't know where it went. The inspector general made such a finding. Every American should be outraged at this administration's mismanagement of these funds for children, and we better look at other agencies, too, to be certain about spending in efficiency in this administration.

#### WAKE UP TO JAPANESE TRADE DEFICIT

(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, 10 years ago the 10 biggest banks in the world were American banks. Today the 10 biggest banks in the world are Japanese banks, all 10. Even after the merger of America's 2 biggest banks, they did not even make the top 10.

Wake up, Congress. Japanese banks did not get fat on the yen. Japanese

banks got fat pigging out on American dollars. The trade deficit just came out last month. It skyrocketed 48 percent, a 48-percent increase in 1 month, over \$10.3 billion.

Japan takes, America gives; Japan protects, America counsels; Japan regulates, America negotiates.

Let us tell it like it is. If America's trade program was so good, why does Japan not try it?

We are getting our clock cleaned, and we are not even talking about it. Think about that.

#### INTRODUCTION OF CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM ACT

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

Mr. BASS. Mr. Speaker, in the 104th Congress the new Republican majority has made great strides in reforming Congress and restoring America's faith in the honesty and integrity of this institution. Indeed, our accomplishments are a shining example of promises made and promises kept.

Although we can be proud of these changes, one more vital reform remains, and that is campaign finance reform.

Today I am introducing the Congressional Campaign Finance Reform Act to restore credibility and public confidence in elections. It includes provisions that bring elections back home by requiring a majority of campaign funds to be raised from in State sources, it emphasizes grassroots fundraising by reducing PAC contributions to \$1,000 per election, and it controls the exorbitant costs of campaigns by allowing States to enact voluntary campaign spending limits as we have done in New Hampshire and in other States.

For those of my colleagues who want to complete the reform of Congress that we started so well a year and-a-half ago, let us move forward, and I urge everyone to cosponsor my legislation or any of the other bills. Let us get a vote after the April recess.

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#### AMERICAN LIBERATION FROM FOREIGN OIL DEPENDENCE

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

Mr. PETE GEREN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join many of my colleagues in a month-long effort to bring attention to our growing dependence on foreign oil. On the fifth anniversary of the end of the Persian Gulf war and the liberation of Kuwait, it is the logical time to reflect on our domestic oil production, which is at a 40-year low.

Today there are 85,000 fewer people working in the oil and gas industry in

the United States than there were at the beginning of the gulf war. Everything that the United States had at stake at the beginning of the gulf war is still on the line, even more so. Americans consume 17 million barrels of oil a day, and today over 50 percent of that consumption is imported from foreign sources.

Last year, a Department of Commerce study revealed that the Nation's reliance on foreign oil was a threat to our national security, because it increases our vulnerability to oil supply interruptions.

Mr. Speaker, foreign oil dependency can be alleviated. One way would be to allow our Nation's industry more access to promising areas offshore. Our Government also must lift unnecessary and burdensome regulations that provide no environmental benefits but cost American jobs and drive our oil and gas industry overseas.

Congress must take the lead in developing a Federal energy policy that encourages rather than punishes domestic oil and gas production. As the world's leader, America must learn from history's mistakes rather than repeat them. This is a job's issue, it is a national security issue, and time is not on our side.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GUNDERSON). The Chair will entertain three more 1-minutes on each side.

#### URGING SUPPORT OF THE ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE, A PROGRAM IMPORTANT TO RURAL AMERICA

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

Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, as we begin the fiscal year 1997 appropriations process, I'd like to call your attention to a small but important program to rural America—the Essential Air Service. EAS was created in the early 1980's to provide assistance to small communities, and to maintain an integrated, national air service network. Air service is vital to rural communities, it is their link to the rest of the world.

Over the past several years, funding for EAS has steadily decreased, falling victim to an urban-dominated Congress, and budget cuts.

Therefore, I've introduced an alternative to the EAS, the Small Community Air Service Act. My bill, H.R. 2881 would allow States to charge a small fee on passenger tickets to fund an EAS-type program. It would be designed by the State, and for the State. I believe my bill is a viable alternative to the current program.

I ask my colleagues to seriously consider H.R. 2881. And as we continue the appropriations process I ask for your support of EAS.

#### THE UNITED STATES MUST MINIMIZE ITS DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, 5 years after the Persian Gulf war, the United States still imports 9 million barrels of oil. In fact, our Nation is more dependent on foreign oil than ever before. More than 50 percent of our oil is imported, and about 20 percent comes from the Persian Gulf. While we may never completely eliminate our dependence on foreign oil, we must minimize our reliance on foreign sources from the volatile Middle East. We should look more toward our neighbors and trading partners in the Western Hemisphere, like Venezuela, which has made significant investment in the United States and recently opened its oil industry to investment by U.S. companies.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to move toward a policy that encourages domestic oil and gas exploration and production, to ensure a vibrant and healthy economy.

#### AMERICA MUST WORK TOWARD ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

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

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, on this historic fifth anniversary of the Persian Gulf war, the lessons seem clear: America must work toward energy independence. But, this Nation seems to be ignoring the lessons of the past and heading in exactly the wrong direction—toward over dependence on foreign energy sources.

As leaders, we must make every effort to help America's oil and gas industry thrive. By helping the American oil and gas industry thrive, we will create new jobs, more revenues and increased national security. But we must unleash this strategic industry from its regulatory noose. Currently, instead of cutting down on bureaucratic regulations, the administration and some in Congress have proposed more than \$14 billion in new industry regulations that would take effect over the next 5 years.

My colleagues on the House Resources Committee seem to understand these costs. Today, they will markup a bill, the Oil and Gas Royalty Fairness and Implication Act, that makes sense. It cuts through the bureaucracy and provides certainty, simplicity, fairness and efficiency in royalty collection. This is something that industry and the administration can agree on. I hope we can too.

It is time to free America's oil and gas industry from over regulations so that this Nation can be free from its foreign oil dependency.

#### IT IS TIME SOME REPUBLICANS IN THIS BODY GOT RELIGION AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION

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

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I represent the Second Congressional District of Illinois, where education is considered sacred. This Nation should have no higher priority than to educate its populace. Senator DOLE and a majority of the Republicans in the Senate voted 84 to 16 on Tuesday to restore funding for key education and job training programs. Now that Senator DOLE is candidate DOLE, he has religion. Yet, in this body, there is still a majority in the majority who are determined to cut funding for basic education and math skills, cut funding for safe and drug-free schools, cut funding for vocational education, and that is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, education helps preserve family values. Education is the cornerstone of our democracy. It is good for business. It is good for meaningful, well-paying, and socially useful jobs. Education aids economic growth and keeps us competitive in the global marketplace, adds quality to a person's life, and enhances one's self-image. A mind, Mr. Speaker, is a terrible thing to waste. It is time some Republicans in this body got religion and supported the full funding of education.

#### PASO ROBLES MAKES TOP 50 LIST OF SMALL TOWNS TO LIVE IN

(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, I rise today to pay tribute to Paso Robles, a beautiful small town on the central coast of California.

Recently in its April issue, Money magazine described Paso Robles as one of "America's 50 Hottest Little Boomtowns."

Paso Robles, a computer-age company town with tremendous growth potential—just a few miles north of California's commercial space port is considered one of the 50 best towns to live and work because of its growing promise of jobs in its electronics manufacturing and winery industry.

The Money magazine article ranked Paso Robles 43 out of 50 best places to live based on the city's projected population growth of 12 percent, its attractive median income and typical home cost.

I proudly salute Paso Robles and its citizens and encourage them to take pride in the fact that it is truly one of America's best kept secrets.