

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, every spring I plant natural resource trees, over the past 2 months, nearly 600: crab apples, redbuds, oaks, cherries, dogwoods, cypress, and cedar, just to name a few. I also cut down trees, mostly stunted or overgrown pine, to make room for others to grow. I was raised to appreciate that kind of balance.

This spring I will join other volunteers in Habitat for Humanity, hammering and sawing lumber to build suitable housing for poor families in Louisiana. I was raised to understand that kind of balance, too.

Unfortunately, many of our bureaucrats do not. Every week nearly 1 square mile of Louisiana washes away in coastal marsh and barrier island erosion. Private landowners are prepared to spend their own money to save those marshes and wetlands, but our wetlands permit system says no. Hundreds of such applications have been abandoned.

The Corps of Engineers in Louisiana still refuses as yet to authorize a private mitigation bank. So 30 to 50 square miles in my State washes away while bureaucrats squabble over so-called wetlands that no self-respecting duck would land on.

We need to spend less money on lawyers and bureaucrats and more money really saving wetlands in America.

#### SUPPORT H.R. 3244

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, the Capital of the United States is in serious disrepair, and I mean a lot more than potholes. It is trying to recover by downsizing a loan as no insolvent city has ever done. There is Federal responsibility here, including the unfunded pension liability that is taking 10 percent of our budget, and that is entirely my colleagues' responsibility.

The time has come to act now. We are a hemorrhaging population. We want to revive the District the old-fashioned way, by keeping and attracting middle-income residents here. Please support my Federal tax cut bill for the District of Columbia; support H.R. 3244. My colleagues should assume their share of the responsibility for the Capital of the United States.

#### TRAVEL AND TOURISM SHRINKS TRADE IMBALANCE

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

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, did my colleagues see yesterday where the trade deficit is down by over 18 percent? Now that is something to cheer about.

But do my colleagues know why the trade deficit is down? According to the Commerce Department, it is because

the travel and tourist industry reported a temporary surge in foreign visitors to the United States. Unfortunately, this trend cannot continue unless we in Congress work right now to continue the trend by passing the Travel and Tourism Partnership Act.

Now we have 226 cosponsors. That is terrific. I want everyone to cosponsor this bill. We want to do even more, because terrific is not good enough when it comes to travel and tourism.

Travel and tourism is the largest industry in America. Travel and tourism employs one out of every nine working Americans, and it is time that we in Congress, and we are, awaken to the tremendous potential in this industry, and I ask everyone to help me.

Let us cosponsor this bill, and let us pass it so we can get our trade deficit down even further.

#### GIVE OUR STUDENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO WORK THEIR WAY THROUGH SCHOOL

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

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, one of the great arguments that I have heard in this debate about the minimum wage has been that there are many students who receive minimum wage. I stand here this morning as a product of the family of 13 children, parents who could not afford to send me to college, and the only way I could get through was to work.

I do not see anything wrong with trying to provide a wage that allows a student to be able to work their way through school particularly when we are cutting back in so many areas that affect and impact the lives of students who have been able to get scholarships, be able to get grants and loans. It seems to me that if we are going to be fair, we have to be fair to every American citizen, even those who are students who have a desire, a will, to work.

Mr. Speaker, my mother taught me how to cook, wash, iron, and sew. That is how I got through college. There are many other young people who could do the same thing if we were fair enough to them to give them that opportunity, give them the best wages. I have waited tables, I have bussed tables, I have shined shoes, I have done everything, and we ought to let them do it. Pay them a good enough salary so that we can indeed come to that point where maybe if we reduce the scholarships, they will know they can work their way through.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is a good thing. I am a product and a witness of it.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE PARENTAL FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Parental Freedom of Information Act to provide parents in America with the information they need to guide the education of their children. Teachers have told me that involved parents are the most important thing the public schools need to help students learn. Involved parents must be informed parents.

The Parental Freedom of Information Act will guarantee that parents have access to their child's curriculum, the contents and result of standardized tests and medical records, including psychiatric and/or counseling records.

Recently, parents have been denied access to instructional materials used in classes which they might find objectionable. They have been denied achievement tests that have been administered and then withheld from parental inspection, and treatments by unqualified school counselors have been administered to children contrary to the expressed objections of parents, and the records of this treatment were denied to the parents. Parents have been forced into the courtroom to find out what is going on in the classroom.

This act in no way seeks to influence curriculum or standardized tests. It simply provides the basic information which involved parents need to guide the education of their children.

#### RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, good morning. The battle about the minimum wage rages on. Some people would have our colleagues believe that the minimum wage only affects kids, so we should not worry about it. Not true—10 million Americans are affected by the minimum wage. Some 75 percent of them are adults and 58 percent of them are women.

We need to increase the minimum wage. The minimum wage has not been increased in 5 years. The purchasing power of people who earn the minimum wage has decreased by 15 percent. We are talking about people who make about \$8,400 a year operating under the current minimum wage.

I am pleased to say today, Mr. Speaker, that there is some bipartisan support for increasing the minimum wage. I am distressed, however, that there are still some Republicans who believe that we should not increase the minimum wage and want to fight it.

We do not need any convoluted bureaucratic plans to pay employers. What we need is a very simple solution: Raise the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, if we raise the minimum wage, we will bring 300,000 families out of poverty, we will bring 100,000 children out of poverty.

Raise the minimum wage.

### MINIMUM WAGE: MINIMUM OPPORTUNITIES

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I really wonder if the President and the Democrats are truly interested in raising the minimum wage or is it just that they want to score some political points? When they controlled Congress back in 1992 and 1993 with President Clinton in the White House, why was not an increase in the minimum wage on the agenda? Maybe they were too busy raising taxes on gas, on Social Security, on small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I have to look at this comment that the President made in 1993. President Clinton said, "The minimum wage," and I am quoting, "The minimum wage is the wrong way to raise incomes of low-wage earners." But then again, I guess we really cannot believe what the President says from day to day or time to time.

By the way, if my colleagues think 90 cents an hour is going to save working families, I say my colleagues' priorities are in the wrong place. We need to provide tax relief to our families, not 90 cents an hour. Lowering taxes will raise incomes.

### FAMILIES NEED TO EARN A LIVABLE WAGE

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, we are hearing a lot of excuses from the majority these days about why we do not need to increase the minimum wage. Mr. Speaker, I know firsthand why families need to earn a livable wage.

Over 28 years ago I was a single working mother with three small children, receiving no child support. Even though I was working, I was earning so little that I had to go on welfare to take care of my children. I tell my colleagues this, Mr. Speaker, because too many families today face the same situation.

In spite of what the majority whip has said about minimum wage and about earning \$4.25 an hour, almost 5 million Americans work for at or below minimum wage, and I am not talking about teenagers looking for extra cash. Rather, the average minimum wage earner looks a lot like I did 28 years ago, an adult woman supporting her family by herself. Today that mother is worse off because the purchasing power of the minimum wage has plummeted to a 40-year low.

Clearly, it is time to make work pay by increasing the minimum wage now.

### TRIBUTE TO THE LATE GILBERT MURRAY

(Mr. HERGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Gilbert Murray, former President of the California Forestry Association. Today marks the 1-year anniversary of Gil's tragic death at the hands of the Unabomber.

Today, I will not dwell on the tragedy of Gil's death, but rather on the greatness of his life. Gil was a respected professional leader. He advocated good stewardship of our forests to keep them beautiful and productive for our children and grandchildren.

More importantly, Gil was a leader in his home. Despite his professional commitments, he always made his family his priority. He was never too busy for his wife and two sons.

In every way Gilbert Murray was an exemplary man. I speak for many in northern California in saying that we remember him fondly and miss him greatly.

### THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN: RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, the American people have spoken. The latest polls show that 85 percent of Americans are in favor of raising the minimum wage.

I will say to my Republican colleagues, they have lost the battle in the court of public opinion.

So what does the Republican leadership now plan to do? Instead of following the will of the American people, they are following the will of corporate America and the fat cats who have funded their campaigns. That is immoral.

The latest Republican shell game will eliminate the earned income tax credit and then exclude workers without children from getting a raise. The rationale is to save \$15 billion and give more breaks to big, big business. This ridiculous proposal takes working families one step forward and knocks them two steps back.

My colleagues, if we want to help working families, we must insist on a clean minimum wage bill with no strings attached, and vote to raise the minimum wage without delay.

### RENEWABLE ENERGY EXPO 1996

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

Mr. SCHAEFER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to urge Members to visit the Renewable Energy Expo 1996, taking place today from noon to 3 p.m. in the Cannon Caucus Room.

This exhibit, being sponsored by three dozen trade associations, industry groups, and businesses, offers you

the opportunity to inspect the latest American renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies. You can ask the groups' representatives questions about their projects throughout the country, including some which may be operating in your own district.

The renewable energy expo is being put on in cooperation with the House Renewable Energy Caucus, a bipartisan group I founded in February along with six other Members. This caucus has grown 10 times in size—to 70 members—in less than 3 months, demonstrating the broad support renewables enjoy in Congress and throughout the country, renewables for our children and their grandchildren.

I hope you can stop by the Cannon Caucus Room today to see vivid demonstrations of our country's energy future.

### REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP DENIES MINIMUM-WAGE WORKERS EVEN EXIST

(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 are reaching new heights of desperation as they scurry to dodge a vote on raising the minimum wage, even though the minimum wage is at a 40-year low, even though a 90-cent increase would help over 10 million workers in this country, and even though the average minimum-wage worker brings home more than half of his or her family's income.

It might be interesting to note that Members of this Congress earned more during the shutdown of this Government during the Christmas holidays than a full-time minimum-wage worker makes in an entire year. But despite all that, the Republican leadership will go to any length to kill an increase in the minimum wage. They are not even afraid of resorting to fantasy.

Yesterday the House majority whip said, "Emotional appeals about working families trying to get by on \$4.25 an hour are hard to resist. Fortunately, such families don't really exist."

They do not believe that people do exist on the \$8,500 a year or are trying to exist on that amount of money. Tell it to the 300,000 families in this country who are minimum-wage workers. Let us go to a clean, straight vote on raising the minimum wage.

### LIBERALS REACHING NEW HEIGHTS IN DEMAGOGUERY

(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, the liberals in Congress have reached new heights in demagoguery in the last few months, and with the help of the liberal media and the big special interests, AFL-CIO, they have been able to