

each one of us in this Chamber, a voting card that is ironically just about the same size as a credit card, a Visa or Mastercard, that most Americans carry in their pockets. This credit card for 40 years has run up the deficit, a trillion-dollar deficit that we have now, bills that we are going to be paying in the future even if we were to cut spending drastically for years to come now.

We have a lot of catching up to do, Mr. Speaker. This voting card that we have has been put in the electronic voting card slots here for many years running up deficits that our children, as I looked at my children's faces last week, I felt very sad for the fact that we have so many years of catching up to do to cut spending so that we can preserve their future, Mr. Speaker, so that when they grow up, they still have the same opportunities that we have in this country now to live the American dream, as I did.

I come from a neighborhood, low-income neighborhood, primarily Spanish-speaking, on the south side of San Antonio, and I had no special privilege when I grew up. All I had was opportunity guaranteed by this wonderful country of ours. But at the time I was not saddled with the tremendous deficit that the Congress had left behind; therefore, as I grew up, and my father often had to work two jobs to send us to school, he was not faced with looming mega interest rates and deficits in his future that we are going to saddle our ability as a family to prosper.

That opportunity could be threatened, Mr. Speaker, in the future because if we keep running up the charges with these credit cards that we vote with, we are going to threaten the future for our children. My constituents understand this as well, Mr. Speaker. They know, I represent one of the poorest districts in the Nation, they understand how difficult it is to live on a budget.

These are tough choices that we must make and must continue to make. When we cut the deficit and we have a balanced budget, we are going to have lower interest rates for our children as well in the future. When they want to buy a car, when they want to borrow money to go to school, to go to college, when they want to buy, make that first purchase to buy a stereo or books for college or anything that they need to sustain themselves, they are going to have lower interest rates as we continue, as this Congress has done, in cutting spending to cut the deficit and balance the budget.

It is with our children's hearts in mind, Mr. Speaker, that I am going to continue working to cut spending in this Congress, because I know that is what the American people want.

I came from the private sector, never ever having held public office before being elected in 1992, and I remember what it is like to be in the private sector making tough decisions to balance the budget at your business, in your

homes, at the dining room table each night having to decide what you have to do to make the future of your family sustain itself and not with a deficit but with a promising future because you are paying your bills as you are going along.

I promise, Mr. Speaker, that as long as I am here serving in this wonderful Congress, I am going to use this credit card wisely and continue to cut spending for the future of our children in this country because, Mr. Speaker, I ask if we are not here to do this for the future of our children, I ask what are we doing here, what are we here for in the first place?

REFORM WEEK HAS CEASED TO EXIST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, Reform Week, it has been on a life support system for the past few weeks, but now the plug has been pulled and Reform Week has been officially terminated.

The Republican leadership announced less than 2 hours ago that Reform Week, the much-heralded and touted week that was going to turn the House of Representatives back over to the American people, has been postponed once again. This is the same Reform Week that had become the Reform Hour and now has simply ceased to exist.

What happened? Well, rather than actually engaging in real reform, the Republican leadership in this House had decided to bring to the floor of the House legislation that would not actually reform the system but, quite to the contrary, would make it worse.

Ten of my Republican colleagues circulated a "Dear Colleague" letter this week that said, and I quote, "Instead of leveling the playing field in elections, this bill will result in greater incumbent protection. The bill actually increases the amounts that wealthy individuals can contribute to Federal elections." This is the letter. I am not making it up.

That is right, they are right. Under current law, an individual can give \$25,000. Under the Republican campaign finance reform bill, an individual will be able to give up to \$3.1 million. I have to repeat that because the magnitude is startling, it truly is. But it is not startling when you consider that the Speaker of the House said not too long ago that rather than less money in the system in terms of campaigns, we need more money into the system. That is why we had this piece of legislation.

Again, an individual will be able to give up to \$3.1 million. Current law again, individuals can contribute \$25,000. It is mind-boggling to think of how they have turned this concept of reform into something that is totally unimaginable to anyone here, let alone the American public who truly believes

that we need to reform our campaign finance system, and we do.

This is not reform. As my Republican colleagues also said in their "Dear Colleague," and I quote again,

The average American will be left even further behind in the Washington money chase as they are frozen out of political process. Given the fact that only about 1 percent of Americans gave contributions over \$200 or more during the last election, it is indisputable that raising the individual contributions limit will only increase the influence of the wealthy on our political process.

Mr. Speaker, no wonder the House of Representatives is at one of its all-time lowest approval ratings in history. The American people have lost confidence in this institution's ability to lead and in this institution's ability to do the right thing.

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We have no business considering legislation that will make it even harder for ordinary individuals to participate in the political process and make it easier for the rich to participate in this process.

This bill is a sham, just in the same way that Reform Week is a sham. Reforming the process has deteriorated into providing political cover to politicians who came to Washington and they promised to make a difference. Well, it is not going to work.

Even once again the Republican "Dear Colleague" says, "The fact is that H.R. 3760; that is, the Republican campaign finance reform bill, will not give you political cover as we head into Reform Week."

We do need to pass real campaign finance reform so that hard-working Americans can participate in the political process and that the special interests are limited in the political process. And doing that would go a very, very long way toward restoring the American people's faith in our ability to govern our own House, and it would restore their faith and put in the faith and the confidence and the trust that they would like to put in to those people who are elected every 2 years to do the people's business.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to replace the gentleman from California [Mr. RIGGS] on the list of 5-minute special orders.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYWORTH). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

DRUG ABUSE AND LACK OF LEADERSHIP IN THE WHITE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues, I serve on the committee that has been dealing with the FBI files

misuse question and also serve on the subcommittee that deals with our national drug policy, and until today I never thought that the two issues would meet until I sat and heard the testimony of those who work for our Secret Service and viewed the proceedings in the White House.

What I learned was most disturbing and concerns me as a citizen, as a Congressman, and someone who has always held the White House in the highest respect. It is the Chief Executive Office of our land.

First, we heard the tales of an admitted drug user who ended up as the chief personnel security officer for the White House, an unbelievable tale in the White House Legal Office of ignoring the details of this individual's past in placing him in such an important position.

I have come to the House and talked with my colleagues and tried to call to the attention of the Congress and the country the situation with drug abuse and use and the lack of leadership from the White House, and today it really struck home what has been happening.

First, we saw the President take office, and then in a startling move, he cut the White House drug czar's office. He cut the staffing in the White House of the drug czar's office by 85 percent. That did not make sense. Then he cut drug interdiction programs, decimated them, that stopped drugs at their source countries, and that did not make sense and I wondered why. And then the President appointed as the chief health officer for the Nation, the Surgeon General, an individual who said to our children and the American public, "Just say maybe. Maybe drugs are OK." And that did not make sense and I wondered why.

Now I see this pattern of people who are in the White House, and most disturbing we learn today that the situation got so bad with people coming in that even the Secret Service, and these are people coming in with drug use and abuse histories, and some, it appears, current activities, that, in fact, the Secret Service demanded that some action be taken. And only after, through what has been called some remedial action, instituting a program within the White House, was something done.

This administration has talked about regulating cigarettes and the harmful effects of nicotine, and this, I am afraid, has been a diversion. The real question is what has been happening with drugs, and we can look at the results. The results are that marijuana use among our children, our children, 50 percent a year each year since this administration took office. These are not idle statistics. These are facts.

If we look at what is happening, this chart shows here that in 1980 is when President Reagan just said no to drug use, and President Bush, and drug use with our children dropped. Here in 1992, it starts going up, and we see why.

Cocaine, heroin, designer drugs are at epidemic proportions with our young

people, 8th, 10th, 12th grades, and we see that the lack of leadership is the lack of a policy in the Chief Executive Office of this land.

If you are a parent, you should be concerned. Our children's drug use is dramatically up. If you are a minority, you should be concerned. Our jails are packed with minorities. In Washington, DC, we have a record number of killings. And throughout our land, every time you turn on the news you see the mayhem created by drugs, and 70 percent of those in prisons today are there because of a drug-related incident, and the President has failed to mention this or make this a priority.

Let me cite this statistic here. He gave 1,628 statements in 1993 and only mentioned drugs 13 times. In 1994 he gave 1,742 Presidential statements and only referred to drug use or drug abuse 11 times.

We see this pattern that has not been a priority of this President. It has not been a priority of this White House. What we must have is a President that will lead this Nation and people in the Chief Executive Office of this land to lead by example.

WELFARE REFORM LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to spend my 5 minutes tonight talking about the so-called welfare reform legislation that we will be voting on tomorrow, and that debate was started on tonight.

I intend to be very critical of the Republican leadership proposal which has been brought up on the floor and to praise, if you will, the bipartisan alternative that has been put forth by the gentleman from Delaware, Congressman CASTLE, who is a Republican, and also the gentleman from Tennessee, Congressman TANNER, who is a Democrat.

When I talk about welfare reform, and I discuss it with my constituents in my district in New Jersey, what I hear is that most of my constituents feel that in the process of welfare reform children should not suffer, children should not be harmed in any way.

What my constituents say they want is they want to get people off welfare to work and to have a future for themselves and a certain pride in the fact that they are working for their families. They do not necessarily think that welfare reform should be money driven; in other words, that we should use welfare reform as a way to save money. They seem to be more concerned about the need to change the social fabric, to eliminate the so-called welfare mentality.

My point tonight is that the Republican leadership bill, which we are going to be voting on tomorrow, I think falls short in terms of what my constituents want. In fact, it is tough

on kids. It makes kids suffer. It does substantial harm to children, and it is very weak on work. It does not really do very much to get people to work or make it possible for them to work.

The Castle-Tanner bipartisan substitute, I think, is just the opposite. It achieves the goals of trying to get people off welfare and working, and, at the same time, making sure that kids are protected, that they are not suffering in terms of food nutrition programs, housing, or the other things that would keep them healthy and prepare for their future.

Now, let me just give an example. The Republican leadership bill would probably push more than 1 million children into poverty, just the opposite of what most of my constituents would expect it would do.

When it comes to the work program, which I say is rather weak, the Congressional Budget Office says that no State would be able to meet the work requirements in the Republican proposal given the resources or the lack of resources that the bill devotes and gives to States so that they can train people and get them into productive jobs.

The worst example, though, is with regard to the Food Stamp Program. I do not think that any American would think that the purpose of welfare reform would be to cut back on the amount of money that the average welfare recipient has available to pay for food, particularly for their children.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities did a study, which was issued today, and it says that the Nation's poorest households, those with incomes below half of the poverty line, would lose an average of \$650 a year in food stamp benefits under the welfare legislation now before Congress, the Republican leadership proposal.

The study also found that working poor households, and these are people that are working, that receive food stamps, because we know many people get food stamps who are not on welfare; in other words, they are not on Aid to Families with Dependent Children, they are actually working, but what the study found is that working poor households that receive food stamps to help supplement their low wages along with the elderly poor and poor families with children would lose several hundred dollars a year in food cash assistance as well.

The welfare bills coming this week to the House and Senate floors contain \$28 billion in food stamp reductions over the next 6 years, with many of those reductions being achieved by across-the-board cuts that affect all groups of the poor. What the report basically says is that a large share of the welfare bill's food stamp savings would come from across-the-board food stamp benefit cuts with only 2 percent of the food stamp savings in the bill coming from provisions to reduce administrative cost, curb fraud or end benefits for people failing to comply with work requirements.