

from last year where he said one of the greatest myths of modern politics is that campaigns are too expensive, the political process in fact is underfunded. It is not overfunded. I would emphasize far more money in the political system.

Now that says it all. I mean he just wants more money to be available and more money to be spent, and the whole idea, the cap on campaign expenditures, is anathema to him and, I believe, to the Republic leadership, and that is why you are not going to see a cap. Regardless of the mix that is achieved to reach that cap, you are not going to see that cap in something that they support because they just do not think they want to spend more money.

Mr. MEEHAN. If my colleague will yield, that point is right on point and exactly the truth. Since the beginning, Republican leadership has been wedded to the special-interests corporate contributions that drive their agenda. That is what they have been wedded, protecting big tobacco, sheltering corporate subsidies, promoting environmental regulation and rolling back environmental laws. These goals are not driven by the views of the American people, they are not driven by the views of the public. They are on the high-priorities list of the biggest contributors to the Republican Party.

That is what this is about.

Mr. FARR of California. And look what has happened this year and last year. What we have seen here and why we even need to have a reform week is some of the abuses of this institution that have been carried out by this leadership, lobbyists literally sitting and writing the bills, not the paid professional staff of Congress. Lobbyists and former Members who are lobbyists being able to be at the dais during a debate, the fact that the attack has been on sort of the monied interests, the money interests that would rather cut it out for us rather than preserve it, the money interests that would rather pollute our drinking water than clean it up, the money interests that would rather keep minimum wage from being passed and signed into law, the money interests that would like to make sure that welfare reform is all about just making people work, which is fine, but who is going to provide the jobs out there?

So you begin to see that there is a very conservative agenda building in Congress, and that agenda is only thwarted by the fact that this room is made up of a awful lot of diverse people who come here with viewpoints different from just a one standard cookie-cutter financial bottom line "what is in it for me," and that has been able to make the Congress the vibrant place that it is.

If you do not like the product that is coming out of here and the product that the Democratic leadership is adding here, you want to change that, and the best way to change that is to change the Members of Congress, and if

you can make those Members of Congress more reflect just that bottom-line mentality that everything has a price tag on it, there is not a better way to do that than the campaign reform bill, the campaign—no reforming it—the campaign bill that has been introduced by our colleague, Mr. THOMAS.

Mr. MEEHAN. If the gentleman would yield, let me just get into a couple of specifics. These are probably the five worst things about the Republican bill. But the Republican bill vastly increases all of the—nearly all—of the contributions set in current law.

Reforming campaigns, let us face it. It is about limiting the influence of money, not expanding it.

The Republican bill would also allow an individual to contribute \$310,000 to campaigns in political parties in a single election cycle. That is more than 10 times the current legal limit.

Now, we have already mentioned that according to the Republican bill, an individual could conceivably donate \$3.1 million to State and national parties cumulatively. The Republican bill also codifies the soft-money loophole in the current law, which is how millions and millions of these dollars slip in. It is through the soft money.

The Republican bill also vastly increases the role of national parties in local elections. That is a move that would clearly benefit the Republican parties because, as they are in the majority, raising millions and millions of dollars, they are hoping, as we said earlier, that they can buy close elections because of all of the money they are raising.

Those are five of the worst reasons, worst things about this bill, and I think the reason they cancel Reform Week, and let us be clear about this. How long have we been hearing about Reform Week? We are going to straighten everything out in Reform Week, we are going to limit how much money is spent, we are going to change the system, we are going to change the way Congress does business.

Nonsense. Here we are. It is Wednesday night at 10:15 Washington time, and we do not have Reform Week. The Committee on Rules is up considering a bill that goes in the opposite direction.

NEWT GINGRICH is one of the only people in America that thinks you reform the system by putting more money into it. It is absolutely ridiculous, and I cannot imagine the response of people in this country over the next few days when they realize Reform Week was a sham, it never happened. Maybe some day next week, maybe next month, maybe next year.

I think the American people are going to respond very, very angrily to what has happened here tonight.

Mr. PALLONE. If the gentleman will yield, and I have to confess that I am going to have to leave after this remark, but one of the myths that I constantly hear from the Republican leadership is this notion that somehow individual contributions, large individual

contributions, are not exerting influence on Congress or on politicians the way, for example, that political action committees would, and to me it is sort of ironic because I do not really put a tag on any particular kind of contribution. I really think that what we need to do is to create a diversity of contributions and limit the overall amount of money that is spent which is essentially what your bill would do, Mr. FARR.

But this myth that somehow if someone gives a thousand dollars individually, that is clean, or under this Republican proposal that they give \$2,500, that that is clean, but a PAC is not clean or some other method is not clean. And I always think to myself, if there is a large corporation and the individuals in that corporation contribute to the political action committee and then a check was written for \$5,000 to a Congressman from that PAC so to speak, how was that any different from the five individuals or ten individuals each; you know, the chairman of the corporation, the president of the corporation, the various vice presidents of the corporation, each writing an individual check for a thousand dollars, or in this case, you know, as they proposed it would be \$2,500. The ability of people to influence is no different whether they are running an individual check or they are contributing to a political action committee.

I think that the answer is to simply limit the overall amount that can be spent and the amount that can be contributed, if you will, from these individual sources so that if you say, for example, that a PAC can give \$5,000, but you require that a lot of that be small donations, OK, maybe that is some sort of reform, or if you say that, as you propose, that you can only have so many individual large contributions or so many PAC contributions, that is reform. But they keep, the Republican leadership, keeps putting out this notion I call a myth that individual contributions are somehow OK and that they are not going to influence people, and therefore it is OK to increase them and perhaps to almost unlimited amounts, and it is simply not true. There is no difference between the president of the corporation writing me a check and having him contribute to a PAC that writes me a check. I do not see it, and I know for a fact that a lot of times when individuals contribute to your campaign, and particularly if it is a large donation, a lot of times they expect, you know, to have access or to be treated or, you know, to have your ear just as much or if not more than some of the other special interests that contribute through a political action committee.

But we keep hearing this from the Republicans, it is okay to keep coming with those individual large contributors.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, before the gentleman leaves, I just want to comment, and I think it is true in your office, and I would be curious to know, we have received 362 letters in favor of limiting campaign finance in congressional campaigns. We have received two to suggest we ought to spend more money, or are opposed to the limits. It is running over 150 to 1 in favor of exactly what we are doing.

I presume your mail is in the same category, so what boggles my mind is how do you come up with a bill they have come up with that goes just opposite, that blows all the lids, takes all the limits off current law and says just more money, more expensive campaigns, money buys influence, let us get more of it?

Mr. PALLONE. I really think what happens, Mr. Speaker, is that the Republican leadership takes advantage of the fact that the campaign finance system is a complicated structure and that most people really do not understand how it applies to individual races. We understand it because we are in it, but a lot of people do not. So they just try to basically throw out to the public these myths.

I am very glad to see that this latest effort on their part to try to basically raise the individual limits and get so much more money into campaigns have been exposed. As I think I mentioned before, or maybe I did not, we have all the public interest groups opposing this bill: Common Cause, Public Citizen, the League of Women Voters. There was an editorial in the New York Times today, as well as in a lot of my local papers, criticizing the proposal. We even have some of the Republicans who put out a letter opposing it.

We are sort of fortunate, in a way, that this has been exposed for what it truly is, a way to try to put a lot more cash into the campaigns. But I think a lot of times it is a complicated subject, and it is very difficult sometimes to make people understand how it works in practical terms.

That is why I think it is so important to do what the two of you are doing tonight, by trying to expose it for what it really is.

Mr. FARR of California. I appreciate you coming down tonight. You have a family, it is a little late, and you have young kids at home. I hope you will get a chance to see them tonight with the little time that is left. That will leave the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MEEHAN] and myself here. We have been two of the sponsors of the major alternatives to the bad bill that we have been talking about all night.

I want to just publicly thank you for the effort that you have had in leading the bipartisan effort to bring a sensible bill to the floor for a vote, and hopefully you will get that vote. I am certainly supportive of it. If that is not successful, then the bill that I have authored, which is just about the same bill with some minor changes, I hope will prevail in lieu of that.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield for just a minute, we have been working hard on this bipartisan bill. The gentleman from Connecticut, CHRIS SHAYS, and the gentlewoman from Washington, LINDA SMITH, ironically enough, LINDA SMITH and I, for example, we do not agree on very much. She is a conservative Republican and I am a more progressive Democrat. But the one thing that we do agree on is the fact that we will never get to balance the budget fairly, we will never get decisions made in Washington on the merits until we change the campaign finance laws.

It is really frustrating to be here again, near the end of another session, and see all the publicity that the Republican majority got about having reform week and see it turn into nothing but a total fluke, a sham. They are not going to do it. It is just really, really frustrating.

The one thing about it that I think that the American people get is that the worst thing that we could do is nothing. The worst thing we could do is to publicize a reform week and then have nothing. I think ultimately the American people will have their say. It may be a complicated issue, but they understand that we need less money, not more money, spent in the electoral process, in elections in this country. They understand we need to level the playing fields so that people of average, modest means are able to get onto the people of average, modest means are able to get onto the ballot in districts all across America; whether they are liberal or Democratic, Republican or conservative, are able to get on and run for Congress. That is what democracy is all about.

As long as we have the corrupting influence of millions and millions and millions of dollars being spent on these campaigns, the American public is going to be suspicious of decisions that have been made. I think ultimately, maybe it will not be this Congress, but I think ultimately the American people are going to demand the type of reform we have been fighting for.

Mr. FARR of California. I appreciate my colleague's passion on this, Mr. Speaker. The gentleman got married last weekend and he is down here giving up part of his honeymoon to be here and talk about reform week.

Mr. MEEHAN. I thought we were going to be here to do reform week. I have been working for 3 years. I can just imagine my wife at home saying, wait a minute, they are not doing campaign finance reform. You told me you had to be there for campaign finance reform. But what are you going to do? The Committee on Rules just a few hours ago made the decision to block again changing the way our campaigns are financed. I guess the priest said forgiveness is important, so hopefully she will remember that when she finds out that campaign finance reform again ended up on the back burner.

Mr. FARR of California. I think the biggest tragedy that would be caused

by a vote on the Republican bill, if that ever became law, is that I think it would kill the very dream that people have when they come into this building that they or maybe a relative or son or daughter, and certainly as I talk to, I know you talk to all the school children that we meet with every week, and I would like to instill in them that there are ordinary people serving in Congress, and that they too, maybe not even knowing it at young school age or high school age or a young student in college, that they could someday serve in the United States Congress, because if they look around, that is what this Congress has been made up of.

I think that the bill that is being debated in the Committee on Rules to be brought to the floor as the major bill, as the Republican leadership bill for campaign reform, would kill the opportunity for ordinary people to become Members of Congress. That would be the greatest tragedy we could ever perform on this institution that we are so proud of.

Mr. MEEHAN. There is no question about that. I did get married last weekend, and I come from a large family, and my father worked as a compositor at the Lowell Sun, and my mother raised 7 children. I am very fortunate to have the opportunity to have been able to get elected to the Congress.

Could you imagine a system where the political parties, the bosses in Washington, determined, well, we are going to spend a few hundred thousand dollars in the Fifth District up in Massachusetts because we do not want to see this former prosecutor get elected. I never would be here, and there are a lot of other people who would not be here if we had a campaign finance system that allowed an individual person to contribute \$3.1 million to political parties all over the country, and then those parties can funnel this money into congressional races.

There is no way that a lot of people would be here, and increasingly, more and more people are getting elected to Congress because of money. It is the wrong direction. The American people understand that. They feel that. They may not understand the intricacies of election law, but they know that we need less money, not more money, in the system. That is why the Republicans are going to have a lot of difficulty getting the votes on this ridiculous bill to increase the influence of money in American politics.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's remarks. I want to continue on, because we have in the gallery tonight guests that are here watching this debate, and I think we see night after night people coming here to watch.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind the gentleman that he should refrain from references to the guests in the gallery.

Mr. FARR of California. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. People come here from all

over the world to watch Congress in session. It is an opportunity to see how in this country laws are made.

What we are about tonight is the special order talking about what is going on in a room upstairs here called the Committee on Rules room, where they determine the rules to bring bills to the floor: whether the bill will come to the floor, what kind of amendments can be offered to the bill, how much time there will be for debate, whether the amendments are in order.

As we saw, this was the promise that this would be the week that these issues would all be addressed on the floor. We are here at almost 10:30 at night in Washington, DC, and we have no resolution to this promise that was made to this Congress.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, I guess the only promise we have is that we are not going to have reform week.

Let me also say one of the reasons why there was reform in terms of what happened on the floor of this House when television cameras were brought in, the American people got an opportunity to see what happened firsthand, was to get people involved in the process. I think once the American people hear the debate on this floor, they are going to respond to the fact that the Republicans have not done anything about reform week.

Not only that, you mentioned the letters in your office. Clearly the American people who watch the debate on the floor here day in and day out, and there are thousands who do, who watch the debate day in and day out, will be appalled to find out that we are doing nothing on campaign finance reform.

I wanted to mention one other thing, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned the tobacco industry, because I have been involved in the whole issue of trying to prevent kids in America from being susceptible to tobacco, a product that kills over 400,000 people a year in this country. One of the difficult things about that battle is the amount of money that tobacco companies invest in political campaigns and in the political parties.

When I see a bill come before the Congress of the United States at a time when States all over America are increasing the tax on cigarettes, we are still providing subsidies to tobacco companies. Guess what? Every time there is a proposal that comes before the floor, it loses, to end these subsidies.

The assault weapons ban. That debate that we had on the floor of the Congress on assault weapons I felt was really an appalling debate. There was a press report that shows that there were Members in the majority, the leadership are the party that made commitments to the NRA and other groups that we would have a vote to reverse the ban on assault weapons. No one in America wanted that assault weapons ban to be repealed. All of the public opinion polls were against it. Even in

the U.S. Senate they did not take up this battle. Senator Dole said, "I want nothing to do with it."

What did we do? As a payback to over \$300,000 that were contributed by these interests, the NRA and other interests, we have a debate for an entire day on repealing the assault weapons ban. Think of it. We pass the toughest, smartest crime bill, bipartisan, by the way, and Republicans helped pass that bill, as well as Democrats did. We pass it, and then in this Congress there were compliments made in the last election, all kinds of money invested, literally millions of dollars invested in special interest gun lobby money, and we spend an entire day voting to repeal the assault weapons ban.

As far as I can see, Mr. Speaker, that was nothing more than payback time. I said that at that time. We had a whole day debate over it on a Friday. And here we are, trying to debate one of the fundamentally most important reforms a country like ours could ever institute, campaign finance reform. And guess what? The Committee on Rules is up there determining we are not going to debate it this week, we are not going to deal with it. They were only going to give us an hour or so on it anyway.

I just think back to an entire day on repealing the assault weapons ban that was part of the crime bill, with bipartisan support. And here we are, and we cannot even get a vote on campaign finance reform. It is absolutely incredible to me and incredible to the American public, how that could happen.

Mr. FARR of California. It may speak to how bad it has gotten in Washington. That is that the interests that you just talked about and others really would not want a campaign reform bill. You can see them out lobbying against it.

What it would do, it would limit the amount of money that they could give any one candidate. It would require that if they put out bulletins independent of the candidate, that they would have to disclose those as a campaign piece. If they put out your voting record and said your voting record is good because it supports us or it is bad because it opposes us, that at campaign time could be considered a campaign piece, and they would have to be registered as giving an in-kind contribution to the candidate that it benefited. They do not like that. They do not want that kind of disclosure.

So this campaign reform really hits, the Democratic version hits at the very concerns that some of the biggest special interests and most controversial special interests in Washington have.

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On the other hand, the leadership bill comes to the floor with no limits. They could buy and sell and own campaign elections throughout America.

Mr. MEEHAN. Actually, if the gentleman will yield, I would never believe that the majority party would come in with a bill like that. I just never would

have believed it. Let me just say there are a number of Republicans who are committed to campaign finance reform. I have worked diligently, day in and day out with the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] and the gentlewoman from Washington [Mrs. SMITH]. They are fully and totally committed to campaign finance reform.

Mr. Speaker, the problem is with their leadership. The problem is when the Speaker of the House testifies before a congressional committee that there is not enough money being spent in the political process, that in fact we need to raise the limit, more than double the limits of what individuals can contribute. Then the problem is with the Republican leadership. That is what the American people are responding to. How is it that we have a leadership that promised to change the way Congress does business, has an opportunity to fundamentally change the way Congress does business?

The President has been asking for this bipartisan bill all year long, challenging the Congress to pass limits on how much money is spent, challenging the Congress to set some limits on special interest money. We lost by six votes in the bipartisan bill over in the U.S. Senate. If the House could pass real bipartisan campaign finance reform, I believe that it would result in action in the other body. But instead, we have a bill that even Members of the Republican party are embarrassed about, totally embarrassed.

Some of my colleagues read the Dear Colleague letter that was sent around by, I believe, 10 Republican Members, Republican Members who want to see real campaign finance reform. They are embarrassed and they are appalled. What do we do? We say, All right, if you guys are embarrassed, if you guys are appalled, we'll do nothing. Let's take it up later.

That never ever should have been done. We should have known it was coming when the Speaker testified before the congressional reform committee and said: Hey, look, we do not need to limit how much money is spent. We need to increase it so we can compete with Coca-Cola and the major companies.

We are talking about elections in a democracy. We are not talking about selling away to the highest bidder. We are talking about how we elect people to the U.S. Congress and whose interest they are going to represent. We are not talking about competing with Motorola or competing for billions of dollars in advertising on the television set. Absolutely the wrong message. We should have known this was going to happen as soon as the Speaker said he wanted to see more money in the process.

Mr. Speaker, I guess we should not be surprised, but I have to admit I am surprised that just 2 weeks ago the press releases were going out about reform week. And here we are, Wednesday at 10:30. Everyone is going home tomorrow at 4, and we have done nothing on reform, absolutely, positively nothing.

Mr. FARR of California. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, does the gentleman get the sense that this reform effort, so-called reform effort by the Republican leadership is actually imploding on them, that it is blowing up? Because we frankly have, between the Members that have cosponsored your bill and the Members that have voted for my bill in the past, we have enough votes to put our bill out. Frankly, we have enough time left where that bill could become law and signed by the President, and we have a letter from the President saying, if the measure gets to his desk, he will sign it. He is very supportive of the Farr bill.

I get the sense that one of the reasons we see a lot of this sort of slippage and speculation here that things are blowing up is because we really have a chance to do campaign reform because the American public has spoken. They want it. They like this bill. They like your bill. They like my bill. They like them so much better than the alternative that they have allowed their voices to be heard here in Washington.

The letters are coming in. The League of Women Voters, a strong advocate group here, nonpartisan, has let Congress know that they want to see campaign reform.

Does the gentleman have a sense that the Republican bill is really exploding in their face, so to speak?

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting. I have talked to a lot of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and they say: Look, the President is going to sign campaign finance reform.

There are all kinds of different versions. But if it is true campaign finance reform, this President is going to sign it. I believe that. The President is willing to compromise. If he can get any kind of limits on how much money is spent, I think he is going to sign the bill. And I think that is what they are afraid of.

Mr. Speaker, what do they do? They come up with the only possible idea or notion to make the President not sign the bill. Okay, we will put more money in the process. Obviously the President is going to sign this bill. I am reminded of when the Congress rushed to pass campaign finance reform when President Bush indicated he was going to veto the bill. That bill got right over to the President's desk right away so the President could veto it, and everyone went home. But now we have a President that is over there at the White House waiting for a campaign finance reform bill, willing to sign it, pushing the Congress to try to get some kind of limits, and guess what? Congress is blinking.

There is not going to be a campaign finance reform bill that is going to go to the President's desk. I will tell the gentleman that there is no greater failure of this Congress that the inability of the Congress to get a campaign finance reform bill over to the President's desk. That will be viewed in history and by the American people as the

single biggest failure of this Congress, to get that bill or some bill that the President can sign over to him. Republicans have come up with the only conceivable bill that the President would not sign, a bill that increases rather than decreases the influence of money in American politics.

So I give them credit for that. They have found a bill the President cannot support. It is a bill that increases the amount of money individuals can contribute.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure they can even get enough support from their own Congress. Fortunately I do not think they will get the support.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I heard my colleague say some people over here were interested in the debate. I wanted to actually have a debate instead of people throwing softballs back and forth at each other.

Mr. MEHAN. Go ahead. Ask a question.

Mr. KINGSTON. The question is, as I have listened to my colleague and the gentleman who left earlier, and I believe we are in the same class, the gentleman is a freshman class Democrat.

Mr. MEEHAN. Could the gentleman ask a question?

Mr. KINGSTON. Absolutely. I did not want to derail it by just coming out. But the Democrats had a reform bill, Republican freshmen had a reform bill in the 103rd previous Congress. Then if I recall correctly, the Democrats controlled the House, the Democrats controlled the Senate, and President Clinton was in the White House. I am just kind of wondering why we did not have campaign reform then. If it is fair to blame it on Republicans at this point, why would it not be fair to blame it on Democrats?

Mr. FARR of California. I am glad the gentleman asked, because in the 103d Congress with a bipartisan vote, we passed a bill over to the Senate. It was very similar to the bill that President Bush had vetoed in 1992. That bill ironically was filibustered by none other than Senator GRAMM who blocked it from the conferees being appointed. It was again a Republican defeat of a Democratic bill as it had been in the 102d, in the 101st and 100th Congresses, every one of those Congresses.

Mr. MEEHAN. If the gentleman would yield to me, I am really glad for that question because that is exactly what happened with the bill. There was a Republican filibuster. This House passed it, it was bipartisan because that is when I started working with my colleague from Connecticut, CHRIS SHAYS. Let me just say, I have worked diligently in a bipartisan way to pass campaign finance reform. I have worked with Republicans on campaign finance reform in this session since I got here. There are a number of Republicans who are committed to campaign finance reform. There are 20 Republicans on my bill who want to see a bi-

partisan bill pass. We have worked with both sides. The gentleman wants to ask a question, we have answered the question, and the public record is clear. This bill in the last Congress was killed by a Republican filibuster. If we want to lay blame, we will give a little bit of the blame to Democrats that are not pushing the bill quickly enough. But the bottom line to this is we have an opportunity to pass a bipartisan campaign finance reform bill, and what do the Republicans come up with? With a bill that increases how much money is spent on elections.

Mr. KINGSTON. Are we going to debate or grandstand?

Mr. MEEHAN. Neither part have had the audacity to submit to the Congress a bill that increases limits.

Mr. KINGSTON. Are we going to debate or grandstand?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYWORTH). The gentleman from Georgia will suspend. The gentleman from California controls the time.

Mr. FARR of California. I thank the Speaker. We have a few minutes left. I would rather not yield to the gentleman. He can have the next hour and speak as much as he wants.

Mr. KINGSTON. And I will be glad to yield to you on my time if you do want to have a debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia will suspend. The gentleman from California controls the time.

Mr. FARR of California. I thank the Speaker.

Mr. MEEHAN. If the gentleman will yield further, obviously we are finishing up our debate. The gentleman had a question, and it was a great question, "Should we not blame the Democrats?"

The truth was the bill in the 103d Congress had bipartisan support, it died in a Republican filibuster, and never got to the President. Clearly President Clinton would have signed that bill had it gotten there on time.

Mr. FARR of California. We do not even need to go back to last year. We can talk about this year. We have the same action by the Republican leadership in the Senate this year on the bill that was a counter bill to the one the gentleman has authored in this House.

Mr. MEEHAN. That is exactly right. It was a bipartisan bill. I worked with Senator MCCAIN who did an outstanding job working this bill and trying to get Members of the Republican Party to support this bill. What happened? The Republicans killed that bill in the U.S. Senate. I worked diligently with Senator MCCAIN on that. He did a great job. But the Republican majority in the Senate killed that bill. I testified before a Senate committee over there. The fact of the matter is that the increases in campaign contributions that the Republican Party are enjoying at this point I think prevents any real campaign finance reform.

Just for the record, that bill over in the Senate that the gentleman from California [Mr. FARR] mentioned is a

bipartisan bill. It is not about Democrats or Republicans. I recognize the fact that we cannot get a bill to the President without Republican support. That is why I went out and worked with the Republicans to get a bill that we could agree on, a bipartisan bill. But it has to limit how much money is spent. Otherwise, it is not real reform. I am delighted to have had this opportunity to speak out about my bipartisan bill and the really sorry state of affairs that we are faced with here on Reform Week, day 3, I guess. We are going to leave tomorrow, I guess, not doing anything in terms of any of the reforms that were advertised, including campaign finance reform.

Mr. FARR of California. I think history will show as we end this debate here that the Democratic caucus with bipartisan support in the past has passed campaign reform out of this House, in the 103d Congress, the 102d Congress, the 101st Congress, and the 100th Congress and in every one of those instances, that action has been thwarted by Republican actions either in the Senate or a veto by a Republican President. It is obvious that the campaign reform that we are talking about that the American public wants and has supported these number of years is about to be thwarted by actions in this House as well. It is a tragedy. It is a tragedy that Reform Week has diminished into this kind of strained effort to not have effective campaign reform. I thank the gentleman for coming down tonight and being in the well and sharing his thoughts with me as one of the leaders in campaign reform in America.

Mr. MEEHAN. I compliment the gentleman for having this hour on campaign finance reform.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind all speakers that it is inappropriate to characterize possible action or inaction in the other body.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3820, CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM ACT OF 1996

Mr. SOLOMON (during consideration of the Special Order of the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. KINGSTON) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104-685) on the resolution (H. Res. 481) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3820) to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to reform the financing of Federal election campaigns, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3734, PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 1996

Mr. GOSS (during consideration of the Special Order of the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. KINGSTON) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104-686) on the resolution (H. Res. 482) providing for further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3734) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201(a)(1) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1997, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

MORE ON REFORM WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time and wanted to say first of all a couple of things about the, and I am not going to call it a debate, my friends from the other side of the aisle who would yield 1 minute and then go off on a tirade. I do not think that is quite a debate, but then again I am not from their districts.

But I want to point out one thing, Mr. Speaker. The Clinton administration came to office, and they have been in office for 3½ years. They enjoyed 2 years of majority rule in the Senate and in the House. During that period of time, campaign finance reform was not passed. I have heard that PHIL GRAMM was the problem.

Who controlled the Senate during that period of time? Obviously the Democrats did. If they are going to bring in partisan politics, then it certainly stands to reason it should have passed under their watch the first 2 years.

I know this, Mr. Speaker, because I worked with TILLIE FOWLER and PETER TORKILDSEN on a campaign finance bill that we introduced as a freshman class.

□ 2215

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. If the gentleman from Georgia would suspend, the Chair would remind all those assembled that it is inappropriate to discuss individual Members of the other body or action or inaction they may have taken with regard to legislation.

Mr. KINGSTON. I understand that, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate that point.

Let the record be clear that the Senate and the House were controlled by Democrats for the 2-year period of time. The House Republicans have been working on campaign finance reform on a bipartisan basis for some time now, and one of the issues that we are trying to get bipartisan support on but

we cannot is the issue of soft money and the practice of unions and big union PACs to participate in elections and not even to have to report that money even though it is spent on behalf of a candidate. They can come into a district and spend under the label of soft money, an independent expenditure of money on ads, money directed toward the incumbent Republican, almost unlimited, and there is no check on that.

True campaign finance reform would account for all political money, not just the reportable money, and I hope that we do get some Democrats who are willing to stand up to the big union bosses. I know that they are raising \$35 million on behalf of Democrat candidates right now and Democrats are somewhat very reluctant to take on such a cash cow, but it would be great if they would.

Just to give Members some idea, AFL-CIO in 1994 spent \$804,000 on Democrat congressional candidates, 99 percent of their contributions. The American Federation of Teachers spent \$1,053,000; 99.3 percent of their total contributions went to Democrats. The American Trial Lawyers Association spent 94 percent of their campaign contributions on Democrat candidates, \$1,759,000. The Human Rights folks spent 96.5 percent of their money on Democrats. That is \$470,000. The Community Action Program spent 96 percent of their money on Democrats, \$42,000. The International Longshoreman's, \$300,000, which was 96 percent going to Democrats. The IUE, this is some other union, I am not sure which, \$204,000, 100 percent going to Democrats. The International Union of Bricklayers, \$143,000 going to Democrat candidates, 98.9 percent of their entire budget of contributions. The National Education Association, \$1,968,000; 99 percent of it going to Democrats. And one more, the UAW union PAC, \$1,914,000, 99 percent going to Democrat candidates. I would say if you want true campaign finance reform, this has to be included in the formula.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Massachusetts wanted some time, and let me yield to him.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I was just going to make the point that the bipartisan bill, which I have been working on with CHRIS SHAYS and with LINDA SMITH, would in fact limit, in fact the first provision is to abolish PAC money. The second fall-back provision because of constitutional problems is to limit PAC's to \$1,000 per primary, \$1,000 for general. And there are 21 Democrats on that particular bill so I think the characterization of Democrats is inaccurate.

Mr. KINGSTON. Reclaiming the time just a minute with the intent of yielding back to you for further explanation, does your bill also limit or eliminate independent expenditures, such as those that have been targeted