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AMERICAN PEOPLE WANT LAW ENFORCEMENT TO HAVE TOOLS IT NEEDS TO FIGHT TERRORISM

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, the American people are shocked and outraged over the tragedies of TWA Flight 800 and at the Olympic Park.

The American people want us to show determination and common sense in giving our Nation's law enforcement community the tools it needs to fight terrorism.

One proposal is to put chemical markers, or taggants, in gun powder to help the FBI identify the vicious cowards responsible for bombings.

What sensible person would side with the bombers and against the FBI? We have a chance, before we leave this week, to do what the American people would do if they could vote themselves.

The President has asked us to pass this antiterrorism proposal. Unfortunately, the long arm of the National Rifle Association has reached into this House and prevented us from even taking the issue up.

It is time for this House to stand with the American people, and stand up to the NRA. Let's pass meaningful antiterrorism legislation.

PRESIDENT CLINTON FINALLY COMES AROUND TO TRUE HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, good news for all Americans today. Not only has President Clinton agreed to sign the bipartisan welfare reform bill, he has said he will also sign the bipartisan health care reform bill.

With the enactment of the health care bill, this commonsense Congress is giving Americans genuine health care reform without a government takeover. The bill establishes medical savings accounts, fights fraud and abuse, provides a long-term care insurance deduction, allows the self-employed to deduct 80 percent of health care costs, and allows people the freedom to change jobs without losing their health care coverage.

Mr. Speaker, I'm glad President Clinton has finally come around. True health care reform is what the American people want.

PUTTING AMERICA AGAINST ITS OWN IMMIGRANT ROOTS

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

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, another Democratic initiative, health care and insurance reform, will soon become law, affecting millions of Americans. The Kennedy-Kassebaum bill, which reforms insurance portability and preexisting conditions in insurance, will permit us to go home and say, rightfully, that this is not a do-nothing Congress.

But along with same-sex marriage, abortion, and illegal immigration, Republicans are looking for another wedge issue to divide the country and get some votes. They have found it in "English Only," an initiative that puts America against its own immigrant roots and the sweeping tides of history.

□ 1015

It tells the billions that are watching the Olympics in Atlanta that America is saying that any language besides English is not important. "English Only" is bad for business, since most of our commerce is done in other languages. It is bad for tourism. It is a bad

nativist, isolationist initiative that the Congress should reject summarily.

CONGRESS ACTS TO MAKE ENGLISH OUR OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

(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, today is a great day for America. We are finally going to address an issue that the American people have been asking us to address for a long time, like the 45,000 people, 97 percent of the people who called in to USA Today in one weekend who said let us make English our official language.

Winston Churchill said a common language is one of the Nation's most priceless inheritances, and as an American I am delighted to say today that we are going to address this issue. English is a legacy for you and for me. No matter what our background or ethnic group, we all want to pass on this legacy for posterity so we can remain one Nation, one people, one language.

We Americans are from every corner of the globe. We represent every ethnic group, every religious group, every nation. But we are one nation, one people. Why? Because up to now we have had a wonderful commonality and today we are going to make English our official language so that we can respect all cultures, but also reaffirm our common bond and unifying force, the English language.

MEXICAN DRUG TRAFFICKING TO AMERICA MUST BE STOPPED

(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, a former Mexican drug agent says the

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Mexican Government is so corrupt that Mexican drug agents regularly escort massive drug shipments to America's borders. He further said Mexican drug agents are nothing more than bodyguards for drug traffickers to America.

Mr. Speaker, are you surprised? I am not. Everybody knows Mexico's war on drugs is a joke and America's war on drugs is a comedy of errors.

Think about it. When an 8-year-old can find brown Mexican heroin, Mexican cocaine, and Mexican marijuana on any street corner of America, something is not only wrong, somebody in high places, both in Mexico and in Washington, is getting awfully rich.

Mr. Speaker, I say it is time to deploy troops to the border and cut off aid to Mexico until they stop flooding our shores with dope. Think about it, Congress.

THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT, FOR SUPPORTING WELFARE REFORM

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, it's been a 2-year struggle, but I welcome President Clinton's support for the bipartisan effort by the 104th Congress to save generations of Americans from the poverty trap of the failed welfare system.

These commonsense welfare reforms will end welfare as a way of life.

These commonsense welfare reforms will ensure that able-bodied citizens between the ages of 18 and 50 without children must work in order to get welfare benefits.

These commonsense welfare reforms will help preserve families and give them a helping hand to self-sufficiency instead of discouraging marriage and encouraging illegitimacy.

These commonsense welfare reforms will end the tyranny of Washington bureaucrats preventing our State Governors from instituting innovative programs to help their neediest citizens become self-sufficient.

Most important, these commonsense welfare reforms will help save children, communities, and cities from the horrific cycle of poverty and violence which has destroyed so many lives.

Welfare reform is a victory for all Americans.

MUCH-NEEDED HEALTH CARE REFORM IS FINALLY HERE

(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, finally, almost a year to the day that it was introduced, we are prepared to pass the Kennedy health care reform bill. This much-needed legislation will provide millions of Americans with health insurance through greater portability and other needed reforms.

And to think that this day almost never was. In spite of the vote of 100 to 0 in the Senate, it took Democrats, constantly pressuring the Republicans, to get to where we are today.

The Republicans were prepared to let this bill languish in the Senate, but we applied the pressure here, and more important the American people applied the pressure all across this country, and the Republicans were forced to act.

Imagine, forced to enact legislation that would help working families be able to maintain their insurance, to prevent insurance companies from discriminating based on preexisting conditions.

Mr. Speaker, we are sent here to do the people's business and to work on behalf of families in this country. The bottom line is that although some may have gotten here kicking and screaming, they are here. We will pass health care legislation today.

PASSAGE OF WELFARE REFORM MARKS HISTORIC DAY FOR CONGRESS

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

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a historic day for the U.S. Congress. The passage of the Gingrich-Dole Welfare Reform Act provides a dramatic shifting of the direction of the ship-of-state, a shift away from welfare, from a growing Federal bureaucracy and ever expanding Federal welfare spending.

And as the ship turns, it will move toward less dependency upon Government, toward private opportunity and independence.

The welfare reform effort passed yesterday was initiated by Speaker NEWT GINGRICH and majority leader BOB DOLE. Speaker GINGRICH and his committees crafted the bill and worked tirelessly for its passage. And only yesterday, Speaker GINGRICH successfully got a commitment from President Clinton to sign it.

So while Speaker GINGRICH will share a piece of the credit for the Gingrich-Dole reform package with the President, yesterday will go down as a historic success for the new Republican majority in Congress.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE NOW A POSSIBILITY

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

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, this morning I rise to give credit to a small brave group of House Republicans that will join House Democrats and make it possible to at least raise the minimum wage. We in the House minority think that \$4.25 an hour is not enough to live on. We know that with the minimum wage at its lowest purchasing point in 40 years, the time to act is now.

Unfortunately, the rigid, extreme opposition of the House majority, most of the Members and their leadership, have made it impossible to act before this point. In fact, the House majority leadership has said that they ought to eliminate the minimum wage, not raise it.

Well, a few Republicans working with us in the House minority are going to create a bipartisan majority to raise the minimum wage. I admire those House Republicans that took on their leadership on this one. They have made it possible to do something very important for working Americans.

ELECTION YEAR POLITICS

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, aren't election year politics fun? Here yesterday President Clinton, following Bob Dole's lead, agreed to sign the Republican welfare bill. And then following Clinton, who was following Dole, 68 Democrats changed their vote from less than a month ago to pass this bill on an overwhelming bipartisan basis.

Then, in the paper today Clinton is going to support the Hastert-Kassebaum Republican health care bill. Right under that, President Clinton is going to support the Republican clean drinking water bill. Add these to the fact that this party and this Congress has passed the line-item veto, securities reform litigation, a telecommunications bill, Social Security earnings limitation increase, lobbyist reform, a gift ban and the dissolving of 28 different committees and subcommittees. This Republican Party has made in this Congress a significant change in moving the country in the direction of less government. Thank goodness for election year politics.

GOOD HEALTH CARE IMPORTANT, BUT ALSO A SECURE NATION

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am so grateful that I am able to tell one of my constituents who called in yesterday to talk of a sick wife who lost her job that the Democrats have prevailed and we do have a good health care bill that will allow portability and not take into consideration preexisting condition.

But I am saddened about my Republican colleagues, so dominated by the National Rifle Association, that after the TWA tragedy and the Atlanta tragedy we will not give law enforcement officers the right tools, such as tagants, to determine who planted the bomb? Why? Why? Because the NRA dominates this Republican Congress, because they believe in following their