

Opportunity and Responsibility Act—or, more appropriately, Dooms Day Legislation. H.R. 2 is another example of the “Contract on America.” And we know that the Contract on America is a contract on poor people—more than 1.4 million families who live in public housing across our country.

I oppose this draconian bill for many reasons. They include the new power that the bill gives to local public housing authorities to raise rents. This will drive thousands of low-income working families out of public housing. Public housing must be preserved for low-income people who need it most.

But let me discuss a major reason I oppose H.R. 2. It does absolutely nothing to move public housing residents closer to real jobs at real wages. Section 105—one of the more vicious parts of this bill—is the provision to require forced volunteerism and to establish “self-sufficiency contracts.” H.R. 2 requires that nonelderly and nondisabled residents of public housing who cannot find jobs have to perform 8 hours a month of something called “community service.” The bill also requires that residents and the public housing authority sign an agreement as part of the lease. This “agreement” is supposed to set goals for self-sufficiency. And one of the goals is a timetable for families to leave public housing when they become self-sufficient.

But how are millions of public housing residents supposed to become self-sufficient, when Congress refuses to appropriate money to rebuild our communities? Now that would create real jobs at real wages. Instead of passing H.R. 2, this Congress ought to be holding hearings this week on H.R. 950—The Job Creation and Infrastructure Restoration Act of 1997. This bill, cosponsored by more than 45 Members of Congress and over 100 organizations, including city councils, calls for \$250 billion to launch a major public works program that could put millions of people to work rebuilding schools, roads, hospitals, and highways.

Self-sufficiency contracts make no sense. No public housing residents should be forced to sign such contracts when H.R. 2 contains no money for jobs or supportive services to help people find jobs. And why is this Congress considering a law that requires community work in return for receiving Federal assistance? Do we require “volunteer work” in exchange for the right to receive other types of Federal assistance such as farm subsidies, LIHEAP, corporate welfare, or loan guarantees?

Section 105 of H.R. 2 is a threat to working people, especially low-wage workers. The “forced volunteers” required by section 105 threatens to displace thousands of low wage workers currently employed by public housing authorities. If Congress passes a law that requires millions of hours of free labor by public housing residents, then public housing authorities will find no need to pay wages and benefits to other workers who currently perform vital security, maintenance, and other jobs.

Mr. Speaker, you can count on my vote against H.R. 2. And you can count me in to continue to fight with public housing residents across this country to preserve the people's right to affordable housing. Thank you very much.

INTERSTATE 69 COMPLETION CRITICAL ISSUE FOR AMERICA'S HEARTLAND

HON. JOHN N. HOSTETTLER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 1997

Mr. HOSTETTLER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to offer the following resolution from the Vanderburgh County commissioners for my colleagues' consideration here in the Congress. It is but one of the latest examples I see daily confirming that there is widespread, deep support to complete Interstate 69 through my home State of Indiana and through America's heartland down to Texas.

I see this evidence daily through my work as the founder and chairman of the Interstate 69 caucus in the Congress. This caucus includes 37 members, including Representatives and Senators, from all points of the political spectrum.

As this historic Congress continues its work, Mr. Speaker, we need to push for a reauthorization of Federal highway spending to give States greater flexibility and more of the money that we all pay in taxes every time we gas up our cars and trucks. I think that need is well expressed in this resolution approved recently by the Vanderburgh County commissioners in Evansville, IN, and I commend it to the attention of my colleagues.

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF VANDERBURGH

Whereas, the Board of Commissioners of Vanderburgh County recognize that it has an important role to play in the economic development of Vanderburgh County; and

Whereas, the extension of Interstate 69 from Indianapolis to Evansville is an integral element of economic growth and prosperity for Southwestern Indiana; and

Realizing, that Southwestern Indiana does not have direct interstate access to its Capitol in Indianapolis, nor in any other North-South direction; and

Recognizing, that the expansion of Interstate 69 from Indianapolis to Evansville and then toward Mexico will greatly expand domestic and international commerce; and

Whereas, Vanderburgh County can attain only limited benefit from future expansion of trade without direct interstate access to the North and South;

Be It Resolved That, on this 10th day of March, 1997, the Board of Commissioners of Vanderburgh County endorsed the proposed extension of Interstate 69 from Indianapolis to Evansville and eventually on to Laredo, Texas for the purpose of creating a vital transportation link that will lead to the expansion of intrastate, interstate, and international trade; thus, providing a catalyst for creating numerous jobs and providing economic security for its inhabitants; and furthermore, we call upon our counterparts in all Southwest Indiana Counties along the proposed Interstate 69 route to adopt a similar resolution in support of said project.

RICHARD E. MOURDOCK,

President.

BETTYE LOU JERREL,

Vice President.

PATRICK TULEY,

Member.

Board of Commissioners of Vanderburgh County.

COMMEMORATING NATIONAL TOURISM WEEK

HON. BILL MCCOLLUM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 1997

Mr. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate National Tourism Week. The designation of May 4 to 10 is a great way to deliver the message that travel and tourism are vital to the U.S. economy. Today, May 7, is actually Tourist Appreciation Day. Approximately 3,000 communities are expected to participate in this celebration with awareness campaigns to stress the importance and success of tourism in the United States.

I know it seems odd to tout the importance of something that many of us take for granted. It seems that as long as there are planes, trains, and automobiles, people will travel. But the positive impact of tourism is incredible. In fact, tourism is America's largest services export industry, second largest employer, and third largest retail sales industry. This is a \$440 billion industry, directly employing 6.6 million Americans.

Perhaps one of tourism's biggest benefits is on our trade situation. We continue to worry about our trade deficit. However, as the leading export, tourism drew more than \$80 billion in expenditures by 43.4 million international visitors, creating a \$19.5 billion surplus. It is staggering to think that international visitors spend \$218 million per day on their trips to the United States.

On a more local level for me, Orlando and the entire State of Florida are popular tourist destinations. The mix of climate, theme attractions and natural beauty are instant draws to my district and State. I have the honor and pleasure to represent the Orlando area and see firsthand the benefits tourism can bring. The revenues generated by people visiting our State allow the State legislature to keep State taxes low. Florida still does not have a State income tax for this reason. Employment in Florida, especially central Florida, remains strong. Over 650,000 jobs are supported in Florida by tourists.

But aside from the economic benefits of tourism, Mr. Speaker, we simply must recognize the other bonuses of tourism. Vacations yield families quality time together. Traveling to new and interesting places is educational for people of all ages. International tourism promotes cultural and political understanding among different peoples. The list is virtually endless.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is important to realize the importance of tourism to the U.S. economy and that our efforts in Congress reflect that. It is my hope that my colleagues will take note of National Tourism Week and Tourist Appreciation Day. We cannot afford to discount this critical industry.

NATIONAL TEACHER'S APPRECIATION WEEK

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 1997

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today out of respect for National Teachers' Appreciation Week. Without a doubt, there

is not a group of individuals that add more to our nation's future than the men and women who are in the classrooms with our children everyday. They are the ones who hold in their hands the future of our country's greatest resource. If any group of individuals deserves our recognition, it is these dedicated individuals that should always be the true objects of our gratitude.

As we move into the 21st century, our teachers are one of our most important resources; for without an educated and disciplined generation coming into power in our great democracy, we can not maintain our preeminent economy and scientific community.

Each of us can, no doubt, remember a teacher who affected the way we thought about the world around us. We can remember a teacher who changed the way we thought about what we wanted to do with our lives. Today is the day to try and evoke those memories and pay tribute to their work.

We have to keep these important people in perspective. These are the people who lead our children daily through their lessons, and give them the knowledge that they will take into later life. What can be a more important role in our communities and more deserving of our recognition.

Consequently, we should use this week to renew our commitment to our Nation's teachers. They are the backbone of our educational system. No matter what policy or funding we provide in this body, these are the people who walk into the classroom each and every day and do the kind of work we can only value in the highest sense.

I have worked with my teachers in the 18th Congressional District and they are extremely special. Every time I walk into our schools their enthusiasm for their work is self evident.

I want to pay my respects to each and every one of our teachers across this great Nation, in classrooms in our elementary schools, middle schools, high schools and our colleges and universities. I greatly admire them; and I offer them my thanks and sincere appreciation.

TRIBUTE TO THE STERLING HEIGHTS LIONS CLUB

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 1997

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Sterling Heights Lions Club today, in recognition of their dedication of their new facility in Sterling Heights, MI.

For over 26 years, the Sterling Heights Lions Club has been dedicated to serving their community and helping those in need. They have undertaken countless projects, ranging from fundraising at festivals, raffles, and fairs to building playgrounds for disabled children to supporting students in youth exchange programs. Their efforts are as varied as their talents. Truly, our community is privileged to have in our midst such a dedicated group of individuals whose tremendous contributions have assisted so many in need of support.

It is especially fitting, as many of our public leaders have recently addressed our Nation on the importance of volunteering, that my brother, Senator CARL LEVIN, joins me in rec-

ognizing the Sterling Heights Lions Club. Their many years of service to the community are truly commendable and we wish them many more in their new facility.

CONCERNING LEGAL REFORM

HON. SONNY BONO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 1997

Mr. BONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Trade and Professional Association Free Flow of Information Act, and ask my colleagues to join me by cosponsoring this important legislation.

Unfortunately, our society has become increasingly litigious, especially within the area of product liability. Many product actions involve small business owners who find themselves involved in extensive, complex class-action lawsuits involving numerous litigants. Most often, these small business owners do not possess the resources to research problems and collect the information they need to mount a credible, effective defense. In many cases, these business people turn to their professional association for help.

Many associations have the staff and resources to provide research and information gathering services to their local members; indeed, this is but one of the many important roles played by associations at the local, State, and Federal level. However, as more and more association members request information—and the association attempts to fulfill the requests placed by its members—the association could find itself more deeply involved in litigation. And perhaps faced with liability, as a result.

This threat may cause associations to hold back in providing assistance so desperately needed by small business owners. As a result, there is less information flowing between associations and association members—information that could help avoid litigation in the first place. This free flow of information from associations to their membership often works in the public interest to alert consumers to the characteristics of various products before a possibly defective product is placed into commerce on a widespread basis.

My bill would primarily accomplish three goals. First, it would grant associations limited protection from liability when acting in good faith to provide information to their members. Only in cases of fraud or misrepresentation would an association be subject to a lawsuit for providing much-needed information and services to their members. This will set a national standard by which associations can provide information to their members without the threat of litigation.

Second, it would protect associations from burdensome subpoenas unless a clear case can be made that the information possessed by the association is vital to a particular case or is unavailable from any other source. I must make an important distinction—this provision does not prevent associations from being served with subpoenas. It merely ensures that the information requested is vital to a particular action and unavailable from any other source. This further serves to encourage associations to develop and catalogue information beneficial to their members.

Finally, the bill establishes a level of qualified privilege between association and member to ensure that confidential materials can be provided for the benefit of association members. This provision is based on joint defense privilege currently recognized by state and federal courts. This privilege is qualified in the sense that it can be overcome should a judge determine that the party seeking materials has a clear and compelling for the information.

It is my sincere hope that the provisions of my legislation will allow associations to continue to actively disseminate valuable information to their members while safeguarding current legal protections against fraud and abuse. The goal of the Trade and Professional Association Free Flow of Information Act is one I believe I share with a majority of my colleagues—a reduction in costly litigation through the free flow of information generated by associations for their members. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation.

HONORING STUDENTS IN FREE ENTERPRISE

HON. JAMES C. GREENWOOD

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 1997

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding organization in Bucks County, the Students in Free Enterprise, located at the Bucks County Community College.

Students in Free Enterprise [SIFE] is a non-profit, international organization including over 400 chapters on the campuses of U.S. colleges and universities. SIFE has continually encouraged the free-enterprise system through educational programs since its inception more than 20 years ago by Sam Walton, founder of Wal-Mart. Students in the organization dedicate their time and resources to helping others develop leadership, teamwork, and communication skills through learning, practicing, and teaching the principles of free enterprise. SIFE is not only involved with the encouragement of the free-enterprise system, but has worked closely with many national and international charitable organizations such as the American Red Cross, the American Lung Association, and the Civil Air Patrol on various projects. The student organization at the Bucks County Community College has also instituted programs such as Reading Empowers and Directs Youth [READY] and Children Are Really Extra Special [CARES] to teach children important computer skills.

The Students in Free Enterprise is a valuable asset to the people of Pennsylvania. In honor of their many charitable and civil contributions, I join my colleagues in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in recognizing May 20, 1997, as Students in Free Enterprise Day.

I congratulate them on this day as they continue their mission of helping people achieve their dreams through free-enterprise education.