

calculated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development as a part of the primary metropolitan statistical area which includes the income data from New York City. For this reason, HUD is listing the median income of these two counties as being far less than they truly are.

Since HUD's income levels are used in calculating eligibility for almost all State and Federal housing programs, these inaccurate statistics have drastically reduced the access of both Rockland and Westchester County residents to many needed programs. A myriad of programs have artificially low income caps, thus residents, financial institutions, realtors, and builders from these two counties are at a severe disadvantage in relation to their counterparts in neighboring counties.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the committee and Chairman LAZIO for their great work in reforming the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 and attending to this extremely important local need. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] has expired.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore, Mr. (BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado) having assumed the chair, Mr. GOODLATTE, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2) to repeal the U.S. Housing Act of 1937, deregulate the public housing program and the program for rental housing assistance for low-income families, and increase community control over such programs, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 129, COMMITTEE FUNDING RESOLUTION

Mr. LINDER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-84) on the resolution (H. Res. 136) providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 129) providing amounts for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Fifth Congress, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ELECTION OF MEMBER TO COMMITTEE ON HOUSE OVERSIGHT

Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Republican conference, I offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 137) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 137

Resolved, That the following named Member be, and he is hereby, elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives: Committee on House Oversight: Mr. Mica.

The resolution was agreed to. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1615

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

[Mr. GOSS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

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

[Mr. GUTKNECHT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

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

[Mr. WEYGAND addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

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

[Mr. NEUMANN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

INTRODUCTION OF "APPREHENSION OF TAINTED MONEY" BILL

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

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, today I have introduced a special piece of legislation that goes to the heart of campaign finance reform about which we hear so much.

How many will recall that during the election and immediately following there were revelations of moneys being contributed to the Democratic National Committee, and then a decision made by the Democratic National Committee to return the funds to X, Y, and Z because the Democratic National Committee determined that they were illegally contributed?

Now, the question arises, does this money go back to the people who may have violated the law in making the contribution to the Democratic National Committee?

We have a situation, for instance, of a drug dealer who took thousands of dollars from profits made in the drug business and used that money to make a \$20,000 contribution to the Democratic National Committee. Now we hear announcement by the Democratic National Committee that it will return that money.

Well, is that not wonderful. That money will be returned to a drug dealer to be reused, perhaps, in the drug business or to make some other kind of contribution. Who knows what.

I have introduced a bill here today which we call the ATM bill, believe it or not. Apprehension of Tainted Money. ATM. What does it do? It says that if, indeed, a national committee, the Republican committee or the Democrat committee, should receive contributions and they are questionable donations, questionable contributions, where the committee believes it may come from a tainted source, a criminal source, some illegal contributor, then instead of returning it back for further possible illegal spending, my bill would call for this money to go to the Federal Elections Commission in an escrow account, and the Federal Elections Commission then would investigate the source of this contribution.

If it is determined that indeed this is drug money or illegal money or some other tainted source of money, then the Federal Government, our Government, can latch onto this money and use it for fines and penalties against those people who violated the law in that instance. In this way we would be preventing the possibility of impacting on our election system by foreign sources and illegal sources.

At the same time, if indeed those contributions have been illegal, we could use that money to help defray the expense of the investigation and the prosecution and the restitution that must be made by the wrongdoers.

We believe that it fills a large gap in the election process and in the question of who can contribute what to what entity. We have strong laws on the books right at this moment, as we speak, but we fail in many instances to enforce the law. We fail to bring wrongdoers to justice in the hundreds of different ways that they can violate the election laws and the criminal laws of our Nation.

We believe that this could be a gigantic step towards signaling to the American people that we will not countenance violation of the criminal laws or violation of the election laws.

Every day the news brings us more revelations—and more lurid details—about the lengths to which some people went during the 1996 election to gain victory for their candidates. Unfortunately, the lengths to which many parties went were beyond the bounds of the law.

Though the investigations into campaign finance law violations have only barely begun, and, to be sure, only scratched the surface, we know very well about some egregious violations of the law involving very large amounts

of money. Many more cases are rife with impropriety and unethical behavior, even if illegality has not yet been proven.

Let me address just a few: Mr. Johnny Chung, described as a "hustler" by a member of the National Security Council, made donations to the Democratic Party numerous times. Among these was a \$50,000 check handed over to Margaret Williams on the White House grounds during one of his 51 visits. The Democratic National Committee has announced it will return contributions totaling \$366,000 from Johnny Chung because it cannot verify the source of this money.

Mr. Charles Yah Lin Trie raised and contributed more than \$½ million to the Democratic National Committee. This money has been linked to funds transferred to him from the Bank of China, which is operated by the Chinese Government. The Democratic National Committee has returned \$187,000 that Mr. Trie contributed and plans to return another \$458,000 that he helped raise from others.

In November, 1995, Mr. Jorge Cabrera wrote a check for \$20,000 to the Democratic National Committee from an account that included proceeds from smuggling cocaine into the United States. Within 2 weeks, he met with Vice President GORE. He also attended a White House Christmas reception hosted by the First Lady. The Democratic National Committee returned his contribution almost a year later and he is now serving time in a Miami prison.

Mr. Speaker, these are just three examples, but they serve to illustrate a situation that is intolerable. The Democratic National Committee has given, and plans to give, huge sums of money back to the drug dealers, international hustlers, and foreign agents who broke the law in giving that money in the first place.

The penalty being suffered by Mr. Johnny Chung, Mr. Charlie Trie, and Mr. Jorge Cabrera is to have mountains of tainted money given back to them to use as they wish.

Mr. Speaker, these people are criminals. The American people, and particularly the people I represent, will not stand for it when the law allows them to be rewarded with hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash.

Mr. Speaker, I am introducing a bill today to remedy this extraordinary situation. The Apprehension of Tainted Money Act would require political committees that intend to return certain contributions to transfer those contributions to the Federal Election Commission.

The Commission would establish an interest-bearing escrow account, deposit returned contributions in it, and notify the Attorney General. The Commission and the Attorney General would be able to apply this money toward any fine or penalty imposed against the contributor under Federal election or criminal law. In addition, if a fine or penalty is imposed, the Commission or Attorney General could use deposited funds to cover the costs incurred in investigating the contribution. If the contributor were cleared, if the Commission and Attorney General failed to act, or if some portion of the money was used, the remaining contribution would be returned.

Mr. Speaker, my bill would prevent the Johnny Chungs, the Charlie Tries, and the Jorge Cabrerases from getting their dirty money back and spending it—or making it disappear—before Federal officials have a

chance to investigate them and apply appropriate fines and penalties.

Let me make one other point that I think is very important: We are seeing that, in many instances, the tainted money is being returned after an election has intervened. This means that money from an unknown, possible illegal source has been used by a campaign to influence an election. Anyone with a healthy skepticism and sense of watchfulness about our Government could not help but want to investigate whether there has been collusion between questionable campaign contributors and the individuals and parties to whom they gave. This makes the apprehension of tainted money bill all the more important.

I urge my colleagues in the House to join me in passing this legislation and getting it before the President for signature. There can be no time lost, because each returned contribution gives undue benefit to some of our Nation's most pernicious lawbreakers.

Let me briefly describe the bill in some more detail: The Apprehension of Tainted Money Act adds a new section to the Federal Election Campaign Act. The new section provides the following:

When a political committee intends to return a contribution of more than \$500, it must transfer the contribution to the Federal Election Commission [Commission] and ask the Commission to return it. This requirement does not apply to contributions returned within the times set by Commission rules for return or reattribution of contributions, but it does apply to contributions that a political committee discovers to be illegal after the Commission's deadline for return of illegal and nonreattributable contributions.

The Commission must establish an interest-bearing escrow account, deposit returned contributions in it, and notify the Attorney General when it receives such contributions. Interest from the funds placed in the escrow account shall be used to cover administrative costs of the account, all excess going to the U.S. Treasury.

The Commission must consider the return of the contribution in determining whether it has reason to believe that election laws have been violated.

The Commission or the Attorney General may apply returned contributions toward any fine or penalty imposed against the contributor under Federal election or criminal law. If a fine or penalty is imposed, the Commission or Attorney General may use deposited funds to cover the costs incurred in investigating the contribution.

The Commission must return the contribution if: First, the Commission and Attorney General certify that the contribution is not the subject of an investigation; second, the contribution will not be applied to any fine, penalty, or charge for cost of investigation, or the portion to be used has been subtracted from the returnable amount; or third, for any 120-day period, neither the Commission nor the Attorney General have pursued an investigation of the contribution.

The act applies from the date it is enacted, whether or not the Commission or Attorney General have issued regulations. Notwithstanding the Administrative Procedures Act, the Commission and Attorney General must issue final regulations within 30 days of the enactment of the act.

RIGHT WELFARE REFORM'S WRONGS BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I want to tell all my colleagues a brief story that we here in Congress have helped write with the passage of what we called the Welfare Reform bill last year. Members of this body have written a story with a tragic ending, but it is not too late to change it.

This is the story of Marta Molina and her 24 classmates at the San Diego Center for the Blind. All are long-time legal residents of this Nation whose supplemental security income will end in a few months unless there is legislative relief or they are naturalized as citizens.

Marta, who is 44 years old, is the mother of two grown children she raised by herself following a divorce 10 years ago. She and others in her English and life skills class began studying for the citizenship test well before welfare reform was enacted. After evaluating Marta's degenerative blindness, cataracts and cataract surgery, her physician asked the INS to give Marta extra study time. Because of the rigid mandates of welfare reform, she has no more time.

Marta's situation is serious, but the predicament of some of her other classmates is even worse. They are on dialysis and they can possibly die if their Medicare ends. The INS, which should not be in the position of correcting welfare reform's cruel and arbitrary cutoff of legal immigrants' benefits, including the blind, frail, and elderly, was asked to ease the naturalization process for some of these immigrants, but the INS's new rules will not help these blind students.

The rules, which do exempt disabled immigrants from the English and civics test, provide no relief for the blind, according to the INS authorities, because their vision impairment does not prevent them from studying and taking a test. These inflexible rules do not take into account that a disability like blindness makes it very difficult to master English and civics under a strict time limit.

These students of the San Diego Center for the Blind say they are terrified, living in fear of these inflexible policies that even do not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. They say people are called at INS offices by a number flashing on a screen which they cannot see, and that test preparation material is not available in Braille or on tape. This situation demands our immediate intervention.

When this body passed welfare reform last year, I am sure those who voted for it did not intend to jeopardize the lives and peace of mind of thousands of long-time legal residents with disabilities. But now that the law's unintended consequences have been brought to our attention in story after story,