

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALDINE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE], my colleague from Houston. That championship game last week was exciting not only for those of us who are from Houston, but all across the country.

Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to be here on the floor of the House and pleased to announce the high performance rating for a school district in Houston, Aldine Independent School District. It was recognized by the Texas Education Agency for the quality of their program.

As the parent of two graduates of Aldine schools, and my wife who teaches in the Aldine schools, and representing, along with the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE], about half the district, it is a pleasure to see the school district receive the recognition that it deserves.

According to the latest data released by the Texas Education Agency, Aldine ranks among the Texas high performance school districts. This rating was based on 1996-1997 Texas Assessment of Academic Skills, our Statewide TAAS scores, attendance records, and low dropout rate.

Aldine is the largest recognized school in the State with a student enrollment of approximately 48,000 students. To earn a recognized rating, 75 percent of all students in each students group, district-wide, must pass each TAAS subject area. In addition, the dropout rate for all students cannot exceed 3.5 percent. They must also maintain an attendance rate of at least 94 percent.

Only a few schools have reached the high performing level of recognized or exemplary and Aldine is one of the four "recognized" school districts in Harris County, TX.

By achieving a recognized designation from the State, it is a great honor for everybody in the school district. But it is more than that. It recognizes each individual's hard work and commitment to education.

More specifically, a special thank you for the dedication of the curriculum program directors, principals, the teachers, the teaching assistants, and the students. It is a collaborative effort by these individuals which guarantee the continued success of the school district.

One of the reasons for the success of the Aldine Independent School District is their curriculum. The staff development focuses on teamwork and giving teachers of all subject areas the chance to support academic success. Each teacher in the district receives the same materials containing the same common strategies throughout the district. Program directors from different

subject areas then work with the teachers on integrating those common strategies into their curriculum.

The curriculum is based on the continual assessment of student performance, analysis of student performance data, and the development of benchmarks, targets, and then implementation. It is a structured system to ensure that the skills are mastered and applied to each student's learning.

Not only has there been success for Aldine Independent School District, but there has also been success for the State of Texas. Students across the State of Texas have improved their performance on TAAS testing, TAAS is a statewide assessment of skills, from 55 percent in 1994 to 73 percent in 1997. In comparison, Aldine ISD students have improved their mastery from 49 percent in 1994, to 75 percent in 1997.

For the State of Texas as a whole, the figures show an increase in the number of highest performing districts and a decrease in the number of lowest performing districts statewide, despite tougher performance standards for the years 1996 and 1997. Again, each year the performance standards get tougher, as we know, the worldwide competition gets tougher.

Texas has the most high school seniors taking the SAT test than any State in the country, at 48 percent, and these scores have continued to improve. Texas has brought education to the forefront. It is a priority for everyone, and that is an important distinction.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be here this evening and recognize the contribution and the success of the Aldine Independent School District to the education of our children.

LISTENING TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. HULSHOF] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, continuing the tradition that we have tried to begin as newly elected Republican Members focusing on positive success stories across the district, as you know just as our Nation's children are returning to schools all across this great land, we lawmakers are returning here to Washington and I think probably sharing some of the mixed emotions that our schoolchildren have as far as returning here to this establishment.

What we do here, of course, is very important with the bills and the debates and our struggles here. But I think what we do pales in comparison to the real life struggles that our constituents, the American people, are facing each and every day.

We talk about this 4-week period of time here in August, or just as August past, as a recess or a vacation. And I

know many of the newly elected Members did not consider it as a vacation, as a recess. It was a very good time to get back home to really probe the minds and listen. And I think if anything that we have been able to accomplish that has been the most fruitful is that we stop shouting long enough in this body to listen to what the American people have to say.

And when we began to listen to those men and women that have been struggling to keep a roof overhead and keep food on the table, what we heard them tell us is that they were working longer and harder and yet had less to show for it at the end of the month and wondering where their tax monies had gone.

□ 1915

Basically what I was hearing, in a series of town hall meetings, was that the people back home in Missouri's Ninth Congressional District wanted us to change our ways here in Washington so that they would not have to change their ways back home.

I know certainly that there has been a wide difference of opinion on the budget agreement that we put together. Certainly future political candidates, I was flipping around the channels and watching C-SPAN and some of the speeches where future politicians or those seeking higher office have talked about what we did in a negative way. Yet I did not sense that at all. A series of town meetings in the Ninth Congressional District of Missouri were overwhelmingly positive.

The folks that came out recognized that we were on the path to a smaller, smarter government. They were appreciative of the fact that the centerpiece of our budget agreement, the tax relief package, was a child credit that will benefit the parents of 41 million children across this country, and the fact that nearly 2 million households will not have a Federal income tax liability just because of this \$500 child credit.

They were appreciative of the child health initiative that we have commenced, that we put together in this budget plan to help the Nation's most vulnerable that are uninsured. And I tried to explain and made clear that this was not a new Federal entitlement that we had imposed but a way to reach out with local innovative solutions to this national problem of uninsured children.

They were certainly appreciative, as education is very much on the minds of the folks in the Ninth Congressional District, that we have education tuition credits that we are putting in place so that children that dream of college can actually get there, and those that have been laboring under the weight of a student loan might have a little bit of his or her burden eased by allowing the deduction of interest on that student loan.

Certainly we recognize that a strong economy is vital because as we help educate and invest in our children, the

future of this country, we have to make sure that there are jobs available. And clearly people recognize that we do not create jobs here in Washington; it is the American people, it is the business people, it is small business across this country that creates the jobs. And so clearly we want to make sure that every investor, every inventor, every small business person, every farmer has some relief from this very burdensome tax on savings and investment that we have come to call capital gains, and they were very appreciative that we have at least taken a step in the right direction regarding a reduction on that burdensome tax.

Many of the women that came to town hall meetings were astounded to learn that women in this country are starting businesses at twice the rate of men in this country. But oftentimes women have that very difficult choice, do I stay home with family or do I rejoin the work force? So we have reached out to them and all small business people that want to work from their homes by restoring the flexibility through the home office deduction; and the American people, at least those in the Ninth Congressional District, see that and applaud that as a step in the right direction.

Finally, as we have talked about many times in this Chamber, I personally believe it is immoral that the Federal Government can take up to 55 percent of a family farm or family business at death. Death should not be a taxable event. Certainly we will be having future discussions about death tax relief, but we have made some positive strides by raising the exemption so that family farms and family businesses and those that labor can pass the fruits of their labors on to future generations.

I know one of the polls that somebody showed me as we were leaving town 4 weeks ago indicated that Congress' approval rating was at a high level, at least the highest level since the early 1970's, and sadly our approval rating in this body was above our disapproval for the first time in several decades. And of course that is a sad event, but we need to continue to focus on our agenda that we will be bringing to the floor in the weeks and months ahead before we take our final recess for the end of the year.

We have got a lot of work yet to do. But I think we need to focus a little bit on some of the success stories and some of the things that we have listened to the people across this country in our respective districts.

I see I have various colleagues that are here to join me. I think first I would yield to the gentleman from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE]. It is interesting that each of us has our own respective districts and I know our friend and colleague, the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. MORAN], I think was one of the most ambitious and he embarked on a 60-plus county tour and made sure that he blanketed his district.

But certainly we do not have quite the expanse of territory to cover as the gentleman from Montana [Mr. HILL], who is not with us, or the gentleman from South Dakota who has the entire State.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Dakota [Mr. THUNE].

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri and would say that over the course of the August break, I had the opportunity to travel over much of the 77,000 square miles that compose our State of South Dakota. As I traveled the highways and byways and places like Sturgis and Spearfish and Custer and Rapid City and Hill City and Mitchell and Yankton and Watertown and Pierre and Gettysburg and Clark and Aberdeen and Sioux Falls, my home town of Murdo, made it there, places like Wall and winding up at the State Fair in Huron, we had an opportunity, I think, to really get in touch with the real world and remember what we are all about here.

And it was great, because I had my wife and two little girls with me. They had an opportunity to return and enjoy the freedoms that you have on the windswept prairies of South Dakota.

In fact, my 7-year-old, who is sort of a tomboy, enjoys doing things outside, one afternoon when we were at the grandparents in Gettysburg, she said something to the effect, as her sister asked her if she could paint her toenails, she said, no, I have got frogs and snakes to catch outside. And she came back with a snake hanging on her hand, much to her grandmother's chagrin. I think she about had a conniption when that happened.

Those are the types of things that people in our part of the country are able to enjoy. It is a wonderful place to be from, and it was great to be able to travel.

One of the things that we did while we were out there is, we held a series of meetings on transportation issues. Those issues are critical in our State because we rely so heavily on our farm-to-market transportation system, because we are predominantly an agricultural State, but also we rely quite heavily upon tourism as an industry. So roads and bridges and transportation are critical in our States.

I had the opportunity to listen to people who were interested in transportation policy issues, people like mayors and county commissioners and State officials and economic development experts and Chamber people and those who are in the business of building roads and bridges in the construction business. One of the recurring themes was, when you rewrite this Federal highway bill out there in Washington, please do it in a way that maximizes our flexibility and that allows us and enables us to make the decisions about what the highest needs are at the local level; and try and get away from this micromanaging of Federal highway programs and policies and priorities from Washington, DC.

Through those discussions, I was really reminded, too, of why we do what we do because really this is about people and about giving them more control of their lives. And I was reminded, as well, of the difference between the way that the Washington glitterati views things and the way that people back in the real world view things. And there are a couple of distinctions I would like to draw to my colleagues' attention here this evening because I think it was a great reminder; any of us, when we go home, often have these things brought to our attention.

But one of the things that we have been talking about a lot is for the first time in over 30 years we will have balanced the budget in this country, and that was a priority for all of us here. All of us who are here in the Chamber this evening talked a lot about that throughout the course of our campaign, about lowering the tax burden on hard-working families, men and women in this country.

In my State those are ranchers, small business people; those are people who are trying to make an honest living and just really hoping that Government will sort of stay out of their way. And one of the things I saw was a tax foundation study which enumerated and broke down the tax savings and benefits that were in this particular package for the State of South Dakota. It was about \$416 million in tax relief to our State, some 247 million coming from the family tax credit, but also estate tax relief for the 34,000 farmers and ranchers in South Dakota.

The 66 percent of the people in South Dakota who own their own homes will have the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of capital gains tax relief should they decide to sell that home. Income averaging can for farmers. There was an opportunity in there, as well, when it comes to the whole area of deferring income and allowing farmers and ranchers, people who have very volatile and erratic incomes to spread that over a period of years.

There were so many things that were positive in this. The one thing I will say though, and I heard this over and over, is that we made a step in the right direction; that we are lowering the tax burden in this country, but we did nothing to simplify what is already an inordinately complicated Tax Code.

I would hope that as we progress down the road in the next year or so, we can continue to draw attention to the complexity of the Tax Code in this country and how difficult it is for people to comply. We have added to what already are 471 different forms, and we spend some 5 billion man-hours a year complying with the Tax Code in America.

I was talking with an accountant in Pierre, and he was thanking his lucky stars for what we had done because it was job security for him. But at the same time, it has made it that much more complex and complicated and

really overwhelming, I think, to a lot of people in this country who try and fill out tax returns.

So I was reminded again of the need not only to simplify, to make things less complicated, but to take the power and control out of Washington, out of the hands of the Federal Government, out of bureaucrats, and to give it back to families and main streets and State and local governments and put that decision-making back in the living room. I think that is really what this whole thing is about. It is what this movement is about.

As we continue down the road, as we have started with the balanced budget and lower taxes, the next step along the way is to bring simplification, to lessen the regulatory burden, to continue to lower taxes and to bring some accountability to Government so that the people in this country know that they are getting a good bang for the taxpayer dollar. I think all that involves more flexibility.

We have a notion here in Washington I think that more is better, and frankly I think that the people of this country are much better off, my children are eminently better off in a form of government where we do not gauge success or measure success by how much we take tax dollars from hard-working families, run it through the Washington bureaucracy and then redistribute it in the form of grants.

We are a lot better off when we allow people to keep the money, the hard-earned dollars, and make the decisions about where best to use those. That is, I would hope, how we would measure success in the work that we are about here.

We have embarked on an important journey. It is the first step in what I hope will be a long process of restoring and taking control and power and decision-making and authority out of Washington and putting it back in the hands of families and individuals. That crosses so many different areas. You look at the world of education, allowing parents to have more decision-making authority, more choice on where they send their kids.

And so these are things that I heard as I traveled across the State, and as I said, it concluded what was an about a week at the State Fair, which is an opportunity to get a broad cross-section of people in South Dakota, to hear what is on their minds. And, frankly, I think that they are for the most part very upbeat, very optimistic about where we are headed, and I think that is a great tribute to what we have accomplished as a Republican Congress, because the things that we have accomplished and where we are today, in my view, are a testimony to and a tribute to the ability of the Republican Congress to move the agenda in that direction.

And I think probably that my colleagues here, the gentleman from Missouri, heard the same thing. I would hope that we would continue to be the

shining city on the hill that attracts people from all over the world because they have hope and opportunity and freedom to explore the American dream here, to pursue happiness in their particular way and that is really what we are about. This was a great reminder as I traveled across my State of South Dakota about why we are here, what we do, why we do it; and again it was a great privilege and honor to get a feel for the people that we represent.

I would like to hear as well from some of my other friends who are on the floor here this evening.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I think the word that the gentleman used, "optimism," I think that is probably what I heard most often from the folks that I had a chance to visit with. All the polls and surveys that these consultants and political pundits seem to find so important, I think truly when you get out of this place and you go back home and you listen to people in town hall meetings, you just open it up for discussion and you say, what is on your minds, I think some of the themes that you have mentioned are exactly what are the prevailing thoughts of most Americans, they do want less of Washington.

□ 1930

I certainly trust the folks on Ducelle Avenue in Columbia, MO, my hometown. I trust them to make the decisions with their tax money a lot better than I trust the 435 of us that assemble here to decide how that money should be spent. They clearly, the folks back home, are appreciative of the fact that we were letting them keep money, their own money. This is not some sort of a rebate, that we are giving them back their money. It is allowing them to keep the money they have earned. I heard some of the same themes that the gentleman mentioned.

I know the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. PEASE] also was quite busy. In fact, his staff, as I understand it, had him crisscrossing the district. He saw himself coming and going, as I understand.

Mr. PEASE. I did, indeed. I was fortunate to spend about two-thirds of my time during the month of August doing the same thing that my colleagues from South Dakota, from Colorado, from New Jersey, from Missouri did; that is, spending time with the good folks in western Indiana, which comprises my district. And my experience was very similar to those that have been related here this evening. People from western Indiana I think are representative of all that is best in our country. They are folks that care about their kids, they care about their communities, they care about their country, and in most cases they really do not ask a lot of us, basically for us to leave them alone. They can make decisions for themselves, they will take care of their neighbors, they will reach out the helping hand to those who need it.

And in town meeting after town meeting, we heard the same thing, about an appreciation for the fact that their representatives in Congress, though they often differ, stood for the principles that they believed in, and, more than that, were willing to listen to those of differing viewpoints, to try and work together for the good of the country, to posture less and to build policy more, and generally gave positive marks, although they understand that what we did was really a down payment on the future, that there is still much work to be done, but that they supported the direction where we were going.

The thing that struck me more than anything in the time that I spent in my district and out of it, which I want to talk about in a minute, was the continuing generosity of the American people. Most of the folks in my district are working hard to support their families. Many of them have to have both spouses working in order to meet the needs of their children, or in some cases they are taking care of their parents, helping their neighbors, but in case after case, we saw people who still after all that gave of their time as volunteers, in their libraries, in their hospitals, in their schools, in community and youth organizations. Despite all the demands on them at work and at home, they still found time to be volunteers on behalf of others.

Which brings me to my second point, and that is, I spent the remaining third of the month of August as a volunteer myself in a couple of places: First, not far from here, near Fredericksburg, VA, where I was a volunteer, along with 5,000 other volunteers, at the national jamboree of the Boy Scouts of America, an event that is held every 4 years. We had 30,000 young people from all across this country who were able to come and spend about a week together because we had 5,000 men and women who gave of their vacations, who left time away from their families, who paid their own way to come and work, and sometimes in 90 and 100 degree temperature, most of them living in tents, so that young people could have a good experience. The barracks where I stayed with other adult volunteers had a cross-section of America. We had Protestants and Catholics and Jews, Buddhists, people of all creeds and colors, who care about young people and who care about the principles that scouting tries to teach, which are character development and citizenship training and personal fitness, and they gave of their time, many of them, for 2 and 3 weeks, and came and labored. We had an admiral, we had factory workers, we had school teachers, a cross-section of America who gave up their time on behalf of young people, and they did it cheerfully, an example, I think, of all that is best in our country's traditions, of trying to instill moral values in our young people and not waiting and in fact in some cases resisting the Government doing it but

taking it as their own responsibility to care for young people in their neighborhoods, in their communities and across the country.

Part of the time I also spent at the Boy Scouts' facility in northeast New Mexico, near Cimmaron, where the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. REDMOND], who was elected in a special election earlier this year, met me at a town hall meeting in Colfax County, northeast New Mexico, and we talked to the folks there about the same sorts of thing we have been talking about here, and where I was also able to spend a little volunteer time at Philmont Scout Ranch, which is 138,000 acres in the mountains of northeast New Mexico where I saw another example of volunteerism, where young people, teenagers, teenage boys from all over the country paid their own way to come to the mountains of northeast New Mexico and volunteer to work, in most cases hard work, breaking rocks and building trails in the mountains of northeast New Mexico, where they could learn ways that we can protect the environment for the future, learn the good lessons of personal responsibility, both for each other and for the environment, and giving of their time and their energy as volunteers for other young people's futures who will benefit from that scouting facility in northeast New Mexico. Eighteen thousand young people over the course of a summer come to Philmont Scout Ranch. They come at their own expense and they come with volunteers, men and women from across the country who pay their own way, give up their vacations to spend time with young people.

I am reminded, too, that the Boy Scouts, along with many other organizations across the country were participants in the President's Summit for Volunteerism that was held at Philadelphia earlier this year. They are representative of that spirit in this country where people take responsibility for young people. They do not wait for the Government to take responsibility. In fact, in many cases their agenda is to make sure that young people have the positive example of role models that are concerned about their moral development, their spiritual development, their physical development, and they take that responsibility themselves. The Boy Scouts as a national organization have committed between 1997 and 2000, 200 million hours of community service in neighborhoods across this country where young people and their adult volunteers will work on behalf of their neighbors. All of that sort of experience and the folks that I saw in libraries and hospitals and schools across my district remind me again of that wonderful American tradition of personal responsibility, being accountable for yourself and helping your neighbors, and even though it was tiring to spend that time as a personal volunteer and to spend those hours, as we all did, traveling around our dis-

tricts, it was refreshing and reinforcing and reminded me why it is important for us to be here and represent those values and do the best we can to support those folks back home.

Mr. HULSHOF. I appreciate the gentleman's report and certainly the good work that he has done, especially many of the themes that he has talked about as far as volunteerism and helping our young people. I had the opportunity to visit briefly with a group called Kids in Motion in Hannibal, MO, which is interesting because this was actually started, I think, 2 years ago, or last summer, that took at-risk youth in the Hannibal communities. This was not a government program. This was largely the efforts of two women, two businesswomen who chose to try to make a difference. And so they reached out to the business community to have jobs that would pay young people to try to help provide some positive role models, a little bit of institutional setting in the sense of teaching them how to get up on time and to get themselves ready for work. It was just an extraordinary experience when you realize that there is this sort of spirit in a small town where you recognize that there is a community problem, or a problem within your community, and rather than reach out to the government for some sort of assistance, here are two women that chose on their own accord to try to make a difference. I think this spirit pervades across the country. We need to help reinvigorate that spirit.

Mr. PEASE. I really believe in that. I believe it is our responsibility as a Congress to make it possible for folks to give more of themselves as volunteers, to reduce the tax burden on American families so that they have more time to spend with their families and as volunteers in their churches and in community organizations, to reinvigorate that tradition of American volunteerism that has persisted despite all of the time that we have taken away from families having to work to pay their taxes. I think it is our responsibility to give them back that time and that freedom. I know as the gentleman has seen, so many will step forward as volunteers to help in their communities and it is exciting to see that happen.

Mr. HULSHOF. I appreciate the gentleman. I see that our colleague from out West in Colorado is here and appears to have some visual aid along with him. I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. BOB SCHAFFER.

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. I thank the gentleman from Missouri for yielding.

It was a great month out in Colorado. Colorado, of course, being a western State with our sense of rugged individualism, we do not like Washington all that much, I have to admit, and I am afraid to say, and for good reason in many cases.

Since being elected to Congress, hardly a day has gone by when some-

body does not run up to me at the grocery store or the post office and say, "Congressman, I've been working harder, I've been working longer and it seems like I take less and less home," and that perception is in fact the reality over the years, and it is one that has really been the source of frustration for people throughout the country and it is the message that I think inspired many of us to run for office in the first place. Fortunately with the Republican majority, we are able to go to work on those very issues right here on this floor.

The package that we constructed a month ago, the tax cut package, is something that changed the message that I heard this last month being back home. Rather than the consistent complaints that we have always heard about high and excessive taxation here in Washington, I began to hear people at the grocery store and the post office coming up and thanking me for pushing and helping to support the Republican tax reform message again that we constructed a month ago. Let me suggest that it is a good first step and it is welcome news, but it is not the full measure of tax relief. We are going to come back and try to push for more at another point in time. But for the first time in 16 years, the American public has received a tax cut package. The first time in 16 years.

Let me just go through some of the numbers on this and tell about what I heard back home in response. Over 10 years, \$260 billion in taxes, that is what we will pay, fewer taxes that we will pay as opposed to the plan that was constructed when the Democrats were in charge of the Congress. That includes a \$500 per child tax credit, the capital gains tax cuts, the estate tax relief, education tax credit, expanded IRAs. Those individuals who understand that they have been paying more and more and more to the Federal Government and working harder and harder are exactly right. Let me direct my colleagues' attention to the chart here at my left.

Back in 1950, the Federal tax burden was 6 percent of the family budget. In 1994, the Federal tax burden jumped to 23 percent. That is a remarkable escalation in the tax bite that this Federal Government has taken away from American families. When we consider all taxes, State, local and Federal taxes, the total tax burden is almost 40 percent of a family budget. The farmers and ranchers and small business owners and the heads of families that I met with tell me that that 40 percent is far too excessive. I was in a Labor Day parade on Monday in the small town of Windsor in Colorado. Windsor is one of those towns that is just your typical American small town. Great patriotic families, people who love their work, love their community, will stand up for the flag and love their country, a town that has sent many, many war heroes to do battle to defend freedom and liberty. After that parade we held a little

barbecue and the numbers of individuals who came up and said thank you for cutting the capital gains taxes because that has real implications on running a capital intensive operation like a farm, thank you for cutting the estate taxes, the inheritance tax because now after working 30 years and putting all of my hard work and assets into a farm that produces and is successful, I finally know that I am going to be able to hand that farm over to my children. Think about that for a moment. Having the prospect of working so many years and putting so much into the ground and into the soil and into the family farm, that farm is more than just an economic enterprise. It is the definition of the character of many in the West and many in my State, most people in my State. The very notion that upon your death the Federal Government will get there first before your children do is something that just frightens the daylights out of many people. We are finally providing real hope, real opportunity. The suggestion that we have changed Washington as a Republican Party, that we have come here and have decided that the estate taxes must end, that we at our first step will reduce the effect of estate taxation, eventually getting to the point of abolishing them, I hope.

□ 1945

That is a message that was just embraced throughout the district, and it was a delight to go home and hear that.

I also attended a conference sponsored by the Independence Institute, and the Independence Institute is a free market organization, and the topic they were discussing was welfare reform, because last year the Republican Congress totally revised the welfare system in the United States and moved welfare authority out of Washington and pushed it back to the States in block grant fashion.

Let me tell you, it was truly exciting to go to these meetings with State legislators, with county commissioners, with local welfare workers, and hear them talk about the remarkable things that they are coming up with to reform the welfare system, to actually create systems on a county-by-county basis where people can make the transition from dependency on the Federal Government to total self-sufficiency.

And the numbers were remarkable as well. The numbers of people that are making that transition and finding the absolute joy of honest hard work and self-sufficiency is one of the most exciting things, I think, that I could have heard, and again thanking the Republican Congress for changing the way the government thinks about how we organize our society.

We are no longer looking to Washington and people here in the city of big government to organize and manage our lives. We have discovered, we have decided, and we have fought very hard for and passionately for a government

that believes we can trust citizens, we can trust taxpayers, we can trust them to spend the dollars that the government used to take from them and allow them to put it toward the things that they believe to be important. They are small businesses, they are farms, they are child health care, the charity of their choice, their church, their synagogue, their community.

And we have also decided that within that framework we are going to create more opportunity in a way that frees people from the burden of an oppressive welfare state and instead rewards honest hard work, real opportunity, and makes Americans free again.

That is the real difference that we have made here in Washington, and I can tell you it is not just talk after 1 month being back in the district and talking with constituents and being in your district, too, by the way. Mr. THUNE from South Dakota spent a little time, a couple days, traveling through South Dakota. It is a consistent message: The work that we have accomplished here in Washington is hitting home, it is making a big difference, and the American public is responding very favorably.

Mr. THUNE. If the gentleman will yield on that point, I think you make an important point, because one thing has been lost, and sometimes in people's minds, is the important changes that were made in the area of welfare reform, and I think it points to the fact that the American public was leading the way on the issue because they arrived at the conclusion long before Washington did that the current welfare system was an abysmal failure, and you did not have to look very far to see that, and what is encouraging in listening to Mr. PEASE from Indiana who was here earlier talking about volunteerism and about the restoration of values in this country that have built it and made it great, things like the work ethic, like personal responsibility, self-discipline, those are the things that are really encouraging, and I think the American public led the way on that.

I think that Washington finally got the picture, and we have changed the mentality and the philosophy in this town, finally, to recognize as well that we needed a new model and something that again put a premium and a value and a priority on those types of values and that kind of an ethic. And that is the thing that has been really encouraging again about getting out there and hearing that from people, and I hope that we will continue to be the impetus that will move us in a direction on other issues that restores power back home, out of Washington, DC.

And welfare reform is a perfect example of that, is something for which the Members of this body and the last Congress should take great credit because they have redefined and changed the way that America thinks about that important issue.

I am delighted to hear that the gentleman from Colorado made his way to our State of South Dakota and helped our tourism economy out there. We hope that you will come back often.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I was asked this question, you get a lot of different questions when you are at these town meetings and hosting these listening posts, but this one question had me stumped for a second. I was asked by a constituent if I could only pass one bill in this Chamber, what would that one bill be. And I say, well, if I could write it and could make sure that it would actually be enacted into law, it would be this: that the parents of our children would teach their children individual responsibility and right from wrong.

But clearly that bill cannot be passed; that bill will never see the light of day. It is not government's place to take the place of a family. That is something that we have to encourage families to do, many of the themes that you just mentioned. But if we could pass any bill, that would be it, to help parents teach kids, their own children, responsibility and right from wrong.

But again I would be happy to yield.

Mr. THUNE. Well, I was just going to say I think what is encouraging to me as I travel in my State, and I think around this country, is we are seeing a resurgence of an emphasis upon those types of things. I think for years there has been an expectation that government could solve many of these problems, but I think Washington is realizing, as I said earlier, what families and churches and communities have known all along, and that is that it is the self-initiative, it is the ability to take these things into their own hands and to help resolve those issues, and to provide the kind of model and the kind of atmosphere in which these types of values can be nurtured and grown, and one of the things that was really stymieing that was the welfare system that has been in place for the past 30 years, and when that was changed, it broke the chain of dependency upon an old system that was outdated and did not work, and it created, I think it renewed, this whole attitude that we are seeing in this country that the things that you just mentioned, the importance of hard work, individual responsibility, self-discipline, the work ethic, the things that again have been the building blocks.

I mean, we cannot legislate that, but, frankly, we can do a lot, I think, to create an atmosphere in which those things will thrive, and that is really again what we are about here.

Mr. HULSHOF. In order to be geographically correct, I know we have heard from the Midwest and certainly from the West, but to make sure that we have all parts of this great land covered, I am happy to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PAPPAS].

Mr. PAPPAS. I thank the gentleman, and once again I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this and to

view the visual aids of my friend from Colorado. I always look forward to what he is to present.

My month back in New Jersey was pretty diverse, as it normally is, even when I am just home for a weekend. The highlight of my month really, though, was the annual Somerset County 4-H Fair, which is my home county which I am very proud of.

We talk about our fair as the largest free fair east of the Mississippi, and we believe that it is. It is a 3-day event. This was our 49th annual fair, and typically during that 3 days we have anywhere between 75,000 and 80,000 people attend the event. It is one that I am proud to be a part of.

I have been an adult volunteer there for many years and mainly because of the wholesome environment and wholesome activities that the 4-H program provides.

We, again, in our county are proud of the fact that it is the largest 4-H program in the State of New Jersey and one that I know is prevalent in many communities throughout the United States and really throughout the world.

4-H, though, is not just for agricultural areas. While parts of my district, agriculture is very strong, yes, even in New Jersey agriculture is an important part of our economy, but the activities, the ways in which young people can grow and can be involved again in activities that help them as individuals and help them grow and expand their horizons and their experiences in life, are such that I think it is very important and why I support it as much as I do.

The activities that center around county fairs in my part of the country, in the State of New Jersey, I think adds to the attractiveness of the range of activities in our State. My district runs from the western part of the State, the shores of the Delaware River, and it runs to the east, almost to the Atlantic Ocean, and while I do not have any of the coast, as we call it the Jersey shore, as part of my district, the economy of my district and the people of my district, as I do, take advantage of the Jersey shore. And during the course of the month I had an opportunity to visit many of the shore communities.

Tourism is the second largest part of New Jersey's economy, and I believe that the activities along the Jersey shore and activities such as the Somerset County 4-H Fair add to that economic activity of our State.

Another couple of things that were a part of my month were meeting with many business people, business men and women. Early part of August, I was the participant of an all-day seminar that was hosted by the Princeton Chamber of Commerce, which is a very prominent community in my district. They have done this for several years and have had a Member of Congress there to meet with their membership one on one, which I did for about an

hour and a half of the morning session, spoke to a group of CEOs in the morning, at breakfast, and then spoke to their general membership at lunch and participated in several Q and A sessions, and they were thrilled, to say the least, of the approved balanced budget plan that we enacted and the President signed and, of course, the tax relief measures.

But they reminded me, and was not anything that they needed to remind me, but it is important to hear it and important to know that people understand that the balanced budget plan is just that, it is a plan. It is a plan that is only good if we follow it, and it is a plan that will take several years to enact to see that very important goal of a balanced budget become a reality. I am certainly committed to that, and they understand that it is important for them, for their employees, for the future of their businesses, and, in turn, for the future of many of those who are employers.

I was encouraged to see how enthusiastic they were about that, but equally as important, the tax relief measure. I have said here, and I have said this in my district and in other parts of our State, that the tax relief measure is a first step to what I will hope to see several steps, second step beginning next year, and you, Mr. HULSHOF, as a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, I know will be very active in seeing additional tax relief measures put forth and that we can debate and consider here in the Congress. That is something that I am committed to.

Just this afternoon, I spoke to a gentleman who is a small businessman in the central part of my district. He had e-mailed me and was frustrated over what he viewed as the abandonment of the Republican majority of our commitment to provide for tax and regulatory relief, and in speaking to him I corresponded with him, but I decided to telephone him as well to let him know, to assure him, that that is not the case, that what we in the House, Republican side, are attempting to do is to govern in a bipartisan fashion, recognizing that President Clinton, while he may not agree to the desire of tax relief that many of us would like to see, yet we need to meet each other halfway and that we have not abandoned our principles, we view this as a first step and that we are committed, just as he is, to trying to see things such as the elimination of the capital gains tax and the elimination of the death tax as goals just as important as the plan to see a budget that is in balance.

So I heard for that 4-week period what I hear on the telephone during the week when I am here through letters, through the time that I am home during weekends or long weekends, and I was just very happy to see that people are encouraged, people do have hope, but they also recognize that it is an ongoing process and one that they are willing to work with us on seeing those goals become realities.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

I was in Wentzville, MO, on the eastern side of my district at the high school, and it was pointed out to me that in a normal day, if you just consider your actions of a normal day, when you wake up and grab a first cup of coffee you are paying a sales tax, when you drive to work you pay a gas tax, when you get to work you pay an income tax, when you flip on the light you pay an electricity tax, when you flush the toilet you pay a water tax, when you get home, if you are lucky enough to have a home, you pay a property tax, and, as we have talked about, if you are fortunate enough to work hard and save and want to pass on to the next generation, your kids, your descendants, then there is the Government wanting another bite with this Federal death tax.

The problem is not that people do not pay enough, the problem is that we here in Washington have been spending too much, and I think we have begun to try to get our arms wrapped around this problem of wasteful Washington spending, and, as you mentioned, it is simply a plan. We need to continue to make sure that the people in this body, certainly we want to provide for the essential services, but make sure that the people that come here from all parts of the country recognize that this is a critically important goal that we need to continue our path toward a balanced budget.

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. If the gentleman will yield, I am so glad that the gentleman from New Jersey is here, Mr. Pappas, because I remember when we first met as freshmen coming here, the first thing out of Mike Pappas' mouth was home office deduction.

□ 2000

We have got to get the home office deduction for small business people back in my home district. That is true in my area as well, as we talk about making the welfare transition from dependency to complete independence, to realizing the economic trends taking place in America toward smaller businesses and independent employment.

Our goal as Republicans has been in this Congress to try to find ways to triple the number of minority-owned businesses throughout the country as well. I have to tell you, when I went back home I heard so many people thanking us that MIKE PAPPAS' legislation made it into the final tax cut bill on the home office deduction.

Finally, we are going to be able to provide parity to small business owners, parity with respect to the expenses associated with running a business out of your home that large employers enjoy throughout the country as well.

Since you are here tonight, I want to thank you, and just let you and the constituents back in New Jersey know that this is an important item that you fought for that has had a tremendous

impact, not just in your home State of New Jersey, but had an impact in Missouri, South Dakota and Colorado.

You can drop me out of an airplane in a parachute anywhere in this country, and I guarantee people struggling to be entrepreneurs and finding a way to get their small business open and operating out of their homes appreciate the jobs created, thanks to the home office deduction. Would the gentleman talk a little more about that?

Mr. HULSHOF. If the gentleman would yield, I also wanted to ask you, you have had the opportunity I think to go into another district in Colorado, I think that of another freshman Member. Did you go into the inner city of Denver at one point? With regard to some of these themes, you talk about the minority business people. Did you talk about some of these conservative principles back in Denver?

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for inquiring about that. My district, the 4th district of Colorado, is essentially the eastern half of the State, a very rural area, about the size of Indiana in square mileage. My district does not include Denver, but I did an exchange with a Member of the other party where I spent a day in her district and she in mine. We went to inner-city Denver and spoke with minority business leaders and owners of the business community in inner-city Denver.

The concern of the folks that we met with is very different than what you might expect in a setting of that nature. I did not hear requests for any kind of handout of any kind, any kind of preference program, anything along those lines that has come in Washington and in many places and seems to be what you would expect. It was just the opposite, asking for fewer government regulations, asking for the home office deduction, asking for 100 percent deductibility of health benefits for health care expenses for small employers, to get them to the same level where large employers are.

These are the key elements, removing the barriers of a large, oppressive Federal bureaucracy from the natural entrepreneurial instincts that occur to all Americans in all settings. It was just remarkable, because it is the same message I hear in the rural parts of my district. Going to inner-city Denver, I heard the same message.

This particular tax cut package that the Republicans crafted and constructed right here and passed and that we fought so hard for is really being embraced throughout the country. It is so exciting. And Mr. PAPPAS is exactly right, this is just the first step. It is a good start. But we are not finished, we are going to go back and get more and continue to fight to shrink the size of the government in Washington and expand the authority of real people, real, free people throughout America.

Mr. PAPPAS. If the gentleman would yield, one thing that I remind people is that again this is a first step. This plan

to balance the budget is just that, a plan that needs to be followed. But also taking up the suggestion of Speaker GINGRICH, and that is people in my district believe that the tax on savings and investment and the death tax needs to be eliminated, that we need to band together and involve people in the community that may not have ever been involved in the legislative process before, to help educate people within our districts and the communities, to help make the people in the local media, who may not be involved in these issues as the national media is, aware that this is important for everyone's future, and not just the rich as is too often heard in this Chamber, but for small business people, their employees, people who could be employed by small- and medium-sized businesses in the future.

So those that may be watching this, whether you live in the central New Jersey area or the 12th district of Colorado or Missouri or South Dakota, if you are interested in being a part of this, contact any of us, contact Members of Congress who really are desirous of organizing public education activities to see this ball moved down the field, so to speak.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hard work of the gentleman from New Jersey, and the things that he has pointed out here are important to all of us.

I guess as our time is winding down, I want to pick up on one note that was made earlier, and that is that one of the things that we have to, I think, insist upon in Washington, is accountability.

As we move forward now, having balanced this budget, the gentleman talked about the fact that we have got the blueprint there, but we have to be conscientious and see that it is enforced.

One of the other things that I think we need to take very seriously is the so-called Results Act which has been passed by the Congress. It goes into effect this year. For the people in this country, we spend \$1.6 trillion taxpayer dollars on the Federal Government, and the estimates are that as much as \$350 billion is lost through fraud, waste and abuse, some \$23 billion in the Medicare program alone, which represents 14 percent of their total budget allocated dollars.

So one of the things we do have to, I think, as we go through the process continue to try to root out, and that is all the spending in government that is over and above what is necessary to get the job done.

The people in this country expect Washington to be accountable. They deserve to have Washington be accountable. I think that that, too, is an important part. Think about the tax cut that we could do. \$350 billion in waste, fraud and abuse. Figure out what that would translate to the average person in this country in terms of lower taxes, or investments in other

types of things that might be important to the future of this country. But instead of having it lost through the waste, the fraud and the abuse that so oftentimes is endemic in big government and bureaucracy, that is the kind of thing that we are going to continue to focus upon, try and root that out, and see that those savings are passed on to the hard-working men and women in this country.

So I think that too is an important point and something that I think all of us are very concerned about and want to continue to pursue as part of our agenda for the future.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back to the gentleman from Missouri. I think our time is winding up.

Mr. HULSHOF. I think the gentleman is correct. I again appreciate my colleagues for joining me and participating in this special order.

I think, Mr. Speaker, to those naysayers that have picked apart these past weeks' aspects of what we have done here, we should not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Clearly we are not here to rest on past accomplishments. We have a tremendous amount of work yet to do, and we have just touched the surface.

Mr. THUNE talked about trying to crack down on fraud and abuse in many of these programs. I know one of the things on the agenda we will be focusing on, Mr. PAPPAS mentioned the Committee on Ways and Means. We are going to be focusing on how to restructure possibly the Internal Revenue Service.

Everybody talks about trying to simplify the Tax Code. We need to continue to have those discussions, beyond just having Presidential candidates come forward and say this is what we ought to do. I think this is a dialog we have to get the American people on board with us, whether they favor just the Tax Code that we have and simplifying that, or whether they favor a flat income tax or a national consumption tax, a sales tax or the like.

But our efforts to restructure the IRS, whether it is the highway bill, the infrastructure, investing in roads and bridges that are so needed across the country, or as another freshman Member, we are talking about education. This is the time everybody is heading back to school or colleges and universities. The fact is we have to get more money than is presently appropriated back into the classrooms, so teachers are not having to dig in their own pockets and purchase school supplies to educate the kids that are entrusted to them.

There are so many things we have yet to do. But I think in our quest for progress, we have to continue to stay on the path. I think we are committed to doing that, certainly as this freshman class is on this side and many on the other side, of trying to work with politics of cooperation, rather than politics of confrontation.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on my special order in recognition of the life of Betty Shabazz to be given today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia?

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF BETTY SHABAZZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come forward this evening to lead a special order in recognition of the life of Betty Shabazz.

Betty Saunders was the adopted and only daughter of loving parents, who grew up in Detroit, MI. She died on June 24, 3 weeks after being burned over 80 percent of her body. Her grandson, Malcolm, has been convicted of the arson and has since been judged to have been mentally disturbed.

I come forward this evening to speak of a woman who in a very real sense was two women. Betty Shabazz was her own woman, and inescapably and memorably, Betty Shabazz was the widow of a great man, Malcolm X. The two identities are inevitably related. Each side, gracious and strong, fed the other side of this remarkable woman.

I want to begin by saying some words about Betty, and later on I want to say some words about Malcolm X, because many have no clear vision of who Malcolm became, and in honoring Betty, we inevitably honor this man who transformed himself.

I knew Betty well. On one level she was simply a friend, one of the girls. On the level where she is remembered best, she of course was the widow of Malcolm X. But at the level that I find most remarkable, Betty Shabazz was all Betty, not Malcolm, because Betty, like Malcolm, redefined herself from the wife of a great man who was tragically assassinated, to herself, a self-made woman.

There is, of course, Betty the mother. There is a kind of primacy that was attached to being Betty the mother. When you raise six girls, when your husband is struck down and assassinated before your very eyes, when you and four children are in the ballroom where that act occurs, you are inescapably, first and foremost, a mother. When you are pregnant with twins who are then later born, there is a very special primacy to being a mother.

Yes, she went on to get her doctorate and to become an associate professor at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, NY, and ultimately to become an adminis-

trator in that college. This is the kind of transformation aspect of her life that, in many ways, is shades of Malcolm.

□ 2015

Betty met Malcolm in New York, having come there to study nursing. She described the courtship as an old-fashioned courtship. I wish we had more of those today. Malcolm loved children, and he particularly loved his children. I must say that during their what turned out to be a short marriage, Betty was pregnant most of the time.

Malcolm was assassinated on February 21st, 1965, with four of those six girls by her side. She threw herself onto the children when she heard the bullets, and then she ran to Malcolm, by which time he was already dead.

How do you go forward after something like that? Unlike the two other civil rights widows, with whom she became friends, Betty was left without any protection. Myrlie Evers, the extraordinary wife of Medgar Evers, who has since become chair of the board of the NAACP, was left with the protection of our largest and oldest and best-known civil rights organization, the NAACP. Coretta Scott King, when Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated, was left with the protection of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and, as it turned out, of much of the Nation, for whom King was recognized as a very special martyr and a very great man. But as for Betty, it was members of the Nation of Islam who were ultimately convicted of the assassination of her husband. She was left with no organizational protection.

What did she do? She did what such women often do, only she did it in her way. She raised these girls, got more education, and went on and got a career. The country and the world did not hear much of Betty Shabazz during this period. I cannot imagine who could have heard much of Betty Shabazz, doing what she was doing during this period. She lived a very private life. She was particularly keen to protect these children, and, of course, she had to live and move forward.

I had a forum at the Black Caucus Weekend last year where I invited Betty Shabazz, my old friend, to be one of the speakers, because it spoke to issues about which she had been identified. And this very gracious and remarkable woman was anything but self-assured about coming to this forum and speaking at this forum with women whom she regarded as more practiced at such pursuits.

I remember that Betty said when she finally got herself so that she could see the movie Malcolm X that the young actress who portrayed her was far more self-assured than Betty felt she was during this period. There was a kind of inner assurance and inner conviction, an inner self-esteem that came out during the forum, and that was part of the very essence of Betty Shabazz.

Ultimately, in addition to her professional stature, Betty was to become a human rights advocate of very special stature.

I want to say something further about her husband, the man who transformed himself from a petty criminal to a major league thug to a black Muslim and finally to an orthodox Sunni Muslim who embraced universal brotherhood, because I think we ought to be clear who Malcolm became. There is lack of clarity on that in this country, because only then can we understand Betty Shabazz.

But before I go on, I see that I have been joined by my good colleague, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. JOHN LEWIS]. It is very fitting that JOHN should come forward first, for he and I worked together in the very same civil rights movement for which the civil rights martyrs became so well-known and admired in this country, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, and Medgar Evers.

I am pleased to yield to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. JOHN LEWIS].

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend and my colleague, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON], for calling this special order tonight. I know some time ago the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia had planned to hold a special order, but because of the schedule of the House, we are doing it tonight.

So Mr. Speaker, I join my colleague in paying tribute to a noble spirit, Dr. Betty Shabazz. I felt a profound sense of loss when I learned of her death. Betty Shabazz stood tall as a wife, a mother, and a friend.

As a matter of fact, I knew Malcolm and got to know her husband fairly well. I first met him on the night of August 27th, 1963, 34 years ago, here in the city of Washington on the eve of the march on Washington. The last time I saw her husband alive was in Nairobi, Kenya, in October 1964, at the New Stanley Hotel.

Malcolm and Betty together represented something deep and good about the very best of America. Betty Shabazz stood tall as a wife, as a mother. She stood tall as a woman of courage, pride, and with a great sense of dignity.

As I said before, at the age of 28, Betty Shabazz suddenly lost her husband, Malcolm, to an assassin's bullet. With few resources, she began to raise her six daughters. With determination she pursued and achieved a doctorate degree in education. With a deep sense of compassion and an abiding faith, Betty Shabazz continued Malcolm's work.

On February 21, 1965, I say to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia Ms. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, my friend and colleague of long standing, I remember very well, we were driving back from Macon, GA in south Georgia on the way to the city of Atlanta, and then on our way to Selma, when we