

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the gentlewoman from Oregon [Ms. HOOLEY] in expressing sympathy for the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PASCRELL] on the death of the gentleman's father.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats are determined to bring campaign finance reform to the floor, despite the Republican leadership's reluctance to do so. The problem with congressional elections is that they cost too much, and increasingly the average American cannot run for Congress. The public feels that their vote does not count because of the influence wealthy people have through their ability to contribute large sums of money to a campaign.

My home State of New Jersey sets a very good example of a public financing system that we use for our Governor's race that is going on now. Contributions to the Governor's race, I should mention, are limited. But more important, the amount of private money is capped and then matched with public funds, so that the overall expenditures of the race remain basically even for Democrat and Republican candidates.

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I would like to see the same type of system for congressional raises. I believe the public would support this as an alternative to the current race for dollars. Democrats, Mr. Speaker, will continue to press for campaign finance reform.

NATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I was saddened several months ago when I heard the President abandon the teachers in America. He called for 1 million volunteers to teach our children to read.

In Kansas, the teachers have not abandoned our children. They are teaching reading and writing and math and history and science and other important things. They have not turned from their job responsibility, even if the President has turned his back on them.

Now the President wants to create more government and establish national education standards. Sounds good. I am from the government and I am here to help. But we have done that before. We have national standards. It is for Pentagon procurement. We call them MILSPECS. They are very complicated. Because of those MILSPECS, we bought a \$750 pair of pliers.

Now they want to transfer that technology to education. Let us not go there. The States have that responsibility and States like Kansas have established quality performance accreditation educational standards. Kansas has not abandoned educational stand-

ards. Let us not complicate education standards and get the equivalent of a \$750 pair of pliers. Let the States do their job.

FAST TRACK TRADE AUTHORITY

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, stating that exports to Mexico have increased, the President now wants fast track for all of Latin America. In a way that is true.

Check this out. Last month, Fruit of the Loom cut 2,400 jobs in Louisiana, citing no regulations and cheaper labor. As a result, Fruit of the Loom is exporting factories and machinery overseas. This is out of control, Mr. Speaker.

First, the President donates his boxer shorts to charity, then literally takes the tax deduction for it. Now the President wants to donate our BVDs, Mr. Speaker, and give us a training voucher for a job in Latin America.

Beam me up. This is not fast tracking. This is backtracking. I yield back the Constitution that mandates a two-thirds ratification vote of the U.S. Senate to enact a treaty, if anybody abides by the Constitution around here.

SCHOOL CHOICE

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

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, for America's poorest children education is their most direct path out of poverty. In fact, even children in truly horrible schools manage to escape destitution by dint of relentless determination and honest hard work. But children should not have to pass through metal detectors on the way through the schoolhouse door. If kids are more consumed by the fear of violence than the hope of earning an A on the next exam, the great challenges they face become even greater.

Confronted by school violence and disorderly classrooms, to whom can these children turn? I believe they ought to turn to their parents, of course. But what if their parents lack the freedom to pull their children out of harmful schools? While the status quo interests join together to say "too bad" or join together in offering more hollow promises, Republicans offer America's children hope in the form of school choice and education savings accounts.

Hope is too scarce a commodity to most of our Nation's poorest communities. School choice and education savings accounts level the playing field and offer hope by treating families like real customers and children like real Americans.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. SNYDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, on June 11, 1995, in a very famous photo, the Speaker of the House and the President of the United States shook hands and committed themselves to campaign finance reform. Over 2 years later, we have had over 85 bills introduced and none passed. Why is that? Because it is a tough issue. It is a very difficult issue that not only divides parties but divides us among our own parties.

I encourage the membership to take a look at H.R. 2183, the freshman bill. It is bipartisan. It does the doable. It stops the large donations from unions, corporations, and wealthy individuals, those huge soft money donations that threaten our system.

H.R. 2183, I believe, takes a step in the right direction, not a bill for all time but it is a good, important first step.

NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY ACT

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, the rhetoric surrounding H.R. 1270, the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1997, is often technical and rarely illustrative in a personal manner, where the impact will be the greatest. Many American cities around this country are going to be affected by this act. Typical American cities such as St. Louis, MO, will become nuclear refuse hubs as radioactive waste is transported and funneled from subsidized nuclear powerplants through St. Louis to the proposed nuclear storage site in Nevada. Residents of St. Louis should know that this waste will travel along Interstate 70, next to North Memorial Drive and the Mississippi River, meaning that if an accident were to occur and a small fraction of the shipping cask's contents were released, it would be sufficient to contaminate a 42-mile square area that would take 460 days to clean up. This would devastate downtown St. Louis, endanger the people living there, contaminate the Mississippi River, threaten every city and person downstream.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues were sent to Congress to serve and protect their constituents, not mandate a physical, environmental, and economic disaster upon them.

BIPARTISAN CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, campaign finance reform does not have to be a partisan affair. It can be a bipartisan

affair. In fact, the freshmen of this Congress, six Republicans and six Democrats, worked on a task force and developed the Bipartisan Campaign Integrity Act of 1997. It takes the biggest of the big money out of politics and it does something else: It takes the contentious issues off the table.

There are those on the Republican side who simply want to do something about labor unions. But they know that is a deal breaker. There are those on the Democratic side who want to do something about candidate spending limits, but those over here think that is a deal breaker.

The fact is, we can take the biggest of the big money out of politics. We need to support the Bipartisan Integrity Act of 1997, the freshman task force bill. In this Congress we should legislate, not just investigate. I urge all my colleagues, especially those on the Republican side, to join the 11 Republicans and many Democrats who support this bill.

MOTHER TERESA

(Ms. GRANGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, several years ago a newspaper reporter assigned to cover Mother Teresa of Calcutta decided to follow her around for an entire day to see what a day in the life of the Saint of the Gutters was really like.

After visiting several hospitals and feeding the hungry, the reporter followed Mother Teresa to a sewer on the outskirts of town. The tiny woman proceeded to get down on her hands and knees in the middle of the sewer where she began talking to the destitute people living there. The reporter standing on the safety of the concrete street above looked down to Mother Teresa, shook his head and said, I would not do that for a million dollars. Mother Teresa looked up to the reporter and said, "I wouldn't either."

This story captures the essence of a great humanitarian, a woman who touched lives with her Missionary of Charities and saved souls with her message of Christ. Politically incorrect and yet morally courageous, this heroic woman touched the lives of millions with her conviction, her commitment, and, most important, compassion.

Mr. Speaker, I hope we can all join together in the memory of Mother Teresa and work to make America a little more like her, a place where individuals matter, character counts, a place where people love their neighbors and respect themselves and, most important, a place where service and sacrifice are not things people do for money but things people do for free.

MORE ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE

(Mr. TURNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2183, the bipartisan freshman campaign finance reform bill. Abraham Lincoln once wrote that with public trust, everything is possible. And without it, nothing is impossible. He recognized that a democracy cannot work unless people have confidence and trust in their government.

Over the last few decades, this essential trust has been undermined, not only by periodic scandals but by the everyday practice of raising huge sums of money from wealthy contributors and special interests. Year after year, both parties raise larger and larger amounts of what people in Washington call "soft money," but my folks back home in Texas call "hard cash."

People cannot help but wonder whether their government is for sale to the highest bidder. The reforms that we propose are not intended to help or hurt either party. These reforms are designed to help restore the people's confidence in the independence of their Representatives and in the integrity of their government. The only way to regain people's confidence is to pass campaign finance reform.

STANDARDIZED FEDERAL TESTING

(Mr. THUNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, in the area of education there has been a lot of talk lately about the importance of testing. I would like to talk today about something we do not hear as much about. That is the importance of learning.

Some people think we do not have enough standardized testing. They think we need to spend more than \$90 million on a new Federal test to tell parents how their kids are doing.

Right now schools in my home State of South Dakota and other States around the country already give students two standardized tests. Both of those tests are given in March and both take about a week to administer.

Now, President Clinton wants another standardized test. It would also be given in March and it would take about a week to administer. That means students back home in South Dakota would spend the entire month of March not learning but testing.

Think about it. Would you like to spend three solid weeks filling in the oval next to the correct answer with a No. 2 pencil? I cannot think of anything I would dislike more unless it is spending \$90 million to do it. That is why I am urging my colleagues to vote for more learning in our schools and less pointless, redundant standardized Federal testing.

SUPPORT BIPARTISAN CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mrs. MINK of Hawaii asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, the people of this Nation have a right to expect that the Congress act upon issues that are raised. We are now investigating campaign financing, and every day we hear about this unregulated, unlimited, huge sums of money being poured into our national parties and other independent committees.

Almost all of the bills that have been offered for consideration have one provision in common, and that is ban the soft money contributions that are currently unregulated.

All of us run under a Federal election law that regulates our contributions, no more than \$1,000 per election, no more than \$5,000 in PAC contributions. Why is it not so simple for this Congress to pass a bill that bans soft money? There is absolutely no justification for our just sitting here and listening to this debate without action. The people have a right to expect this Congress to be responsive. We have the legislation before us to do it. Let us act today.

NATIONAL STANDARDS

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

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, the issue du jour for the Clinton administration is to create national education testing standards. I find this ironic in light of today's newspaper account: Former Democrat Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Joe Califano has just published a comprehensive report on America's schools. He described them as a "candy store" for illegal drugs being available to our Nation's school children.

The Clinton Department of Education's response to this report was, in typical ostrich fashion, to ignore it. They replied that our schools are essentially safe and drug free, so "let's get back to the issue of national standards."

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the bipartisan "national education standard" we ought to be working for is safe schools that are drug free. How else can we guarantee our children a world-class education? That should be the first priority of President Clinton and his administration. We Republicans will happily work with him to achieve this national standard that we can all be proud of, and pass on a legacy to children that will endure the test of time.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE W. CROCKETT

(Ms. KILPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Congressman