

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, 2 weeks ago the U.S. Senate did the right thing and passed modest gun safety legislation to keep guns out of the hands of our kids. Now it is time the House of Representatives do the right thing.

I was saddened to read in the paper this morning that the Republican leadership is playing games with gun safety legislation. Two weeks ago, instead of allowing us to vote on the gun safety package passed by the other body, the Republican leadership told us that they needed more time for hearings to proceed in the regular order. Now what we have found out is that what they really needed was more time for the National Rifle Association to wage a grassroots campaign and to water down gun safety legislation.

The Republican leadership is pulling a bait and switch on the American people. It is time to stop playing games with the deadly serious issue of gun safety for children. We should vote on the Senate gun safety package, not a watered down, NRA written, loophole filled, sham bill.

Madam Speaker, this is the people's House, it is not the NRA's House, and the American people want gun safety legislation. Let us have a fair and open debate on gun safety legislation.

RECOGNITION OF THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KATONAH FIRE DEPARTMENT

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

Mrs. KELLY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to proudly mark the 125th anniversary of the Katonah, New York Volunteer Fire Department. It truly takes hard work and dedication by its members to provide quality fire protection services for over a century.

Formed in 1874, just after a major fire which nearly resulted in the destruction of the entire town, the Katonah Fire Department has grown to over 100 active, hardworking volunteer firemen and emergency medical service personnel.

The history of this incredible organization has turned out to be a long and illustrious story of bravery and commitment to the residents of Katonah. They have progressed dramatically over the 125 years of existence from an old horse and carriage to the fire-fighting tactics and equipment of today.

Today, more than ever, all over the country, we need people to volunteer to serve in our local fire and ambulance corps. The people of Katonah are proud of our men and women who volunteer to risk their lives every day to respond to any emergency at a moment's notice.

Congratulations to them. Let us salute them on this auspicious occasion for the undaunted hard work they do to make Katonah a safer place.

FLAG DAY

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Madam Speaker, in America it is illegal to burn trash, but we can burn the flag. It is illegal to remove a label from a mattress, but we can literally rip the stars and stripes off our flag. It is illegal to damage a mailbox, but we can destroy our flag.

Beam me up. A people that does not honor and respect their flag is a people that does not honor and respect their country nor their neighbors.

Today is Flag Day. I say if we want to make a political statement, we can burn our bras, burn our BVDs, but we should leave Old Glory alone. Every day should be Flag Day.

TRANSPORTING MINORS ACROSS STATE LINES FOR ABORTION SHOULD BE FEDERAL MISDEMEANOR

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, yesterday a subcommittee approved a bill to make it a Federal misdemeanor for strangers to transport minor girls across State lines in order to avoid State abortion parental consent or notification laws. My bill is designed to punish those who take teenagers to other States for a secret abortion, thereby deceiving parents and avoiding the parental consent laws.

This commonsense legislation, which currently enjoys the support of almost 130 Members, will prevent our children from falling prey to strangers. The idea that any nonparent can take one's 13-year-old daughter to another State for a secret and potentially fatal abortion should be appalling to any parent and should convince this Congress to move swiftly on the bill.

I commend the members of the Subcommittee on the Constitution of the Committee on the Judiciary for protecting the basic right of parents to participate in all decisions involving their minor children, and I ask that the Committee on the Judiciary and the full House do the same as soon as possible.

CRA

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

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Madam Speaker, as we seek to provide banks and other financial companies with an environment that would allow them to expand their powers and become more competitive globally, it is our responsibility to make certain that our constituents, the financial institutions' customers, are also provided with an

environment that would allow them to prosper.

Since 1977, banks and thrifts have made over \$1 trillion in loan pledges to low-income areas. CRA investments have been widely credited with dramatically increasing home ownership, restoring distressed communities, and helping small businesses and meeting the unique credit needs of rural America.

I cosponsored an amendment offered in the Committee on Banking and Financial Services that would make bank affiliates that sell bank-like financial products subject to CRA review on those products. If they want to play on the same ball field they have to play by the same rules.

If this amendment is enacted in the House, on the House floor, bank affiliates will be pleasantly surprised to see that the same result will occur as my banking colleagues did; there is a profit to be made in low-income rural and minority communities.

CRA has been good for banks and great for our communities.

VIOLENCE AMONG OUR YOUTH

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

Mr. EWING. Madam Speaker, school violence and violence in society concerns all of us. What do we do about it? Well, we have tried gun control. We have insisted on parental control. We have suggested the schools could control more.

I do not believe our young people are born violent. It can be learned. We have found that out in the culture of the Hitler Nazi regime where he taught his youth, or there may be other ways that we can learn violence.

In America, we have allowed a culture of violence to promote it, besides guns, besides lack of parental control. What is that? It is our movies, our television, our video games.

I would like to see more leadership in addressing the thing that our students spend more time with. Let us try strict liability with television, videos and movies.

BOMBING FOR PEACE

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, bombing for peace. This is the new strategy from NATO. While engaging in peace negotiations, NATO has intensified the bombing. Bombing for peace.

During peace talks, B-52s dropped cluster bombs along the Kosovo-Albania borders. NATO says that as a result about 600 Serb troops in the field were pulverized by the cluster bombs during peace talks. Besides those troops killed, there will be countless Kosovars and Serbs injured by thousands of cluster bombs which will remain

unexploded until discovered by accident, by children playing, by people walking home to Kosovo.

Peace bombs. There is no such thing as bombing for peace. We bomb for war; we negotiate for peace. We cannot do both at once and keep credibility. Let us hope we can finally get a peace agreement and let us demand an end to the bombing.

MINORITY LEADER WOULD CUT DEFENSE AND RAISE TAXES

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Madam Speaker, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), the House minority leader, was apparently caught off guard recently and said out loud what he really thinks about defense spending and about taxes. He said, and I quote, and I have it on this chart, "You have got to have a combination of taking it out of the defense budget and raising revenue. We can argue about how to do that, closing loopholes or even raising taxes to do it."

That is right. He proposed to raise taxes and cut defense. And then, even more amazing is that he was given a chance to clarify his remarks in a letter to the editor of the Washington Times. Did he say that he would oppose tax increases? Did he say he would retract his words? Did he repudiate the notion that what this country needs is to weaken our military and raise taxes? No. He wrote, "I have no intention of proposing or supporting any tax increases."

No intention? The last time we heard that was 1992, only 1 year before President Clinton gave us the greatest tax increase in our Nation's history.

SUPPORT IMPROVEMENT IN NATION'S SCHOOLS

(Mrs. JONES of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Madam Speaker, we can no longer ignore the disparities in our school systems and allow young people to suffer in crammed, outdated public school buildings.

Daily, Americans are forced to send their children to schools with leaky roofs and unsafe ventilation. With the classroom enrollment rate growing, children must endure overcrowding and dangerous conditions.

It is vital that we bring education to the forefront of our deliberations. We will not be able to meet the Nation's educational needs with temporary remedies. We must make this a non-partisan issue and create permanent solutions. By joining with other Members of Congress and supporting school construction and modernization, we secure the welfare of our children.

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It is imperative for the survival of this great Nation to prepare students to enter the global market and enable them to become productive members of the community. Reduced classroom size, qualified teachers, and new technology provide the opportunities students need to succeed.

Our future depends upon the schooling of the children who sit in American classrooms today. As a Member of the 106th Congress, I am duty-bound to protect the interests of the American people. The steps and directions we choose to take today will decide the future of our Nation. To meet the impending demands of the 21st century, we must do everything in our collective power now to ensure the education of our children.

OLD HABITS DIE HARD

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, as we just heard, the House Democrat leader said something the other day that might give American taxpayers cause for concern. A lot of people have been fooled by the talk about "new Democrats" and the "third way" and other such deceptions that liberals must use to remain politically viable.

But every once in a while a Democrat leader slips and reveals what their party actually stands for, the same thing they have always stood for since the 1960s.

Listen again to this comment by the minority leader: "You've got to have a combination of taking it out of the defense budget and raising revenue. We can argue about how to do that, closing loopholes or even raising taxes to do it."

So there we have it. Cut defense and raise taxes. No wonder all those flag burners and left-wing activists from the 1960s found a home in the Democratic Party. It is a party whose leaders, after all these years it seems, do not support a strong military and simply cannot wait to get back in power so they can pass another tax hike.

Old habits die hard.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND MODERNIZATION

(Mrs. NAPOLITANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, I would like to certainly call upon all my colleagues to join us in bringing the issue of school construction and modernization up for debate this year.

In my home State of California, we are facing a very critical and potential crisis in providing adequate school facilities for our children. With the number of students increasing in grades K through 12 by about 270,000 during the next 5 years, California will need 10,000,

10,000, new classrooms. That is six new classrooms each day for the next 5 years.

In addition to building new classrooms, more than two-thirds of existing school buildings are in desperate need of repair. State and local resources are currently only covering half of these construction costs and modernization needs.

We, therefore, all of us, owe it to our children from throughout the United States to address this issue right here in Washington. The children of my State who are the future of California and the children of other States are depending on us to take action to build and renovate our schools.

FAILED CLINTON ADMINISTRATION POLICY ON NORTH KOREA

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, the Clinton administration's policy on North Korea has failed on several counts.

In exchange for making North Korea the largest recipient of U.S. assistance in East Asia, Pyongyang promised to terminate its nuclear weapons program and any efforts to develop or deploy long-range ballistic missiles.

While there are several indications that the North Koreans have not kept their end of the bargain, last summer's launch of a three-stage ballistic missile over Japan is the most egregious example of this rogue nation's disregard for their commitments.

With Pyongyang calling for further concessions from the U.S., I believe it is important for Congress to make it clear to the administration that we will not provide additional money or ease economic sanctions unless there is clear and convincing evidence that the North Koreans are living up to the requirements of the 1994 Agreed Framework.

To do anything less would be a severe abdication of our responsibility to defend the national security of the United States.

NATIONAL HOMEOWNERSHIP WEEK

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

Mr. VENTO. Madam Speaker, I rise to hail National Homeownership Week. Homeownership is one of the core values we have, I think, as Americans and one of the most fundamental bases for stability in our communities. This record homeownership rate of over 67 percent did not happen without leadership from the Clinton administration, from former Secretary Cisneros and current Secretary Andrew Cuomo.

I think we all should be very proud of this accomplishment and the focus that led us to this result. Since 1993, we