

POINT REYES FARMLAND PROTECTION ACT OF 1999

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I am back. I am back because our country continues to lose farmland at an alarming rate. I am back because I again have introduced legislation to protect the beautiful farmland near the Point Reyes National Seashore in my congressional district just north of San Francisco, across the Golden Gate Bridge.

□ 1015

This land is 40 miles from San Francisco. It is under heavy threat for development, and because of that, I am introducing the Point Reyes Farmland Protection Act of 1999, H.R. 2202.

This bill establishes that a local-Federal partnership, completely voluntary, will make it possible for landowners to sell their conservation easements, and that these local landowners are willing sellers. The goal is to protect the productive and pristine family farms that are a way of life in my district.

In the last Congress I had similar legislation that was supported by 228 bipartisan cosponsors. Please join me to protect agriculture. Sign onto the Point Reyes Farmland Protection Act, H.R. 2202.

URGING MEMBERS TO SUPPORT VALIANT MEN AND WOMEN FASTING FOR DEMOCRACY IN CUBA

(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. Mr. Speaker, the courageous fasts that began last week in Havana are gaining momentum as dozens of dissidents across the enslaved island of Cuba join the public protest started in Tamarindo 34, peacefully demanding freedom of expression and the release of hundreds of political prisoners.

One of the heroines currently fasting is Magaly de Armas, wife of Vladimiro Roca, one of the four opposition members imprisoned earlier this year for criticizing a communist party document that they dared to say did not present solutions to Cuba's problems.

Roca is also fasting, his will unshaken by Castro's torturous prison in Cienfuegos, and has asked his countrymen to join him in what is becoming a national movement.

On behalf of Vladimiro Roca, Felix Bonne, Rene Gomez Manzano, Marta Beatriz Roque Cabello, and all of the other political prisoners unjustly shackled by Fidel Castro, I ask my colleagues to support the valiant men and women currently fasting. We pray that their courageous democracy efforts become the beginning of true liberty on the island.

DISAPPOINTING LEGISLATION FROM THE HOUSE LEADERSHIP ON GUN SAFETY AND SCHOOL VIOLENCE

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

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, disappointed in this House. I come from the district in California with the highest gun registration. Four years ago, when I ran for Congress and I walked 60,000 households door-to-door, I came across a lot of those gun owners, hunters, people who liked to go down to the range and shoot their guns, people who collect guns.

But they agreed with me, they agreed that decent people who want to own guns do not mind waiting to have their background checked. They agreed that there were too many weapons in criminals' hands, especially in an urban area like the one I represent.

That was before Jonesboro, that was before Littleton, and that was before last week, just this past weekend, when one of our deputy sheriffs in Orange County was sitting in his patrol car and was gunned down, riddled by someone with a machine gun who was mad because this officer had stopped him 3 weeks before.

Mr. Speaker, we need real legislation to help America.

ELDER BASEBALL TEAM EXTENDS INCREDIBLE TITLE STREAK

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, Cincinnati's Elder High School took it down to the wire last week when their great baseball team traveled to Canton, Ohio, to play for the State championship. When the smoke cleared, the Panthers had accomplished a truly extraordinary feat. They had succeeded in winning a State title in 6 consecutive decades with 11 championships overall.

My brother, Ron, is a 1965 Elder graduate. I am an alumnus of arch rival LaSalle. I have to give credit where credit is due, Elder's accomplishment is phenomenal, and all of us who reside in Cincinnati's Western Hills are proud of their great achievement. Their commitment to excellence and their tradition of hard work have paid off. Once again they have made all of Cincinnati proud.

To coach Mark Thompson, the Panther squad, and all their families and fans, I offer my heartfelt congratulations.

From an old Lancer to all the Panthers, well done.

CALLING ATTENTION TO WEBSITE AND FAMILY INTERNET TOOLBOX

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

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Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, I know an important part of controlling youth violence is controlling the violence that children are exposed to.

These days a lot of violence is hitching a ride on the information superhighway. Parents are concerned about the violent influences of the Internet. A recent poll shows that 75 percent of high school students believe the Internet responsible for the shootings in Littleton.

I propose that Internet service providers be required to provide their customers with the necessary filtering software. The other body has already approved legislation to that end. I urge my colleagues in the House to do the same.

In the interim, I would like to draw Members' attention to my web site. It is Family Internet Toolbox, which offers software, tips, and links to safer surfing at www.house.gov/rholt. I hope Members and their constituents will find it useful.

REPUBLICANS BELIEVE THAT LOW TAXES ARE FAIRER THAN HIGH TAXES, AND PEOPLE SHOULD BE ENTITLED TO THE FRUITS OF THEIR LABOR

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, too many Americans liberals have a strange concept of fairness. When it comes to taxes, the liberals' idea of fairness strikes me and most Americans as very unfair.

If one person works twice as hard as another, most people do not think it is unfair if he earns twice as much. A liberal would disagree. As a matter of fact, the liberal tends to demonize the harder working person.

Most people do not think it is unfair that people who sacrifice income through long and difficult years in college and even graduate school expect to find jobs which pay higher than other jobs for their efforts. Yet, we find liberals constantly railing against people who are rewarded for their educational sacrifices as the rich, and presumably not entitled to the rewards they worked so hard to obtain.

I find the tax on the rich and any class of people profoundly un-American.

Republicans believe that low taxes, low taxes on all Americans, rich or poor, are more fair than high taxes. Should not freedom mean that people are entitled to the fruits of their labor?

CHARACTER EDUCATION

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

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on this House to pass a new investment in character education. As the former superintendent of my State schools, I know firsthand that character education can make a difference in teaching our children values and to make sure our children are well rounded and prepared to become good citizens.

Across my Congressional District, school leaders have developed character education initiatives that can make a difference in strong schools and better communities. In Wake County, North Carolina, they have become a leader through an innovative effort called "Uniting for Character." In Johnston County, the principal of Selma Elementary School attributes 59 fewer suspensions between the '95 and '96 school years due to their character education program. And CBS News recently profiled a successful character education program in the Nash-Rocky Mount school system.

Mr. Speaker, character education works because it teaches our children to see the world through a moral lens. Children learn that actions have consequences. Teachers work with parents and the entire community to instill the spirit of shared responsibility. Character education emphasizes values such as character, good judgment, integrity, kindness, perseverance, respect, and self-discipline. This Congress needs to act on this and act now.

A NATION'S TAX POLICY REFLECTS ITS VALUES

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, one reason why taxes are such an important issue is because a Nation's tax policy reflects its values. A system of low taxes rewards hard work, rewards educational achievement, rewards prudence, rewards long-term planning, rewards risk-taking, rewards entrepreneurship, rewards diligence, and most of all, is an endorsement of freedom, the idea that a person is truly entitled to the fruits of his labor.

A system of high taxation punishes these very same virtues. It discourages work, discourages job creation, and reduces freedom. It buys into the idea that the more productive a person is, the more he should be punished, and the less entitled he is to those fruits. It is based on the belief that government knows best.

This in my view is a bizarre value system. I find the liberal value system to be contrary to freedom, contrary to common sense, and the exact opposite of the values that made America great.

WHAT HAS THE HOUSE DONE TO MAKE AMERICA'S CHILDREN SAFER FROM GUN VIOLENCE?

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

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, it has been a month since the tragedy at Columbine. The Senate quickly acted to make children safer. But what has this House done? What has this leadership done? Have we closed the gun show loophole? Today we will get the answer: No. Are we going to hold parents responsible for securing their weapons to keep them out of the hands of children? Today we are going to find out that the answer is no. Are we going to do anything to invest in smart gun technology, so only people who own the guns can fire the guns? Today we are going to find out that under this leadership, the answer is no.

Instead, we are going to be doing the bidding of the National Rifle Association. But the Republicans have come up with a bill today, and among their brilliant strokes, they are going to require that every record store have the lyrics to every CD on display at every store.

If Members want to know what it was that Pavarotti was singing, now they will know. But if they want to make our kids safer, they will have to wait until the Democrats take back the House.

DEMOCRATS ARE CONSISTENT: THEY ALL WANT HIGHER TAXES

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, not counting the social security, the Congressional Budget Office projects \$824 billion in budget surpluses over the next 10 years. Again, that is not counting the temporary surplus in the social security trust fund.

What does the Democratic leadership intend to do with these surpluses? Well, the President stated last January that he does not trust Americans to "spend it right." Yes, that is an exact quote.

Earlier this month we had the House Minority Leader, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), state for the record twice that he would consider raising taxes to pay for an expansion in Federal programs. Members heard that right, raise taxes, not cut them.

Now we have the minority leader in the other body, Mr. DASCHLE, who is on record with this exchange on CNN's Evans and Novak. Asked his opinion about raising taxes, Mr. DASCHLE said, "It's an option. Of course, it's on the table. . . ."

Think about that. At least the Democratic leadership is consistent. They all want higher taxes.

EXPAND THE COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT ACT

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share an example of how banks and community groups are using the Community Reinvestment Act, an act now under attack, to expand access to the financial mainstream.

Last summer First National Bank of Chicago made an agreement with the Chicago CRA Coalition to invest \$4.1 billion in low- and moderate-income Chicago communities over the next 6 years. The bank recently opened a new full service branch in Dominick's Supermarket in the North Lawndale neighborhood on Chicago's West Side.

First National began pilot projects in North Lawndale and two other branches to expand low-cost checking accounts. At the same time, the bank and community groups sponsored financial literacy workshops for area residents.

In the last few months, dozens of persons who previously would have been denied the opportunity to open a bank account have opened checking and savings accounts, depositing thousands of dollars.

The Community Reinvestment Act is under attack. Why? I do not know the answer to that question, but I know that what we should be doing is protecting, expanding, and strengthening CRA.

RENEWAL WEEK

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, we talk a lot in this body about achieving the American dream, but even in the most prosperous economic expansion in recent history, many of our fellow Americans still struggle to make it out of poverty.

That is why the Renewal Alliance, a bicameral group of legislators here in Congress, seeks to highlight both civic and legislative solutions to the plights of so many low-income Americans who desperately want to make it. They want safe communities and they want honest jobs.

I want to encourage my colleagues to join the many members of the Renewal Alliance this week, Renewal Week, and to renew our efforts to pass legislation critical to improving our low-income communities.

The American Community Renewal Act, the Charity Tax Credit, and education scholarship opportunities all combine to use a market-driven and even private sector approach to bring about real hope and opportunity through tax incentives for investment, for capital formation, for community reinvestment, and for contributing to charities of our choice, as well as opportunity scholarships. We reward what works.

Join us in working for our Nation's low-income communities.