

How can the administration talk about saving Medicare and, on the other hand, have \$9 million in cuts that would be taken away from Medicare. We cannot have this kind of double-talk. I urge my colleagues to consider the citizens of rural America. Do not allow the \$9 million in cuts from Medicare. We realize that rural hospitals depend on Medicare and that our citizens' needs will not be met if they are not able to survive.

Now is the time to have the debate on Social Security, but now is also the time to make sure we do right by our citizens in rural America on Medicare.

Let there be no discrimination among any of our citizens. Let us stand up and do right for quality health care for all Americans.

THE MONEY BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE WHO EARNED IT

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, what a surprise. Republican proposals to cut taxes have already been met with speech after speech by my liberal democratic friends denouncing them as tax cuts for the rich.

Well, we will celebrate this April 15th a \$400 child tax cut for families, a tax cut for all families and one that the President approved.

Has anyone else noticed that no matter what tax cuts Republicans propose, it will automatically, 100 percent guaranteed, be called tax cuts for the wealthy by the party that not only does everything in its power to discourage wealth creation but apparently feels intense hatred for anyone who has realized the American dream.

Of course, we all remember what the Democrats called rich in the last Congress: Anyone who is middle class. But I will ask that middle class farmer in Illinois if he is rich, and I will ask that security guard trying to earn extra money if eliminating the marriage penalty, or if the \$500 tax credit will benefit him, and if he is the wealthy? And of course my liberal friends on the other side, many of whom themselves are quite rich indeed, might never have considered the simple fact that rich or not the money belongs to the people who earned it anyway.

H.R. 350, THE MANDATES INFORMATION ACT

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

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for the Mandates Information Act, H.R. 350. H.R. 350 would provide Congress the means of assessing proposed programs and their potential impact on jobs and workers before enacting significant Federal mandates on the private sector.

Over the years, a well-intentioned Congress has imposed its will on American business operators, large and small, requiring them to enforce public laws at private expense.

We have achieved a balanced budget in part because we have ended the era of undisciplined legislators working outside the constraints of common sense budgeting. We must remain accountable to the American people by passing the Mandates Information Act.

This is a common sense way to legislation. If we are going to require private business to enforce our laws, we should at least give them the chance to know how much it will cost them to do our work and allow them to plan accordingly. It is only fair.

TAX D-DAY, A DARK DAY FOR REPUBLICANS AND A DAY TO REJOICE FOR DEMOCRATS

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

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, in just 64 days, the dreaded April 15 will be here.

Well, I should clarify that. April 15 is not a dreaded day at all by some Americans. In fact, April 15 is the single most glorious day of the year for our liberal friends in the Democrat Party. The Democrat Party believes in an activist government and believes that if the government just took a little more money out of your paycheck the politicians will make life better for people.

How truly ironic it is that the party of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson has categorically rejected the vision of those early American heroes who believed in the strength of the common man to manage his own affairs without the interference from Washington, D.C.

It is now the Republican Party that represents the interests of common people, of average middle class families that work hard, play by the rules and who will believe in the right to pursue the American dream without the Federal Government standing in the way.

Sixty-four days until Tax D-day, a dark day for Republicans, a day to rejoice for Democrats.

SOCIAL SECURITY SUMMIT IN THE NINTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF TEXAS

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

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to announce that I will host a Social Security summit in the Ninth District of Texas. Why? Because hundreds of senior citizens and their families have called and written letters to my office concerned about the future of Social Security.

Americans from all walks of life recognize that this sacred contract be-

tween the public and their government must be addressed and must be addressed now. I congratulate the President for having the foresight to set aside the vast majority of our budget surplus for this critical issue.

As we look toward the 21st Century, we cannot afford to risk losing this opportunity to save Social Security by allowing ourselves to become mired in partisan rhetoric or by failing to use creative approaches to problem solving.

It has been said that opportunity only knocks once. Mr. Speaker, Congress must answer the door. We owe that to the American people.

A \$500 PER CHILD TAX CREDIT, NOT SOME BOONDOGGLE FOR THE RICH

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, so often we hear about tax cuts for the rich, and here is an example of one of the taxes that the opponents said was for the rich, and this is a \$400 this year, \$500 next year per child tax credit for families that make under \$110,000 a year. Seventy-eight percent of the families who will benefit from this tax credit have a household income of less than \$75,000 a year.

Take the case of Mr. and Mrs. William Franklin of Brooklyn, Georgia. They just had a new son named Sean. They have to go out and buy a car seat, which the kid will immediately throw up on. They have to go out and buy shoes, which he will immediately lose one of. They have to go out and buy a walker, which he will try to roll down the steps so they will have to put a block in front of that little accordion door. They have to buy a Johnny Jump-Up to develop his legs. They have to go out and buy a blender to smash peas with, or they can pay for the more expensive; just get Gerber to do it for them.

You have to do all of this if you have a child because raising children is very, very expensive. I know. I have four kids. They are wonderful, but it is proper for the government to give a \$500 per child tax credit. It was passed by the Republicans last year. It is not some boondoggle for the rich, as the Democrats would have us believe.

FIRESAFE CIGARETTE ACT

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

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, as many of my colleagues know, last Friday a huge fire broke out in a high-rise apartment in Baltimore, Maryland. Like most fires in the United States, this fire was caused by a carelessly disposed of lighted cigarette.

Mr. Speaker, because of that fire, one woman died and nine people were injured, and the most tragic part of that

is that that fire could have been prevented.

That is right, Mr. Speaker, that fire could have been prevented. Each year, cigarette-related fires kill over 1,000 people, and those are not just the smokers. We are talking about that little baby in the crib upstairs. We are talking about that elderly lady next door or that poor fellow downstairs and, yes, Mr. Speaker, even the firemen who go into the fire to save those people.

On March 1, I will introduce the Firesafe Cigarette Act to require cigarette companies to make cigarettes less likely to burn people's houses down. Mr. Speaker, there are cigarettes on the market that will extinguish after 5 minutes and the tobacco companies should use these.

REDUCE TAXES ON HARD- WORKING AMERICANS

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

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, the question before us is faith. Do we place our total faith in the Federal Government or do we place our faith in the American people?

Not too long ago here in Washington we were faced with huge budget deficits. And because of a responsible Republican Congress, we now are on the path to prosperity because of the hard work of the American people. We were told then we could not cut taxes, and we did. And today we are facing a huge budget surplus here in Washington, and if left alone it will be spent here in Washington. Now we are told again today from those same people, we cannot cut taxes.

Well, let us lay down the line right now. If we believe in the American people, if we believe that this is still the country of hope and opportunity and that anybody, given the right set of incentives and hard work and notions of personal responsibility, can go out there and succeed, let us reduce the taxes on the hard-working American people, let them keep more of their hard-earned money, and let us send the promise back to them. Let us promise them that if we give them the tools to succeed, we believe in them, not the people here in Washington, who all they will do is spend that money and too often unwisely.

NATIONAL DEFENSE IS IN CRISIS

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

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, national defense is in crisis. We are going to be 18,000 sailors short this year in the U.S. Navy. We are going to be 700 pilots short in the Air Force. We are short on basic ammunition in the Army and the Marine Corps. Our equipment is aging.

And we have an inadequate budget. We have a budget which is \$150 billion less on an annual basis than the Reagan budgets of the mid-1980s.

Now, we do not have to go back up to the Reagan budgets because the Cold War is over, but we do have to add an additional \$20 billion this year. The President has only offered \$4 billion of that \$20 billion that the services request.

Now is the time to rebuild national defense and this is the House to do it.

AMERICANS NEED TAX RELIEF

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

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Americans are not taxed too much? Look at how we spend our day.

We get up in the morning, get our first cup of coffee on which we pay a sales tax. Jump in the shower and we pay a water tax. Get in our car to drive to work and pay a fuel tax. At work we pay an income tax and a payroll tax. Drive home to the house on which we pay a property tax. Flip on the lights and pay an electricity tax. Turn on the TV, pay a cable tax. Pick up the telephone, pay a telephone tax. Kiss our spouse good night and pay a marriage penalty tax. And on and on and on until, at the end of our lives, we pay a death tax.

Well, no wonder families and the elderly in this country have such a tough time making ends meet. They need relief, and the Republican plan provides it.

MANDATES INFORMATION ACT OF 1999

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KINGSTON). Pursuant to House Resolution 36 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 350.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 350) to improve congressional deliberation on proposed Federal private sector mandates, and for other purposes, with Mr. BRADY of Texas (Chairman pro tempore) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Thursday, February 4, 1999, all time for general debate had expired.

The amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in the bill shall be considered by sections as an original bill for the purpose of amendment, and pursuant to the rule, each section is considered read.

During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chair may accord pri-

ority in recognition to a Member offering an amendment that he or she has printed in the designated place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Those amendments will be considered read.

The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may postpone a request for a recorded vote on any amendment and may reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the time for voting on any postponed question that immediately follows another vote, provided that the time for voting on the first question shall be a minimum of 15 minutes.

The Clerk will designate section 1.

The text of section 1 is as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Mandates Information Act of 1999".

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Are there any amendments to section 1?

If not, the Clerk will designate section 2.

The text of section 2 is as follows:

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Before acting on proposed private sector mandates, the Congress should carefully consider the effects on consumers, workers, and small businesses.

(2) The Congress has often acted without adequate information concerning the costs of private sector mandates, instead focusing only on the benefits.

(3) The implementation of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 has resulted in increased awareness of intergovernmental mandates without impacting existing environmental, public health, or safety laws or regulations.

(4) The implementation of this Act will enhance the awareness of prospective mandates on the private sector without adversely affecting existing environmental, public health, or safety laws or regulations.

(5) The costs of private sector mandates are often borne in part by consumers, in the form of higher prices and reduced availability of goods and services.

(6) The costs of private sector mandates are often borne in part by workers, in the form of lower wages, reduced benefits, and fewer job opportunities.

(7) The costs of private sector mandates are often borne in part by small businesses, in the form of hiring disincentives and stunted growth.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Are there any amendments to section 2?

If not, the Clerk will designate section 3.

The text of section 3 is as follows:

SEC. 3. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are the following:

(1) To improve the quality of the Congress' deliberation with respect to proposed mandates on the private sector, by—

(A) providing the Congress with more complete information about the effects of such mandates; and

(B) ensuring that the Congress acts on such mandates only after focused deliberation on the effects.

(2) To enhance the ability of the Congress to distinguish between private sector mandates that harm consumers, workers, and small businesses, and mandates that help those groups.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Are there any amendments to section 3?

If not, the Clerk will designate section 4.