

securing the future of Social Security are not mutually exclusive goals. We can do both and still have some money left over to invest in education and strengthen our national defense.

Excessive taxation is making it harder for middle-income families to get ahead. When adding State and local income taxes, or just taxes period to the Federal tax bite, the average American family ends up paying more in taxes than it is paying or spending on housing, food and shelter.

A 10 percent across-the-board income tax cut would save this average family approximately \$1,000 per year. This is money that could be saved for a down payment on a home or used to pay for college tuition or put aside for retirement.

A broad tax cut like the across-the-board tax cut that I am promoting today is best for the American economy as a whole. It will increase economic activity across the widest number of individuals, thus creating jobs, greater financial security, and giving every American a bigger piece of the pie. However Americans choose to spend their own money, I am confident that it would be put to better use by the family who earned it than by the Washington bureaucrat who yearns for it.

As the debate over how to use the budget surplus heats up, the protectors of big government will scream bloody murder about any plan to return some of the windfall to the American people. To them I ask simply, if we cannot cut taxes when the economy is strong, the Federal Government is in the black, and taxes are at an all-time high, when can we?

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support a 10 percent across-the-board tax cut.

MORE CHOICE FOR AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express concern about an article that our friend, George Will, has in Newsweek this week, attacking the administration and Vice President GORE in particular for dealing with livable communities. With all due respect to the journalist, he has it exactly wrong.

There is a national grassroots movement from coast-to-coast where people are now struggling to contend with the forces of growth, sprawl, pollution and congestion to try and have more livable communities. Contrary to the columnist's assertion, it is not about forcing people to do things, it is about giving Americans more choices. Today, too many people have no choice but to be trapped in congestion, soccer moms and dads forced to be out shuttling kids around, forced to burn a gallon of gasoline to buy a gallon of milk.

What the Vice President, what the administration, what Americans across the country who are concerned about

livable communities are promoting is the concept of learning from our past mistakes, organizing ourselves to make sure that our plans for the future will make our communities more livable. It is not, as some would suggest, an attack on the automobile. To the contrary, it is simply not surrendering our communities to the cars.

At a time when the Berlin Wall has fallen, when there are capitalist markets in the former Soviet Union, in China, it is time to perhaps end socialism for the car by subsidizing the automobile more than other transportation choices. Planning makes it possible for people to do more with their lives and their time.

In his article Mr. Will attacks Portland, Oregon, my hometown, as a place where we are trying to crowd people, where we are trying to have zoned-out things like big box development, to somehow force people to do things they do not want to do, calling it some sort of planner's paradise. Well, it is ironic that the city Mr. Will is attacking is held up as one of the best models in the country for working with our citizens to promote liveability, to give people more choices.

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It is a community where we have, in fact, not sprawled as much as other places around the country, but we have actually dramatically increased the housing stock without spreading out to farm and forest land. We have added 42 percent in population since 1979, but we have only increased the developed area 20 percent.

Some of the most attractive housing, the most valuable housing, is to be found in newly redeveloped areas with loft housing, with townhouses. In fact, they are worth more in terms of actual value than the typical single lot subdivision. It is not about crowding people together.

In Portland, like in most other communities, our neighborhoods are less densely populated today than they were 40 years ago when I was growing up. What has happened is because we have unplanned growth, exclusive reliance on the automobile, we have far more people driving and driving more miles, and as a result, it is the cars that people are upset about, not the citizens.

This has resulted from not turning over industrially-zoned land to big box retail, like a COSCO or a Wal-Mart. We have protected it for industrial jobs. Portland has added 180,000 new jobs since 1990. I would suggest that it is hardly a failure, that there is a reason why people come and look at what we have done.

Government has made many mistakes in the last 40 years that have contributed to the deterioration of the quality of life. It is time for us to take a step back, to learn from our mistakes in both government and the private sector, and plan for a better tomorrow. That is what the Vice President, the President, and not just his administration but people around the country are doing with the new livable communities movement.

I strongly urge that people support these initiatives and what they can represent for a more livable future.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS: FAITH FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the subject of Catholic schools, a great gift to this country.

Catholic Schools: Faith for a Brighter Future, that is the theme for the 25th annual celebration of Catholic Schools Week January 31 through February 6, 1999, in the 10th annual National Appreciation Day for Catholic Schools February 3, 1999.

Catholic Schools Week celebrates the important role Catholic elementary and secondary schools across the country play in providing a values-added education for America's young people. Catholic schools are proud of their educational network, emphasizing intellectual, spiritual, moral, physical, and social values in their students.

The National Appreciation Day for Catholic Schools was established to encourage supporters nationwide to showcase the great accomplishments and contributions the more than 8,200 catholic schools nationwide make to our country. Celebrated in communities across the U.S. that have Catholic elementary and secondary schools, this day provides opportunities for State Governors, big city mayors, and small town councils to join in proclaiming Catholic Schools Week in their localities year after year and arrange special commemorative celebrations.

On February 3 this year a delegation of more than 130 Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area Catholic school students, teachers, and parents visited Capitol Hill to meet with congressional leaders and promote Catholic schools. They served as ambassadors for the students enrolled in Catholic schools nationwide.

Students met in the Dirksen Senate Office Building for a briefing by a Senator from Tennessee, and held a rally on the steps of the Capitol. Groups of students visited congressional offices, meeting with Members and staff to acquaint themselves with the mission and accomplishments of Catholic Schools, and to discuss issues of importance to Catholic school students.

As part of their activities, they hand-delivered letters from Catholic school superintendents of schools to their congressional and Senate Members, and provided a background package on Catholic schools to every congressional office. Today we congratulate America's Catholic schools, the students, the

teachers, and especially the parents, who make many sacrifices to provide their children the education offered in Catholic schools. The outstanding contributions of Catholic schools to our Nation are worthy of celebrating, and I offer heartfelt congratulations to all who participate in the work of Catholic education.

At present Catholic school student enrollment is almost 3 million students. Catholic schools welcome all students whose parents wish their children to attend.

Catholic Schools are proud of the diversity of their student body. Minority students, for example, comprise more than 24 percent of total enrollment, and nonCatholic students are approximately 14 percent of the enrollment nationwide.

Congratulations to the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Catholic Conference, the national organizations that sponsored the National Appreciation Day event on Capitol Hill. NCEA is the largest private professional education association in the world, representing more than 200,000 educators serving 7.6 million students at all levels of Catholic education.

The United States Catholic Conference is the national public policy organization of bishops in the United States. Congratulations to Catholic Schools, students, teachers, and parents. You are giving this Nation faith for a brighter future.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE
NAACP ON THE CELEBRATION OF
ITS 90TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend congratulations to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, sometimes known as the NAACP, as it celebrates its 90th anniversary on this Friday.

The NAACP is the oldest, largest, and strongest civil rights organization in the United States. On February 12, 1909, on the 100th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birthday, 60 prominent black and white citizens issued the call for a national conference in New York City to renew the struggle for civil and political liberty.

Participants at the conference agreed to work toward the abolition of forced segregation, promotion of equal education and civil rights under the protection of law, and an end to race violence. In 1911 that organization was incorporated as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Today the NAACP is a network of more than 2,200 branches covering all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Japan, Germany, and its membership exceeds a half million people. Born in response to racial violence, the asso-

ciation's first major campaign was the effort to get the anti-lynching laws on the books in the United States.

In 1919, to awaken the national conscience, the NAACP published an exhaustive review of lynching records. NAACP leaders, at potential risk to their own lives, conducted firsthand investigations of racially motivated violence that were widely publicized. Though bills succeeded in passing through the House of Representatives several times, they were always defeated in the Senate. Nonetheless, NAACP efforts brought an end to the excesses of mob violence through public exposure and the public pressure it mobilized.

The NAACP has always known how to respond to challenges, and is certainly no stranger to struggle. Through political pressure, marches, demonstrations, and effective lobbying, the NAACP has served as an effective voice, as well as a shield for minority Americans. From educational parity to voter registration, housing, and labor, the NAACP has been at the forefront of efforts aimed at securing civil rights and civil liberties. No longer do we see signs that read "white" and "colored." The voters' booth, the schoolhouse door, now swing open for everyone.

It is important for us to all remember how effective the NAACP efforts have been. While much has been accomplished, much more needs to be done. Mr. Speaker, America still needs the NAACP.

I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating the national organization and all its local chapters as they celebrate their 90th anniversary on February 12. I wish them continued success as they continue to focus on the protection of civil rights and civil liberties of all Americans.

THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG FAIRNESS FOR SENIORS ACT OF 1999

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) is recognized for 45 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Prescription Drug Fairness for Seniors Act of 1999. I want to thank my colleagues, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TURNER), and the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), for coming up with this great idea to help correct a tremendous injustice in America today.

Our senior citizens pay over twice as much as citizens in other countries. They pay over twice as much as the preferred customers of the prescription drug manufacturers in this country, and it is simply not fair.

This chart demonstrates the way that our seniors are overcharged and the amount they are overcharged for their prescription medications. They are forced to make a choice between

food and medicine, between paying their rent and having medicine, between having utilities, having heat, and medicine. This is simply not right.

The First Congressional District of Arkansas, that I am so fortunate to represent, contains the most senior citizens of any Congressional District in this country that live only on social security. The cost of prescription medication is a tremendous burden for them. Yet, we allow them to continue to be overcharged by 40 and 50 and 60 and 70 percent.

They are overcharged by the most profitable companies in the world. These companies should be profitable. We are in favor of them being profitable. But that profit should not come at the expense of our senior citizens being forced to choose between food and the medicine it takes to keep them alive. When that happens, it becomes a moral issue. It becomes an issue that this Congress should address.

Our bill, the Prescription Drug Fairness for Seniors Act of 1999, will reduce the cost of prescription medication for our seniors approximately 40 percent. Our seniors should not be at a disadvantage because they are citizens of the United States.

The average prescription price for Canadians is 72 percent less than it is for Americans. For Mexican citizens, it is 103 percent less than it is for Americans. This simply does not make any sense. If the prescription drug manufacturers that sell product in this country can sell it at other countries at much reduced rates, if they can sell it to our Federal Government at much reduced rates, these same prices should be available to our seniors. That is what this bill does.

One company last year raised the price of one of their medications 4,000 percent in one day. The Federal Trade Commission looked at this. They decided it was unfair and they filed a \$120 million recovery claim against this company. This is an outrageous attempt to make a profit.

The Prescription Drug Fairness for Seniors Act of 1999 will reduce those prices, as I have said, by 40 percent to most of our recipients. It is something we should do. It is the fair and right thing to do. It does not cost the Federal Government any money. This will simply make our seniors part of the largest purchasing pool in the world, and it will give them the ability to be dealt with fairly through their own local pharmacies.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill. It is a good bill, and it is what we should do for our seniors.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Ms. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY), for his leadership on this issue, and as well, my colleagues, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. TOM ALLEN), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JIM TURNER),