

committed to the Lake Tahoe Basin for clean-up and conservation efforts. But most importantly, the majority of these dollars were available to State and local agencies of Lake Tahoe, and not a Federal bureaucracy.

The agreement reached at Lake Tahoe is a shining example of concerns of environmentalists, conservationists, and even private property owners are not mutually exclusive. I commend all those involved, and look forward to the second annual Tahoe Summit to report on the positive and cooperative efforts that would truly benefit this gem in the sky.

SUPPORT THE PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Mr. SANDLIN. Madam Speaker, insurance companies, there they go again, attempting to mislead and deceive the American public. Television ads that they are placing all across this country incorrectly state that a Patients' Bill of Rights will make insurance premiums skyrocket.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Madam Speaker, the State of Texas enacted these protections that the insurance companies claim will increase premiums. The Texas experience proves that the insurance companies are dead wrong. One of those protections that is most often cited is the right to sue an HMO if treatment is denied.

Texas enacted a similar provision in 1997. There have been 516 complaints filed, half in favor of the patient, half in favor of the plan. Only three lawsuits have been filed, three lawsuits. That is hardly an explosion in a population of 20 million people.

Texas has some of the lowest premium rates in the entire country, and a study from the Kaiser Family Foundation found that liability accounted for only 3 to 13 cents per person per month in premiums, 3 to 13 cents. Mr. Speaker, the Democrats are working to put the needs of patients first. Let us enact a real Patients' Bill of Rights, not a bill of goods.

THE TAX RELIEF BILL

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, Americans do not want, need, or deserve the highest taxes since World War II. For too long, our tax system has punished the very virtues Americans live by: hard work, marriage, savings, entrepreneurship, and freedom.

Look what happens when we play by the rules. If we get married, the government punishes us with taxes. If we save and invest for our family's future,

we pay taxes on the earnings. If we work hard to earn more, we end up paying what is called an alternative minimum tax, and lose all our family tax credits.

Finally, if we build a successful business and try to leave it to our kids, they will probably have to sell it in order to pay taxes when we die.

We want to end the assault on American values of family, savings, hard work, entrepreneurship, and freedom. It is our money, and we deserve to get it back. Americans do not want or need the President to spend our money on big government.

CONGRESS MUST PASS A MEANINGFUL PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, for the past 2 years the American people have consistently asked for reasonable health care reforms that put those decisions back in the hands of doctors and patients and out of the hands of insurance company bureaucrats. People want to be able to choose their own doctor, to have access to the nearest emergency room, to see a specialist when necessary, to be free from HMO gag rules that prevent doctors from discussing treatment options for them, and to have the right to hold HMOs accountable for their decisions.

This Congress can and should pass these reforms now. The Members of this body who are doctors, whether Democrats or Republicans, almost all agree that these measures will benefit patients, make our health system stronger.

In the past year, thousands of Medicare recipients have been dropped by their HMOs. Millions of Americans have health care without basic coverage protections. We must pass a meaningful Patients' Bill of Rights. It must reflect our values for quality health care in this country. If we do, we can once again make the doctor's office a place for medical decisions.

TAXPAYERS KNOW WHICH PARTY IS CAREFUL WITH THEIR MONEY

(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. Madam Speaker, for 40 years Democrats controlled Congress. For 40 years Democrats expanded government, spent beyond our needs, and called Republicans extremists or mean-spirited any time they tried to limit spending, cut wasteful government programs, and return power back to the State and local level. They have a 40-year track record of being the party for which fiscal discipline was the last thing on their minds.

So please, with all due respect, Democrat allegations that Republicans are being fiscally irresponsible for proposing tax relief in the face of increasing surpluses do not pass the credibility test. As C-Span junkies know, on virtually every amendment, on virtually every bill, Democrats attempt to increase spending and Republicans try to reduce spending.

How is it that increased spending is not a threat to fiscal discipline, but tax cuts are? Just how liberal am I to conclude the Democrat party has become if tax cuts are viewed as dangerous to the economy? One has to wonder just where they learned economics. Taxpayers know which party is careful with their money and which party is not.

WE NEED A TRUE PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Mr. WEYGAND. Madam Speaker, how many times have we heard about a woman being denied to designate her OB-GYN doctor as her primary care physician? How many times have we heard about patients being denied emergency room care because an HMO bureaucrat has said no to the billing? How many times have we heard doctors say, we need more time to stay for this patient, but the HMO has said no?

Sometimes these decisions cause harm, sometimes even death. The Declaration of Independence states that we are endowed with certainly unalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Serving as the foundation for our Bill of Rights, it is now time to call for a true Patients' Bill of Rights, a Patients' Bill of Rights that will provide real access to emergency room care, will strengthen the doctor-patient relationship, and most importantly, most importantly, provide patients with the right to hold insurance companies for wrongdoing, to be able to sue them when they are wrong.

Let us provide a true Patients' Bill of Rights, and declare a Declaration of Independence from the gag rules of HMOs. Please support a true Patients' Bill of Rights.

THE REPUBLICAN AGENDA IS THE BEST AGENDA

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, what is the Republican agenda? The Republican agenda is the best agenda for all Americans. B is for bolstering our national security, E is for education excellence, S is for strengthening retirement security, and T is for tax relief for working Americans.

Republicans have the BEST agenda. It is a positive, forward-looking agenda

that recognizes that our military needs must be given a higher priority in a dangerous world, that our schools need to be improved if our kids are going to enjoy a bright future, that our seniors need to be protected against a looming social security and Medicare crisis, and that Americans who pay the taxes should be given tax relief, not more rhetoric about why Washington needs more money.

Bolstering national security, education excellence, strengthening retirement security, tax relief for working Americans, Republicans have the BEST agenda.

THE PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am continually amazed by the misinformation spread about the Patients' Bill of Rights. I know the businesses in my district believe this Patients' Bill of Rights would allow enrollees to sue their employers for denied benefits, but nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the Patients' Bill of Rights contains explicit provisions stating that employers cannot be sued for decisions made by health insurers.

I hope that the American people this time will see through the smokescreen being thrown up by too many groups who have too much interest in killing this legislation. The more time goes by, we risk losing this opportunity altogether. The powerful forces lined up against this legislation will accept another delay to give them the chance to marshal their forces.

We have plenty of time to pass an irresponsible tax cut, time to prevent the Department of Labor from protecting people against workplace injuries, time to name buildings and court-houses, but evidently we do not have the time to protect the very lives and limbs of our constituents.

After this Friday, this Chamber is out of session for 36 days. How many of those days will we fritter away on sound bites and legislation designed for special groups?

POLITICS AS USUAL WHEN IT COMES TO SPENDING THE MONEY OF THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, it is politics as usual when it comes to spending our money, the money of the people of America.

The Republican approach is three-fold. Number one, the Republican party wants to preserve 100 percent of the social security surplus as compared to 62 percent that the President wants to protect.

Now, we do this, we put aside \$1.9 trillion for social security and Medicare, and the second thing we do is we pay down the debt, \$2 trillion, as seen on this chart. The third thing we do, and only after social security, Medicare, and debt reduction, we return to American people their money for over-payment on taxes.

The President's attitude is somewhat epitomized in this statement: "We could give the surplus all back to you and hope you spend it right." Gee, whiz, people of America, Bill Clinton can spend your money better than you can spend it. Does that not make you feel good?

All I can say is, the people in America must not know how to spend money at all, judging by the responsibility exhibited over at the White House the past 2 years.

Let me say this, this is Americans' money. It ought to go back to them.

UNDER THE REPUBLICAN TAX CUT, WORKING AMERICANS GET THE SHAFT

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, I ran down to this floor when I heard my colleague, the gentleman from California, refer to the Republican tax cut as fair and balanced. I thought, how could such a huge tax cut, aimed almost exclusively at the super wealthy and the giant corporations, be called balanced? And then I understood what he must have meant.

See, under this tax cut, the top 1 percent wealthiest Americans get ten times the tax relief as 100 million Americans, constituting the lower 40 percent of income earners. At the same time, this tax cut provides more tax relief to job-exporting corporations than it provides to over 50 million Americans.

Madam Speaker, that is the balance. Compared to the super wealthy, working Americans get the shaft. Compared to giant corporations, working families get the shaft. That is the only sense in which the Republican tax cut is balanced.

CONGRESS MUST PASS THE PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Mr. HOEFFEL. Madam Speaker, we must pass the Patients' Bill of Rights. Our system of HMOs has run amok.

As evidence, I offer a survey of doctors conducted by one of the newspapers in my district, the Reporter, in Lansdale, Pennsylvania. Most of the doctors responding were not against the original idea of HMOs, they have just said the rules have gone haywire.

Eighty-seven percent of the doctors responding have had conflicts with

HMOs. Fifty-eight percent of those say the conflicts have been serious, and happen frequently. Seventy percent of the doctors say they do not have sufficient control over treatment.

As damning as the numbers are, the doctor's comments say even more. Dr. Ruth Schiller, a Harleysville, Pennsylvania, pediatrician, says that "HMOs are worse in the sense that I cannot make all of the decisions for appropriate care."

Another doctor said, "The American people need to wake up. Their lives are in danger with HMO control. Doctors have to put away their medical books and do what the HMO manual says for their patients."

A third doctor was afraid to sign his survey for fear of HMO retaliation. Something has gone wrong. "HMO" stands for How Much Outrage must the American people put up with? Pass the Patients' Bill of Rights.

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WILSON). Pursuant to House Resolution 263 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. 2606.

□ 1030

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. 2606) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, with Mr. THORNBERRY in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Monday, August 2, 1999, the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (MR. PAUL) had been postponed.

SEQUENTIAL VOTES POSTPONED IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 263, proceedings will now resume on those amendments on which further proceedings were postponed in the following order: The amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO), amendment No. 9 offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL), and a further amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL).

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. TANCREDO

The CHAIRMAN. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the