

SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, the same people who told us again and again and again just 2 years ago that Congress could not cut taxes and balance the budget were wrong. Congress cut taxes, and the budget is actually now in surplus.

Well, the same people now are telling us that we cannot cut taxes and strengthen Social Security at the same time. Well, of course we can.

The same people who are defending the President's budget, which loots the Social Security trust fund to the tune of \$30 billion on new Washington-based social programs and double counts \$2.4 trillion in Social Security, are criticizing the Republican plan to strengthen Social Security, cut taxes and pay down the debt.

Well, the naysayers are wrong. The Republican plan will accomplish three important goals. It will strengthen Social Security, it will refund middle-class taxpayers some of the government overcharge, and it will start to chip away at the national debt, which means lower interest rates and good economic times for people trying to make ends meet.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

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

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, if this Nation sincerely believes that education is the foundation of our democracy, then it is time to act like it. In high-growth areas like the Evergreen School District in Clark County, Washington, the growth rate is too high for the local district to keep up. Evergreen is the fastest growing school district in our State, with a growth rate of 4.5 percent a year; and by 2004 their student enrollment is projected to increase by 26,000 students.

To respond to the number of students enrolling, Evergreen has put up 320 portable classrooms where 20 percent of our school district students are educated. This is not an effective environment in which to teach or to learn. That is why I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the School Construction Act of the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) which will create new tax credits to leverage \$7.2 billion in school construction bonds. Under this bill, the bonds would be allocated according to enrollment growth over the next 10 years.

It is a good bill for our students, it is a good bill for our communities, and it is a good bill for our democracy. I urge my colleagues to support it.

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RICH, MIDDLE CLASS OR POOR—REPUBLICANS STAND FOR TAX CUTS FOR ALL AMERICANS

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, the Republican party stands for saving Social Security; and, yes, we stand for tax cuts, too. We stand for across-the-board tax cuts for all Americans. We stand for the elimination of capital gains taxes because capital investment is the engine of job growth, the key to economic opportunity for all Americans, whether rich or poor.

We stand for the expansion of IRA accounts. We stand for elimination of estate taxes because we think the government should not have two and three whacks at the fruits of a lifetime of work and because we think the government has already done enough to kill the family farm and to kill small businesses.

We stand for elimination of the marriage tax penalties. Right now, a married couple pays higher taxes if they are married than if they are not, and that is just plain wrong.

So let us work together to reduce the tax burden on all Americans whether rich, middle class or poor.

SUPPORT THE SCHOOL RECONSTRUCTION AND MODERNIZATION ACT

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the conditions of elementary and secondary schools in New York City. I wish to bring to light to my colleagues the dire conditions faced by students in New York and across our country.

Many of my colleagues may ask why the Federal Government needs to become involved in school renovation and construction issues which are historically local concerns. The simple answer to my colleagues is because the problem has grown so large that localities or States alone cannot handle it. They simply cannot handle it.

A recent survey by the Division of School Facilities in New York City concluded that in my district alone 19 new schools are needed to alleviate the overcrowding in my districts. Currently, three of the five community school districts in my district, my congressional district, are operating over capacity. The fact is, we are 9,789 seats short, 9,789 seats short. I ask my colleagues to think about that: almost 10,000 students for which the schools simply do not have any room.

Mr. Speaker, that is not the worst problem. Population growth is expected to increase over the next 10 years, leaving us 44,822 seats short.

This is why I support and Congress must pass the Democratic School Reconstruction and Modernization Act.

SAVE OUR STEEL INDUSTRY

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

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, sometimes an industry suffers from foreign competition because a new tool is invented or product quality goes up without a price increase or their government reduces regulation and taxes. But this is not the reason that the U.S. steel industry is suffering. Since 1980 it has modernized, it has streamlined, and it is 240 percent more efficient.

The International Trade Commission announced that foreign companies have indeed dumped hot rolled steel at prices below their own market. That announcement and the suspension agreement with Russia might provide some relief, but a key fact is often missing from the discussion. Some of these same countries have simply switched their dumping to other categories of steel. Russia has played that game since 1997.

The coming weeks and months are very critical to saving these United States jobs. This Congress must act. It must act quickly in order to save American jobs and our steel industry here in the United States of America.

PROVIDING 21ST CENTURY LEARNING INSTITUTIONS FOR OUR CHILDREN

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

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about school modernization. There is absolutely no doubt that our schools are in a state of despair. I have traveled New Mexico and talked to students and teachers in the schools and seen the problems firsthand, from buildings being shut down because of health and safety violations, temporary classrooms put on the campus for 1 year and used for 10 years, and the list could go on and on.

Mr. Speaker, one in three New Mexico schools need repair and need to be refurbished. The cost is staggering: \$2 billion. No one entity can do it.

So what we need, Mr. Speaker, is a partnership of the States, local school boards, the Federal Government, to make sure that we build 21st century learning institutions for our children.

HYPOCRISY OF TRASH

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I read with interest an article in yesterday's Washington Post which some Members of this Congress are upset and demanding legislation to stop other States from shipping garbage into their

States. There is some real irony here. My colleagues will understand my surprise when I read this because these alarmist complainers are some of the very same Members of Congress who want to ship their trash, including nuclear waste, all across this country and into my State.

Mr. Speaker, let me get this straight. They want to stop shipping garbage to their State, but they want to ship their deadly toxic waste into mine. A transportation accident, including banana peels and used paper towels, is certainly not going to be the same as one of the consequences of an accident with nuclear waste.

I yield back this hypocrisy of trash, and I encourage Members to support common sense, fairness and safety, and oppose H.R. 45.

WE MUST MAKE BETTER SCHOOLS AND BETTER EDUCATION A NATIONAL PRIORITY

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

Mr. PHELPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the initiatives to improve education for our children by building and modernizing our schools. As a former teacher and the husband of a teacher, as a former legislator, I know firsthand the burdens and constraints that overcrowded classrooms and antiquated buildings place on our student, teachers and administrators.

Mr. Speaker, when I taught, I had so many students it was impossible to foster the proper learning and mentoring relationships that are necessary to provide quality education. In my district today, schools are struggling just to provide space. There are deplorable conditions. One school in any district does not have proper air conditioning, even sometimes no heat. One particular broom closet was vacated to provide a small library for our elementary students. One school in my district had to go to a local prison track for their track team to utilize for their team.

Mr. Speaker, these are unacceptable conditions today in which we seek to prepare our students for tomorrow and for our future. We have a great opportunity in this Congress to make these schools a national priority.

CONGRESS MUST UPHOLD THE DELICATE BALANCE OF THREE SEPARATE BUT EQUAL BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

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

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, this Congress has every legitimate reason to be deeply concerned about the President's barrage of, count them, 280 Executive Orders. Congressional authority is clearly at risk. Nowhere is it written that the President has any authority to issue Executive Orders. Our

Founding Fathers reserved the responsibility of spending taxpayers' money to the people's representatives.

Mr. Speaker, the delicate balance of the three separate, but equal, branches of government is at stake. We cannot allow the President to issue Executive Orders that require the expenditure of Federal funds unless those funds are appropriated by Congress.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, I introduced H. Con. Res. 30 which reasserts the role and responsibility of Congress to enact the laws and appropriate Federal dollars. It seeks to curb the infringement of executive power on legislative authority. Furthermore, H. Con. Res. 30 will clarify any confusion regarding Executive Orders by emphasizing Congressional authority granted under Article 1, Section 8, of the Constitution.

Please join me in cosponsoring this bipartisan resolution.

PRESERVING SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE AND PAYING DOWN THE NATIONAL DEBT

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

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, the Congress this year will undertake the most sweeping domestic legislation probably in 40 or 50 years and certainly, in the case of Social Security, the most sweeping changes since Social Security was created in 1935. So I think there ought to be some basic premises here, particularly as we look at, of all things, a budget surplus, something no one ever expected to see.

First, take 62 percent of that surplus and invest it in Social Security and in preserving Social Security. Preserve it for the 400,000 West Virginians that depend upon it.

Second, take 15 percent of that budget surplus, totaling 77 percent now, and save Medicare, for which 300,000 West Virginians depend upon for their basic health care, those over 65 and those who are disabled.

Third, take that surplus and pay down the national debt.

Mr. Speaker, now this is a program that America can rally behind: 62 percent for Social Security to preserve it, 17 percent to preserve Medicare and, finally, paying down the national debt. Let us get moving.

HAITI: A CLIMATE OF INSTABILITY

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week Haitian Senator Toussaint was gunned down in front of his home in a gruesome, politically-motivated murder. Toussaint had been a member of the OPL, the political party that has controlled parliament in Haiti and is the opposition party for current Presi-

dent Preval and former President Aristide, and it is no coincidence that the loss of Senator Toussaint also means the loss of OPL's majority status in the Haitian Senate.

Mr. Speaker, it is also no coincidence that in Haiti those who are targeted for surveillance, intimidation and even worse are Haitian and American individuals who are working in support of the rule of law; free, fair elections; and economic improvement in that impoverished country.

The United Nations has called attention to the crises, noting there is increased polarization in the country and new risk to constitutional government, but there has been precious little word out of the Clinton administration.

Mr. Speaker, the crown jewel of their foreign policy is badly tarnished, and we need a new approach to Haiti's failed democracy. We are filing such legislation today, and I urge Members to read it and support it.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND MODERNIZATION

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the Democratic proposal on education and specifically the modernization of our schools.

Improving education in America requires all levels of government to pull their load. Today, local and State school systems are working very hard to improve education, but there is a Federal role. We ought to be providing assistance to local school districts who are trying to modernize their schools.

This problem takes on many faces. Perhaps the most obvious one is the face of temporary buildings in front of school systems. We have lots of temporary buildings that were supposed to be there for 1 year. They are now there for 10 and 15 years, and they are proliferating. They are growing these little pods. It is almost like Monopoly to see these little toy schoolrooms being built.

We need to address that problem. We have systems that have major ventilation problems and major heating system problems and major air conditioning problems and leaking roofs, and we need to address that problem as well. And we have school systems that lack modern technology. Over half the schools in this country are not wired to assume the technology that exists today.

We need to modernize our schools. We need the Democratic plan.

DEMOCRATIC AGENDA CO-OPTED FROM THE REPUBLICANS

(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, as my colleagues know, yesterday the Democrats had a little love fest over in the