

sunset the Federal Tax Code and allow Congress to debate a replacement. I am still hopeful the Senate will do the right thing and take up that bill. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that this is an issue that, if we hope to make serious progress, we must have a serious study. A serious and comprehensive report to Congress and the President will allow us to move forward on this issue with some foundation.

The Tax Code has become so intrusive, it invades the daily decisions of families and businesses. I know this from my own experience in starting and running a small business, as well as from raising a family. As Americans, I know we can do better.

There is no question that fundamental tax reform is desperately needed. The Federal Tax Code is 7 million words long, a patchwork maze of complexity and confusion. It is intrusive, invasive, and overly complex—as my constituents continually remind me.

The majority of Americans now turn to tax professionals to prepare their tax forms. This is hard to believe, but it is true. Many have no choice—they simply do not understand all the tricks and traps. Unfortunately, many of these same tax professionals are calling for tax reform and simplification as well. I have spoken with accountants and tax professionals from my district who have told me of their struggles and uncertainty.

This is not just my district. In 1998, Money Magazine asked 46 tax professionals to calculate a hypothetical family's tax responsibilities. Not one got the correct answer, and no two even got the same answer. When tax professionals do not understand the Federal Tax Code, what about American families?

There are exemptions you may never know you qualified for, and deductions you forgot to take. There are different rates, and different dates by which you need to file different forms to qualify for those rates. There are ways in which money must be moved through a complex series of traps to avoid paying maximum taxes, and there are mine fields of forms you may never have known existed, which you needed to file last week to avoid the fine you just received. And there are people who make their living mapping out the maze and guiding others through this code. I do not fault these people—it is a good living, and they are only dealing with something that we in Congress created. But is this the best we can do? Is this in keeping with a government of the people, by the people, for the people?

The Internal Revenue Service, which is generally made up of honorable men and women, has been given the task of managing this monster. It takes 136,000 people to administer our federal tax laws. The FBI employs less than 30,000—and they combat terrorism.

Since 1986, there have been over 5400 modifications to the Tax Code—and it is still not fixed.

We must return fairness and simplicity to our federal tax policy. I recognize this will not be an easy task. I know that some are comfortable with the way things are, but I believe it is the right thing to do.

I believe we are most secure when we are most free, and the complexity and confusion of the federal tax code hinders our freedom. I am convinced that we can do better.

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. When I came to Congress, I came with a dream of increasing freedom for

people. In this, I continue to dream of a world in which Americans live under a tax code that is simple and fair, a code that makes sense. To get there, it takes courage. To get there, we must take the first step.

I invite my colleagues to cosponsor the Portman/DeMint tax reform commission bill and help us move forward on this issue in a responsible way. We can get a handle on this issue, and get a foothold to move forward with fundamental tax reform. This is what the American people have entrusted us to do, and I ask for your help in securing the future for our country.

KASHMIRI LEADER RAISES AUTONOMY ISSUE—OTHER STATE LEADERS FOLLOW HIS LEAD

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the Chief Minister of Kashmir, Farooq Abdullah, recently called for greater autonomy for the state of Kashmir. However, Abdullah is closely allied with India's ruling BJP, and the BJP government firmly rejected the demand. Other state leaders like Gurcharan Singh Tohra and Simrangid Singh Mann asked Chief Badal to pass a similar measure in the Punjab Assembly.

Under India's constitution, Kashmir was supposed to have a special status, but India has systematically chipped away at it. How would Chief Minister Abdullah make sure that they do not do so under his autonomy plan? The Indian government has imposed President's Rule on Punjab nine times. How would Punjabi leaders ensure that it would not happen again if Punjab has autonomy?

When India forcibly and illegally occupied Kashmir, they promised that there would be a plebiscite on Kashmir's status. That promise has not been kept. The Sikhs in Punjab were promised "the glow of freedom" in Punjab. That promise, too, has been broken. India proclaims its democratic principles loudly, but fails to live up to them when the time comes.

Mr. Speaker, the book *The Politics of Genocide* by Inderjit Singh Jaijee reports that the Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, over 70,000 Kashmiri Muslims, more than 200,000 Christians in Nagaland, and thousands of others. According to Amnesty International, thousands of innocent civilians are being held as political prisoners. Christmas of 1998 unleashed a wave of violence against Christians that has resulted in church burnings and bombings, the murders of priests and missionaries, and other atrocities. Just recently, two extensive, independent studies concluded that the Indian government killed 35 Sikhs in Chithi Singhpora. Amnesty International has also said that India is responsible. How is autonomy going to prevent these things from happening?

America should support self-determination for all the peoples and nations of South Asia. We should act against the atrocities by cutting off American aid against India until basic human rights are enjoyed by all people within its borders. We should declare India a terrorist nation. And we should declare our support for self-determination in South Asia by calling for

a free and fair plebiscite on the question of independence. Not autonomy, but independence. That is the only solution, the only way to bring true freedom to all the peoples and nations of South Asia. If India is truly a democracy, why can't it allow the people of Kashmir to have the plebiscite fifty-two years ago? Why can't it allow the people of Khalistan, Nagaland, and the other nations seeking their freedom to vote on their status the democratic way? Is that too much to ask of democracy?

IN RECOGNITION OF OFFICER MOSES HART, UPON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE FORCE

HON. ALBERT RUSSELL WYNN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent and one of Capitol Hill's finest, Officer Moses Hart. Officer Hart was appointed to the United States Capitol Police Force on October 15, 1973. He will be retiring on July 31, 2000, after almost 27 years of distinguished service. He has spent his entire career assigned to the House Division of the Capitol Police. For the past 10 years, he has been assigned to the Ford House Office Building. Over these years, Moses has made a tremendous difference in the lives of Members of the House, Congressional staff, and visitors from throughout the world.

I wish him well in his retirement and hope he will take the time to enjoy fishing, one of his favorite hobbies. In addition, I am sure he will devote time to his number one love, barbering. Moses has been a licensed barber for more than 30 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in extending our sincerest appreciation and best wishes to Moses Hart upon his retirement for the United States Capitol Police Force.

NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD FREEDOM CENTER ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BARON P. HILL

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2000

Mr. HILL of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2919, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Act. As the Representative of a Southern Indiana district that housed many "stops" on the Underground Railroad, I am a co-sponsor of this legislation to promote preservation and public awareness of the Underground Railroad and those who helped African American slaves escape to freedom in the North.

As we all know, the Underground Railroad was an informal system of transporting runaway slaves to freedom in the North and Canada. The "stations" of the Railroad were homes of slavery's staunchest opponents, and the "conductors" took the fugitives at night to the next station along the secret routes. The brave individuals who took these runaway

slaves into their homes, fed them, hid them from authorities, and transported them to the next stop up the road did so at high risk, as those who aided fugitives were prosecuted, especially after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.

I am proud to say that Southern Indiana played a key role in the Underground Railroad, one of the most powerful and sustained multiracial human rights movements in world history. The Ohio River, which separates Kentucky and Indiana, represented the border between slavery in the South and freedom in the North. There were twelve major crossing points for runaway slaves along the Ohio River, three of which were in my Congressional district. Once the slaves crossed the Ohio River, they were not only in free territory, Indiana, but they had placed that wide river between themselves and their pursuers.

In Indiana, fugitives could find refuge at Bill Crawford's farm near the town of Corydon. Conductors transported fugitives from the mouth of Indian Creek in Corydon across Jackson County or Jennings County on their way towards Ohio. Those who took a different route over the Ohio River found refuge in Jeffersonville and Rising Sun. John B. Todd's house in Madison, the site of some of the busiest Underground Railroad activity in the state, was a well-known safe haven for escapees. There were an estimated 600 to 800 successful escapees through Kentucky and Indiana each year due to these brave efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I salute both the Hoosiers who helped the fugitive slaves through the Underground Railroad and the slaves whose love for freedom motivated them to risk their lives by escaping to the North. The Freedom Center in Cincinnati, Ohio, will facilitate a greater understanding of our nation's history and honor those who risked their own freedom to stand by their conviction that no person should be slave to another.

A TRIBUTE TO THE 2000 "SPIRIT OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARD" WINNERS

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the participants of my 2000 Spirit of Achievement Award program. In 1982, when the current citizens of the 3rd District of Illinois elected me to represent them in the United States Congress, I introduced this very successful program. Since then, every middle school in the 23rd Ward of Chicago annually selects a graduating 8th grade boy and girl who they feel represents overall outstanding academic achievement, community service and extracurricular activities. Today, it gives me great pleasure to recognize the hard work of 28 young achievers and future leaders from the 23rd Ward of Chicago.

St. Jane De Chantal School: Nora Krause and Christopher Paluch; Our Lady of Snows School: Amanda Hartman and Jeffrey Mikula; St. Camillus School: Amanda Kurmpel and Kevin Jasionowski; St. Bruno School: David Szwajnos; St. Rene Elementary School: Anthony Garcia and Catherine O'Connell; St.

Daniel the Prophet School: Deanna Maida and Paul Bruton; and St. Richards School: Monika Dlugopolski and Christopher Dyrdak

Gloria Dei School: Faith Krasowski and Jeremiah Jurevis; Hale Elementary School: Emily Fisher and Xavier Hernandez; Peck Elementary School: Maribel Pantoja and Anthony Naranjo; Dore Elementary School: Robert Bradel and Jennifer Collins; Kinzie Elementary School: Victoria Okresik and Patrick Forbes; Byrne Elementary School: Jennifer Turner and Ryan Nabor; and Twain Elementary School: Sebastian Gawenda.

TAKE YOUR KIDS TO VOTE DAY

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce a piece of legislation that will designate November 7, 2000 as National Take Your Kids to Vote Day.

Since 1972, voter participation in national elections has dropped dramatically. In 1972, nearly two-thirds of eligible adults cast their ballots. In 1996, the last Presidential election, less than half of all eligible voters (43 percent) exercised their right to vote. Even more disturbing, however, is the drop-off in voter participation rates among younger adults, ages 18–24. Since the 1972 election there has been nearly a 20-percentage point decline, with only 32 percent going to the polls in 1996.

If we are going to turn this trend around, we have to start with our children. Parents need to talk to their children about the importance of voting. In fact, parents, if they have the opportunity, should take their children to the polls on Election Day.

Studies indicate that young people whose parents vote in every election are twice as likely to vote as those whose parents vote infrequently or not at all. And it's even more important for parents to talk to their children about the value of voting and democracy. Children whose parents talk to them about government and politics are far more likely to vote when they become adults. Kids Voting USA, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that has been working to involve youth in the election process for nearly a decade now says that "Taking your child to the polls is one of the most important things you can do as a citizen and parent."

This is something that all of us—Republicans, Democrats, and Independents—should agree upon. Democracy is too important to waste. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and help make voting a family tradition.

SANTA ROSA AND SAN JACINTO MOUNTAINS NATIONAL MONUMENT ACT OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. MARY BONO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mrs. BONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my legislation, H.R. 3676, the

Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Act.

Congress has an opportunity to enact legislation which was originated by the constituents of California's 44th Congressional District. When these residents came to see me and suggested that I introduce legislation to designate our local mountains a National Monument, I decided it was an idea worth pursuing.

For years, my family has enjoyed these scenic wonders and recreational opportunities that are abundant in this remarkable range. I have often hiked the canyons and hills above our home in Palm Springs, sharing with my children, Chianna and Chesare, the beauty of an ecosystem that continues to thrive despite its close proximity to a highly urbanized community. I have developed a profound respect for the people who, over the past century, have served as stewards of these lands. They have done a remarkable job in balancing the preservation of these mountains with the inevitable development that has occurred in Southern California.

It is appropriate that we also recall the original caretakers of this land, the Cahuilla people. For centuries, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians made the canyons and hills above Palm Springs their home. And the Cahuilla people roamed throughout the desert and mountains of this entire region living in harmony with this unique environment. Their culture and heritage is an integral part of the history of this region. And even today, the Indian Canyons near Palm Springs offer a welcome respite from the hectic pace of the urban areas of the Coachella Valley.

One of the tangible benefits that will be derived from this Monument designation is the preservation of tribal lands and historic artifacts. The Agua Caliente Tribe has been a partner in this process from the start, and I want to thank the Tribal Council and all the Cahuilla people for their support of this legislation.

In crafting this bill, I was confronted with a challenge to balance traditional uses and private property rights that the people of the region enjoy with the need to preserve these mountain vistas.

The intention of H.R. 3676 is not to diminish the decisionmaking authority of Local Government (City, County, Water District, School District, etc.) over land use decisions on private property located next to or inside the boundary of the proposed Santa Rosa and San Jacinto National Monument.

The bill provides that "nothing in the legislation shall be construed as affecting any private property rights within the boundaries of the National Monument". Therefore, if a local City or County has a General Plan designation on property within the Monument boundary, for urban land uses such as hotel, resort, golf course or residential uses, then the legislative intent of Local Government shall not be changed, modified or impeded solely by this Federal Law.

H.R. 3676 has eliminated the concept of buffer zones or protective perimeters around the boundary of the proposed National Monument. This elimination of buffer zones is designed to protect private lands located both on the outside and inside of Monument boundaries. The intent is to protect private land nearby and within the boundary from any form of Federal Monument regulation by this Congress or the Federal Administration. The right