

My sixth grade teacher at St. Catharine's, Parma Samad, Miss Fierro at the time, was simply the best. Over her career, she taught in both the Catholic and public schools.

Madam Speaker, our entire community has benefited from her selfless dedication to her students. And she will be long remembered by those whose lives she touched over her 39-year teaching career.

Madam Speaker, I know that I am joined by many in Cincinnati who knew and admired Parma Samad when I offer my sincere condolences to Parma's husband, Ron, to her parents, Cosmo and Agnese Fierro, and to all her family. Parma will be greatly missed.

There is no question in my mind that she is looking down on us right now from a better place, and that she is smiling.

DISAPPOINTMENT WITH LACK OF COOPERATION

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, I was disappointed to read last week a Roll Call story entitled "Democrats Feel Cocky After Big Speech." It said basically that House Democrats feel it is going to be "their way or the highway going into November."

When Mr. HASTERT became Speaker a year ago, he gave a speech in the House that reached out to our Democratic colleagues offering to meet them halfway, and that he expected them to meet us halfway. Now the Democrat leadership seems determined that there will be no legislative progress this year, preferring to sit idly by. The Speaker said, "Stalemate is not an option. Solutions are."

The American people want us to pay down our debt, they want us to give relief from the marriage tax penalty, to ban the raid on Social Security, to renew inner cities and to provide seniors with affordable prescription drugs.

Madam Speaker, I hope the President will reject the foot-dragging tactics of the House Democrats and work with us. I am disappointed they do not want to work, by their own admission, in behalf of a productive agenda.

TIME TO END MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

(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, tomorrow the House is going to vote to end the marriage penalty. Right now married couples pay more in taxes than two single taxpayers living together. That is not right. It is just not right.

Washington must stop penalizing the cornerstone of our society, the Amer-

ican family. We should encourage marriage, not penalize it. We are restoring family, children, and the American dream.

Last year President Clinton and his Democrat allies labeled marriage penalty relief as risky, and the President vetoed it. This year the Democrats are encouraging him to veto it again.

In my district alone, this bill will help end the marriage penalty for over 150,000 Americans. The President and his Democrat friends should stop playing election-year politics.

Mr. President, it is time for you to help us help American families.

VIRGINIA LEADERSHIP DOES NOT GET IT

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, yesterday the Virginia legislature just said no to the citizens' efforts to try and control the problems of livability in their community. It is sad that the new leadership in Virginia just does not get it.

Smart growth is good for the economy. It helps declining and distressed areas, and it does not force the Hobson's choice of dumb growth. But the State of Virginia refuses to deal meaningfully with the transportation and finance problems on a State level and at the same time, refuses to give local governments tools to handle it themselves.

I hope that the citizens of Virginia, as I hope that citizens around the country, will hold each elected official responsible on all levels for their efforts to give the tools to make sure that our communities are more livable so our citizens can be healthy, economically secure and safe.

SUPPORT THE LEAP ACT

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

Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise as a sponsor of H.R. 3429, the LEAP Act. We all agree that immigrants should come to this country legally, and LEAP will remove the magnet that brings undocumented workers to the country in the first place, jobs.

LEAP will improve current employment verification programs so that businesses can make sure that employees are legally authorized to work in this country. Right now, employers are in a catch-22 situation. Under the law, they cannot hire illegal immigrants; but they do not have all of the tools necessary to hire legal workers.

The bill is not anti-immigration. I certainly recognize the many benefits that legal immigrants bring to this country. Most people who come across the border without proper documenta-

tion only want to improve their lives and the lives of their families. But we must remember that there are a lot of people who also want to come to America and must wait years, perhaps, to come legally. It is not fair to them if we do not enforce the law.

Madam Speaker, I hope all of my colleagues will support this common sense approach to discourage illegal immigration.

KEEP SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE SOLVENT

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

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, early this morning the Steve Forbes campaign called me and said that Steve Forbes' wife flew into Michigan late last night; and sometime between 12 p.m. and 5 a.m. this morning, the family made its decision that he would be withdrawing from the presidential race.

As one of the Michigan cochairmen for Steve Forbes, I was disappointed, because what Steve Forbes brought to the podium, to public discussion, was detailed plans on where this country goes, where we go, in terms of fixing Social Security, where we go in terms of fixing Medicare, both insolvent.

In my 5-minute speech today under Special Orders, I will be talking about what could happen on paying down the debt, but probably that it is not going to happen, and that what is really going to happen is a tremendous burden on our kids and our grandkids if we do not wake up, if we do not pay attention, if we do not come out with some of the solutions to make sure that we keep these important entitlement programs solvent.

A FAIR MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam Speaker, tomorrow the Republican majority starts on their march to trying once again to pass over a \$1 trillion tax cut, the same tax cut that Governor Bush offers his candidacy for President. They begin, instead of offering it as a whole, by dividing it up. They will start with the marriage tax penalty.

The fact of the matter is we Democrats also want to end, not just adjust, we want to end the marriage tax penalty; but we want to do it in ways that not only value the institution of marriage, we want to do it in ways that value other issues, such as extending the life of Social Security and Medicare, the values of our seniors, and such as improving the quality of education for children, the value that we hold of our children.

This Republican bill is too expensive than it needs to be. It makes no attempt to pay for itself; and lastly,

many middle-income families with children will not get any tax relief because the bill promises a lot more than it provides because they ignore the minimum tax when writing their bill.

In fact, we need to have values that, yes, take care of the marriage tax penalty and reward marriage, but, at the same time, take care of our seniors, take care of our children and extend the life of Social Security and Medicare.

SAN RAFAEL LEGACY AND NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA ACT

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

Mr. CANNON. Madam Speaker, today I will introduce the San Rafael Western Legacy and National Conservation Area Act. This legislation sets up a process to preserve the remarkable area famous for such outlaws as Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.

Over the last 3 years, people in Emery County, Utah, the off-road vehicle users and sportsmen came together with county officials, landowners and the Bureau of Land Management to approve the plan I am introducing today.

This bill would place 2.8 million acres into a legacy district to be managed for the conservation of the region's historical and cultural resources. This bill will allow management that will guarantee the preservation of the dramatic canyons, wildlife and historic sites of the San Rafael Swell.

Additionally, this bill will set aside about 1 million acres as a National Conservation Area, withdrawn from future mining claims and providing increased protection for primitive and semi-primitive areas. The Secretary of Interior, in conjunction with an advisory council, will develop a management plan for the National Conservation Area that will provide for various land uses and the preservation of these amazing natural resources for future generations.

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ELIMINATING THE MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

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

Mr. WELLER. Madam Speaker, over the last 3 years, many of us have asked a pretty fundamental and basic question, and that is, is it right, is it fair that under our Tax Code, 25 million married, working couples pay higher taxes just because they are married. In fact, the 25 million married working couples pay an average of \$1,400 more in higher taxes just because they are married; and 1.1 million of those American working couples live in Illinois, married couples who pay higher taxes just because they are married.

I have with me a photo of Shad and Michelle Hallihan. They are an average couple suffering the marriage tax penalty, two public schoolteachers in Illinois. Michelle points out the marriage tax penalty for her would buy 3,000 diapers for their newborn child. It is real money for real people.

Tomorrow the House is going to vote on a bipartisan proposal. Madam Speaker, 241 Members of the House are now cosponsoring H.R. 6, legislation which will essentially wipe out the marriage tax penalty for the majority of those who suffer from it. Let us set aside partisanship, let us work together to eliminate the marriage tax penalty.

Valentine's Day is next week. What better gift could this Congress give 25 million married, working couples than passage of this legislation tomorrow to wipe out the marriage tax penalty for couples like Michelle and Shad Hallihan.

HOROWITZ SUDAN RESOLUTION

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

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, today I will introduce a resolution which commends Michael Horowitz for the public statement he made last week by protesting the lack of action that the administration has taken in actively addressing the situation in Sudan. Mr. Horowitz also used this forum in hopes of raising the awareness of the American people to the plight of the Sudanese at the hands of the northern totalitarian regime in Khartoum.

Madam Speaker, the civil war in Sudan has been raging now for over 17 years with close to 2 million dead. The United States should be doing all it can to support the intergovernmental authority for development, or IGAD process, in hopes of bringing this horrific chapter in the lives of the Sudanese to a close. Until peace is finally reached, we should also be supporting those in the south who are fighting to keep the iron, long-reaching fist of the northern regime from crushing their beliefs and way of life.

Furthermore the administration should address and work in conjunction with others who are leading a campaign against companies such as Talisman Energy and others who are using American capital to support their oil operations in Sudan at the detriment of the southern population. Mr. Horowitz's act of civil disobedience was done in hopes of bringing light to the inaction and bland policies of our government towards Sudan, for it is time we truly addressed this regime and the policies of terrorism and destruction it brings to the table with it.

RESPONSIBLE TAX PLAN FOR AMERICANS

(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, American families deserve a responsible plan for the surplus that strengthens Social Security and Medicare, that pays down the national debt, and that gives tax cuts that directly benefit the middle class. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership seems determined to pass an irresponsible tax cut before it develops a plan for the long term. Last year they tried to pass a trillion dollar tax bill that would have benefited the richest in our country. This year, they are trying to pass that package piece by piece.

Madam Speaker, we need to eliminate the marriage penalty; and I support a proposal to do that. But this Republican scheme is irresponsible. The bill helps working families, middle class families very little, yet it gives huge tax breaks to the wealthiest couples. Millions of American families with children will get absolutely no relief at all. We must instead support a Democratic alternative which will both alleviate the marriage penalty and strengthen Social Security and Medicare while paying down the national debt.

We need the surplus to be used in a responsible way that strengthens our country, not for another political gimmick, that the American people have already heard and have already rejected.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. SCARBOROUGH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr.