

the big donors to derail our elections takes power away from the voters and threatens our democracy itself. Cleaning up our campaigns should be an issue we all support. Supporters of clean campaigns in both parties have stepped up to the plate to bring this important issue to a vote, and the time has come to give the American people the victory they deserve by passing the Shays-Meehan bipartisan reform bill.

Good government watchdog groups have consistently recognized my home state of Minnesota as having some of the strongest clean campaign laws in the country. I am proud of those laws, which have increased the power of smaller donors, allowed the average citizen to have a prominent voice, reduced the influence of wealthy special interests, and restored confidence in the political process. I now urge my fellow representatives to implement tough campaign reform measures for federal elections.

The key provision in the Shays-Meehan proposal is a ban on "soft money"—the unregulated, unlimited donations from individuals and political action committees that are often used to run shady and misleading campaign commercials before an election. Eliminating the corrupting influence of soft money is the most basic reform we can make to begin cleaning up our election system and the Shays-Meehan bill is the only measure on the table today that addresses this pervasive problem.

Our nation owes a debt to the authors of this legislation—Representatives SHAYS and MEEHAN and Senators MCCAIN and FEINGOLD—for their tireless commitment to reform. I believe a basic turning point in this effort occurred during last year's presidential election when the public rallied around JOHN MCCAIN's message of reform. The public sent a strong message to the political establishment: they are tired of elected representatives who perpetuate a system that gives the advantage to large wealthy special interests. They are tired of politicians who resort to obscure parliamentary procedures to deny the American people the opportunity to have an honest debate on reform. They are tired of the current system and the overwhelming advantage that it gives to the incumbents. Now is our chance to enact true reform that the American people are demanding, a reform that has the potential to restore a new generation's faith in the political process.

There has been a lot of focus from the political punditry about which political party will benefit from the passage of various reform proposals. This is the wrong approach to take when debating campaign reform proposals. The approach should be on passing legislation that benefits the American people. Our constituents have sent us a strong message that the system is broken. It is time we hear them and pass strong campaign finance reform legislation. It is the right thing to do. I urge the passage of the Shays-Meehan bipartisan campaign reform bill.

BIPARTISAN CAMPAIGN REFORM ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2002

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2356) to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to provide bipartisan campaign reform:

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, Minnesotans wanted real campaign finance reform last summer before the House's debate was unfortunately cut short, and they still want it today. We must begin cleaning up our campaign finance system and the Shays-Meehan bipartisan campaign finance reform bill is a good place to start.

We all have the right to have our voices heard when we engage in the political process. Right now millions of the unregulated dollars flood our campaigns and continue to drown out the concerns of working families in Minnesota and all America. Their opinions are being lost in the flood of big campaign checks from special interests.

Mr. Chairman, we should be encouraging political participation, not discouraging it. I've heard from too many people in my district that our campaign finance system is broken. It's now time this unbalanced system be fixed.

Shays-Meehan will prohibit national parties, officeholders and candidates from raising unregulated soft money for political parties at all levels. State and local parties can continue with voter registration and get-out-the-vote activities. This bill would also require sham issue ads be treated like all campaign ads right before an election—to be paid for with regulated money that requires full disclosure.

With Minnesota's unique system of public financing and contribution rebates, we have shown the nation how to run clean elections. Where else could the Republican party control the House of Representatives, the Democratic party control the Senate and there be an Independent in the Governor's mansion? Minnesotans are used to campaigns that are open, honest and competitive and it shows in voter turnouts that lead the nation year after year.

Campaign finance reform is critical, but we must also learn to control how much is spent on elections as well. I've introduced legislation that model's Minnesota's campaign finance system and will continue to work hard to take the next step in campaign finance reform limiting the hundreds of millions of dollars that are spent on our elections.

It is not a mistake that we are considering real campaign finance reform today. The discharge petition I signed last year finally forced the Republican leadership of the House to recognize that a majority of Americans had finally been joined by a majority of this House in the fight for real campaign finance reform. We must begin now.

Shays-Meehan will help to clean up our campaign finance system. By eliminating soft money, America's confidence in our political system will be restored.

HAPPY 109TH BIRTHDAY TO MAEBELLE PLANT

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2002

Mr. JEFF MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer a very happy birthday to Maebelle Plant who turns 109 years old on February 25, 2002.

Now living in her third century, Granny Plant has seen twenty presidents take the oath of office, experienced two World Wars, the Great Depression, and witnessed America's growth into the world's superpower. She came to Florida in a covered wagon and watched our men walk on the moon.

Granny Plant is our community's matriarch and the embodiment of our values. By helping others in need, she has had an immense effect on our area. Her efforts to feed hungry children is worthy of the highest acclamation. Her work-hard-attitude, unwavering faith in God and countless deeds of good, serve as an inspiration for our own civic responsibilities.

Granny Plant is adored by a family of six living children, 54 great grandchildren, 2 greatgreat grandchildren and a grateful community.

On behalf of the United States Congress, I would like to wish this inspirational woman the happiest of birthdays and many more to come. I offer my sincere thanks for all she has done. Maybe we can all live such a complete life if we live by her words, "Other's is my motto. I love people."

COMMENDING THE HONORABLE DIRECTOR GENERAL VICTOR C.Y. TSENG ON ASSUMING THE POSITION OF REPRESENTATIVE OF THE TAIPEI MISSION IN SWEDEN

HON. DOUG OSE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2002

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, the Republic of China on Taiwan has been a true friend and partner of the United States of America.

During the past three years, the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in San Francisco has operated successfully under the guidance of the highly respected Director General Victor C.Y. Tseng.

Victor C.Y. Tseng assumed the position of Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in San Francisco on July 1, 1998, and quickly became a good friend of the United States of America, strengthening the bond that has grown with each passing day.

On February 9, 2002, a farewell reception was held in Sacramento honoring Director General Victor C.Y. Tseng for his dedication, cooperation and exceptional leadership.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation for the years of outstanding effort as the Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in San Francisco and offer my best wishes and good luck to Victor C.Y. Tseng on assuming the position of Representative of the Taipei Mission in Sweden.

Director General Victor C.Y. Tseng is hereby commended for his outstanding and successful tenure as Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in San Francisco.

WE THE PEOPLE . . . THE CITIZEN
AND THE CONSTITUTION

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2002

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, on May 4–6, 2002, more than 1200 students from across the United States will visit Washington, D.C. to compete in the national finals of the We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution program, the most extensive educational program in the country developed specifically to educate young people about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

I am proud to announce that the class from Duluth Central High School from Duluth will represent the state of Minnesota in this national event. These young scholars have worked diligently to reach the national finals and through their experience have gained a deep knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles and values of our constitutional democracy.

The three-day national competition is modeled after hearings in the United States Congress. The hearings consist of oral presentations by high school students before a panel of adult judges on constitutional topics. The students' testimony is followed by a period of questioning by the judges who probe their depth of understanding and ability to apply their constitutional knowledge.

Administered by the Center for Civic Education, the We the People . . . program has provided curricular materials at upper elementary, middle, and high school levels for more than 26.5 million students nationwide. The program provides students with a working knowledge of our Constitution, Bill of Rights, and the principles of democratic government. Members of Congress and their staff enhance the program by discussing current constitutional issues with students and teachers and by participating in other educational activities.

It is inspiring to see these young people advocate the fundamental ideals of principles of our government in the aftermath of the tragedy on September 11. These are ideas that identify us as a people and bind us together as a

nation. It is important for our next generation to understand these values and principles which we hold as standards in our endeavor to preserve and realize the promise of our constitutional democracy.

The class from Duluth Central High School is currently conducting research and preparing for their upcoming participation in the national competition in Washington, D.C. I wish these young "constitutional experts" the best of luck at the We the People . . . national finals. They represent the future leaders of our nation.

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH
FIRST STATE VISIT TO CHINA

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2002

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, President George W. Bush is making his first state visit to China and I would like to take this opportunity before his departure to China to express my concern regarding Taiwan. I hope that President Bush will stand firm on the issue of Taiwan in his discussions with the Chinese and I encourage him not to comply with any demands from the Chinese government that affect the best interests of Taiwan.

The United States and the Republic of China on Taiwan have been maintaining strong relations for decades. In recent years, despite the lack of formal diplomatic relations between the United States and Taiwan, Taiwan has been unwavering in its support of the United States in all areas.

In the aftermath of the tragedies of September 11, Taiwan was one of the first countries to give its unflinching support to the United States and has also been extremely cooperative in providing information and resources to the United States to combat terrorism. Taiwan has been enormously supportive in other areas as well, such as reducing its trade surplus with the United States and promoting U.S. goods and services in its domestic market.

Any attempts by the Chinese to ask the United States to reduce arms sales to Taiwan will endanger the balance of power in the Pacific Rim and lead to instability. I hope that President Bush will uphold the U.S. policy of continued arms sales to Taiwan and that he will urge the Chinese leaders to resume talks with Taiwan on reunification and other issues.

As long as we stand firm on our principles of providing what Taiwan needs militarily, there will be stability in the Taiwan Strait and that is in everyone's best interests.

I hope the President's visit to China will improve U.S.-China relations, but foremost, I hope the visit will be based on the premise of the best interests for Taiwan.

U.S. SUPPORT FOR TAIWAN

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2002

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, President George W. Bush will be making his first state visit to the People's Republic of China later this month. This is a very important trip for both countries, and I hope President Bush will receive assurances from China for its full cooperation in our fight against worldwide terrorism.

In the meantime, I am hopeful that the President will work to protect the interests of the Republic of China on Taiwan. It is likely that the Chinese leaders will ask President Bush to make certain concessions on the issue of Taiwan, and we must strongly urge President Bush to stand firm on the United States' existing policy toward Taiwan, including our commitment to sell defensive arms to Taiwan.

As we all know, Taiwan is a small country, yet it faces a formidable adversary in the People's Republic of China. Despite all odds, and with U.S. assistance, Taiwan has been able to enjoy great economic success, significant political reforms, freedom and democracy. As a new member of the World Trade Organization and the world's 17th largest economy, Taiwan has a major economic presence in the world. Its 23 million people enjoy a high standard of living and will continue to do so as long as there is peace in the Taiwan Strait.

Peace in the Strait depends in large part on American support. I hope President Bush will give a message to Chinese leaders that peace in the Taiwan Strait will lead to greater prosperity for both Taiwan and the Chinese mainland, and that Taiwan and the PRC should begin serious discussions about economic cooperation and other issues of mutual interest.

I wish the President a safe and productive trip.