

the debt ceiling dramatically to account for these unfunded liabilities, what we have promised in Social Security and Medicare which are going to be future debt and future cost, and we would account for these in addition to what we have borrowed from the Social Security and Medicare trust funds as well as the so-called Wall Street debt.

□ 1245

Perhaps raising the debt ceiling would wake up those in Congress who hope the obligations of the entitlement program will simply go away or simply be dealt with with future Congresses, because it is politically difficult to acknowledge how and who is going to pay for those future obligations. I would just like to say that Chairman Alan Greenspan suggests that possibly we should have no statutory debt limit, because the true obligation comes from how much Congress spends and legislation we pass promising future benefits or future spending. I disagree.

Though painful, I believe that we should have a full discussion about how much debt, including the unfunded liabilities, our country should leave to future generations, and how this would best meet our country's goals of fiscal discipline and honest government accounting.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLETCHER). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the challenges of this Congress are many, and there are many diverse interests that we have. Representatives of the people's House come from all over the Nation, and clearly they offer to the American people the best opportunity to debate the issues that Americans are concerned about.

One of those that causes a great deal of confusion, of course, is the policies of immigration and the work of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

More than any other time, September 11 helped the issues of immigration to explode on the psyche of Americans. I have constantly said as the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Immigration that immigration does not equate to terrorism. So many of us came to this land in many different forms, some voluntarily and some involuntarily.

Mr. Speaker, we have this week the opportunity to address the questions of fixing the Immigration and Naturalization Service agency, to be able to address the concerns not only of Americans, but Members of Congress, who day after day and time after time spend a good 60 percent or more of their office staff time addressing the questions of immigration.

Some would say, here we go again, talking about illegal immigrants and

people coming in to take our jobs. No, immigration deals with individuals who come here to reunite with their family, who come to be a part of this great country, who are law-abiding, tax-paying individuals and families, and they are hard working. Immigrants represent the infrastructure and base of the agricultural industry; and if we talk to those who are in that industry, they will be the biggest champions of those who come to work, but maybe not so much the champions of good working conditions and housing conditions and compensation.

So America has to be honest and true to its values and balance the reunification of families and the fairness of our Nation with the fact that we must have a system that thwarts illegal immigration, but respects and acknowledges access to legalization and family reunification.

This week, we will be dealing with the restructuring of the INS. Some call it the abolishing of the INS. It is a re-vamping and a redoing. It is to set up an agency that can work. We establish, for the first time in history, a Children's Bureau that deals with the many children that come unattended to the United States, who need either an opportunity to be reunited with their families, or to be sent to their homeland.

It provides a real office of student tracking so the tragedies of September 11 with student visas not being appropriately tracked will have at least an office. It gives the position of the Deputy Associate Attorney General, the second-highest-ranking job in the Department of Justice, the responsibility of covering two bureaus, one dealing with those accessing legalization and the other dealing with enforcement. It provides a line of chain of command so that the centers and district offices are coordinated and there is not one hand saying something different from the other hand, that enforcement is not in conflict with services, but that they are coordinated.

Someone said, it is going to be under the Department of Justice and I do not like that. It is under the Department of Justice now. But we are abolishing it in its form so that the administration can change the infrastructure under the umbrella of this new legislation. I would only hope that they will take up the chance and work with Congress. We will be fighting for more resources and professional development training for the employees and the right of these particular leaders of this agency to select new staff, energized staff to be able to work on these issues.

I hope that the op-eds in the editorial pages of America's newspapers will take the time to read and understand legislation as opposed to making blanket comments about what they do not like and do like. All of us have problems with the systems that are broken in the immigration structure, but we cannot have problems with those who come to this land seeking opportunity

and justice. Who are we to say. Each of us, all of us can count an experience of coming to this land of opportunity. No one, except for our native Americans, has any standing to suggest who can come in and who cannot. We must have procedures and laws. We must promote legal immigration and access to legalization, but we must also as a country stand for our values.

Mr. Speaker, we will get that opportunity to debate this important bill on the floor of the House this coming Thursday. It started out as H.R. 1562, which I wrote some years ago; and it is a compromise bill, working together with both sides of the aisle. But I am very proud of the Children's Bureau that has been included and the fact that we now have a structure that allows for a command chain to be in place and to also be able to fix the problems, fix what is broken, and to be able to respect that all of us have walked and all of us have come for freedom and justice and opportunity.

I hope that this does not wallow into the accusations of anti-immigrant policies and debate. I hope that it talks about what this bill is; and it is to fix the system, to protect our borders, to ensure that we have protection for those who come legally and the acknowledgment of those who do not. Then I hope, lastly, that we will bring America together, because that is what this country stands for, unity and an affirmation of our wonderful values.

COMMEMORATION AND REMEMBRANCE OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues to commemorate tomorrow's eighth annual Capitol Hill observance of the 87th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. I do want to thank my colleagues on the caucus, including the Chairs, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG), for their work in organizing the tribute that will take place tomorrow evening. This observance does take place every year on April 24. I hope that my comments a day earlier will attest to my earnestness and passion about the issue.

It was on that date in 1915 that more than 200 Armenian religious, political and intellectual leaders were arrested in Constantinople and murdered. Over the next 8 years, persecution of Armenians intensified; and by 1923, more than 1.5 million had died and another 500,000 had gone into exile. At the end of 1923, all of the Armenian residents of Anatolia and Western Armenia had been either killed or deported.

The genocide was criticized at the time by our United States Ambassador,

Henry Morgenthau, who accused the Turkish authorities of "giving the death warrant to a whole race." The founder of the modern Turkish nation, Kemal Ataturk, condemned the crimes perpetrated by his predecessors. Yet this forthright and sober analysis has been ignored by the United States during the last decade.

The intransigence of this and prior administrations to recognizing and commemorating the Armenian genocide demonstrates our continued difficulty in reconciling the lessons of history with what we believe, and that is, those who fail to learn the lessons of history are condemned to repeat them. We have seen this continually in this century, the abject failure to learn and apply this basic principle. The Armenian genocide has been followed by the Holocaust against the Jews, mass killings in Kurdistan, Rwanda, Burundi, and Bosnia. Many of these situations are ongoing, and there seems little sense of urgency or moral imperative to resolve them.

This was brought home to me when I visited the memorial of the genocide in Yerevan, Armenia, when I led the delegation there several years ago; and here in the United States I have seen the anguish on the faces of the survivors and I have talked to the families who have lost loved ones during that holocaust of the Armenians.

Commemoration of the Armenian genocide is important, not only for its acknowledgment of the suffering of the Armenian people, but also for establishing a historical truth. It also demonstrates that events in Armenia, Nazi Europe, and elsewhere should be seen not as isolated incidents, but as part of a historical continuum, showing that the human community still suffers from its basic inability to resolve its problems peacefully and with mutual respect.

Last year, I sent a letter to our Maryland legislators with several of my colleagues here in the House urging their support of the Maryland Day of Remembrance. I am pleased to say that last April, Maryland joined 27 other States to pass resolutions condemning the Armenian genocide. I am proud to have joined 161 of my House colleagues in sending a letter to President Bush urging him to appropriately acknowledge the Armenian genocide in his April 24 commemoration statement. We urge President Bush to follow Senator Bob Dole's message to simply "state the truth." There was an English poet who once said, "Truth is beauty, beauty, truth. We ask for the truth."

H.R. 1433, THE COMMUNITY CHARACTER ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as we deal with global issues that at times threaten to overwhelm us, there are issues here at home that we can get our arms around that deal with the quality of life, one being the consequence of unplanned growth and development right here in our neighborhood. Some call it sprawl; others call it dumb growth. The facts are that many Americans are increasingly frustrated by the consequences of haphazard development and a failure to balance the needs of individuals, businesses, and the natural environment and the activities that impact on people's lives now.

I have worked with the American Planning Association and a bipartisan group of Members of Congress in both Chambers to produce the Community Character Act, legislation which would provide incentives and resources to assist communities, cities, and States to develop appropriate responses.

Recently, this legislation came under attack by the administration. The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Mel Martinez, stated that the proposed legislation would "infringe on the rights of local and State governments to manage their growth."

He went on to say that it "sets a dangerous precedent to make the Secretary of HUD, Commerce or Agriculture the land use arbiter with the power to usurp the local government's authority." It is clear that the Secretary and his staff have not analyzed this bill. Indeed, they have appeared not to have read it at all.

A key reason for the Community Character Act and a primary obstacle to State comprehensive planning stems from the outdated statutes in place at the State level. Roughly half the States rely on a model of land use planning legislation that was created by the Department of Commerce over 70 years ago. The transformation of America's landscape and settlement patterns since the 1920s has changed drastically. Updating State plans are necessary to create the framework that will allow the States to address the modern world and adequately plan for the future.

The Community Character Act directly responds to the widespread concerns of citizens and local governments on this issue. In 1999, approximately 1,000 land-use reform bills were introduced in legislatures across the country.

□ 1300

On Election Day 2000, there were over 550 State and local ballot measures related to land use planning and development issues. Over 70 percent of them passed.

A recent survey indicated that 78 percent of the voters believe that it is important for this Congress to help communities solve problems associated with urban growth. More than 75 percent of the voters think Congress should provide incentives, funding, and other resources to help with livability.

Our bill provides grants for the States to help do their work. It does not dictate a one-size-fits-all approach, but rather, recognizes that each State is unique and wants its own approach. What is important is that the States take an approach. The bill would reward them for moving forward.

It is true that one size does not fit all, and that is precisely why this legislation does not mandate any particular action by the State or local level. It instead provides an incentive for States to address the issues that most directly affect their prosperity and well-being, such as promoting sustainable development in economic and social equity; coordinating transportation, housing, education, and other infrastructure development; and conserving historic resources and the environment.

We all have a stake in this effort, and the Federal Government has a critical role to play. Our Federal Government has been involved in land use issues since the beginning of the Republic, when we took land away from the Native Americans and gave it to Europeans to farm, and in building our Nation's transportation infrastructure of ports, roads, railroads, canals, the air system, the Internet highway system. Those were all Federal initiatives.

It sets the rules, like for wetlands development; and then there is the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, that all have a profound effect on Americans and on how we use our land.

But most important, the Federal Government is the largest landlord, landowner, and employer in this great country. Instead of creating conflicts that do not exist, the Federal Government needs to do three simple things: It needs to be a better steward of our own lands; it needs to follow the same rules that we ask the rest of America to follow in dealing with their land; and finally, it needs to be a better partner with State and local governments across the country.

Together with the Federal Government as a partner with the private sector, State and local governments, and individual communities, we can make our communities more livable, where our families are safer, healthier, and more economically secure.

I strongly urge the administration and my colleagues to support the Community Character Act to help get us there.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLETCHER). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.