

community, State and national efforts to fight against the exploitation and abduction of our children.

One of those community initiatives is a successful and effective way to combat child abduction and it is called Amber Alert. The Amber Alert is named after Amber Hagerman, a 9-year-old girl who was tragically abducted and murdered in Arlington, Texas in 1996. The tragedy was felt throughout North Texas, and it led to a search for new and innovative community responses to help law enforcement officials find missing children.

That response is the Amber Alert, and it has frequently been successful in recovering missing children. We have been reading about it in our news media in just recent weeks.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of our Members to take the opportunity to join with us to make this a successful nationwide program, to join me in supporting the Frost-Dunn National Amber Alert Network Act. The National Amber Alert Network Act is a common sense approach to the problem of child abduction. Child abduction is finally receiving the attention it deserves. Let us take this opportunity to bring legislation to the floor that all of America can be proud of.

CONGRATULATIONS TO PRESIDENT BUSH

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the President on his reaching out to Congress to seek our assent over any Iraq action. The President will also meet with Prime Minister Blair and communicate with the U.N. Our leaders here in Congress were also briefed yesterday. We all know that Saddam is developing nuclear weapons. The President is reaching out to Putin of Russia, Jemin of China, and Chirac of France. He is doing the right thing.

There may be a vote here on the House floor in about 4 to 5 weeks on this action. Congress will be consulted and the President is building a consensus. We will debate the question, the simple question: Is inaction an option or not? Should we force weapons inspections as a means of building this international coalition to act against Iraq? Saddam has had 11 long years in which he has sidestepped and crawlished on allowing us to inspect. Should there be a consensus first before we inspect?

Mr. Speaker, all of these questions are healthy in the debate here in Congress, and I congratulate the President in reaching out to the public and to Congress and to have this important debate.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I have returned from Johannesburg, South Africa where I attended the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The summit produced some achievements such as the agreement to improve water and sewer sanitation in the Third World. The U.S. delegation also successfully promoted public-private partnerships to solve some environmental problems. But when it came to climate change, it had no interest in partnerships.

The Bush administration stands alone in refusing to deal with global warming. As a former executive, President Bush knows that no business plan will succeed without targets and timetables, yet the President's negotiators succeeded in blocking targets and timetables to reduce the use of oil and gas and increase the use of renewable energy.

The goal of the summit was to implement a vision for a healthier and more sustainable future, but it fell short because the Bush administration has no vision beyond short-term gains for the oil and gas industry.

The U.S. risks falling behind our competitors who will develop innovative and profitable clean and efficient technologies. For the sake of our economy and our health, I urge the administration to abandon its ideological resistance to real action against climate change.

HEWLETT PACKARD'S GIVE THANKS AMERICA INITIATIVE

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the first anniversary of one of the most tragic days in our Nation's history, our attention obviously goes to those who lost their lives and their loved ones, but we also have a renewed focus on the men and women in uniform, the first responders, policemen, firefighters, medical technicians, and also our men and women in uniform who are deployed overseas.

□ 1015

These people have dedicated their lives to protect our freedoms, and they put their safety on the line every day without any expectation of recognition.

To acknowledge the service of our public safety and military personnel, Hewlett-Packard created the "Give thanks, America" initiative, which allows families of military personnel and the general public to send video e-mail messages of appreciation to these heroes.

To date, tens of thousands of Americans have participated in this effort. Tomorrow at the Pentagon an interactive kiosk will be dedicated as a permanent exhibit, allowing service members, family members, and visitors the

opportunity to join in showing their deep gratitude and faith to our military personnel.

I congratulate all those associated with this very important program for pursuing this.

EDUCATION

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

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, most children in America are back in school this week, and parents in most areas have been provided more information about their schools and their child's academic performance than ever before.

Earlier this year, Education Secretary Rod Paige talked about the need for more education options. He said, "The new annual tests will provide parents with much more information about the quality of their children's schools, but if parents can't act on that information, they can't really hold their schools accountable, and the schools will not have a real incentive to improve."

This week, the Committee on Ways and Means, in fact today, will pass the Back-to-School Tax Relief Act that gives parents options to act on the information about the quality of their child's school. The bill gives low-income parents an above-the-line tax deduction of up to \$3,000 for almost any educational expense, including tutoring and tuition at private schools.

Parents deserve this freedom. They deserve the freedom to act in the best interests of their kids. As America's elementary and secondary students go back to school this month, I urge Congress to quickly pass the Back-to-School Tax Relief Act, H.R. 5193.

A TIME FOR EVERY PURPOSE

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, the Good Book tells us that there is a time for every purpose under heaven. There is a time to weep and a time to mourn, and tomorrow I will join some 250 of my colleagues in this body as we travel to Federal Hall in New York City to do just that. We will gather at a place that this Congress met and even adopted the Bill of Rights in the year 1789, and we will mourn with those who mourn, and we will weep with those who weep.

The last time I was in New York City, Mr. Speaker, was September 21. I stood in the ashes and on the periphery of the devastation at Ground Zero, and I expect tomorrow, as we all do, to be a deeply moving day emotionally.

But as we join to pray, let us ever remember that also we are told that there is a time for peace, but there is a time for war. As we pray for the bereaved, let us also pray for wisdom for

our President and our leadership in this institution as we choose the times and the days ahead for war.

WE NEED A TAX POLICY WHICH WILL HELP THE ECONOMY RECOVER QUICKER

(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. Mr. Speaker, in my Seventh Congressional District of Michigan unemployment is going up. Some of the companies are closing. Several are moving to Mexico and other countries.

In the past, the United States has been so advanced in our productivity and our efficiency that we could put heavy taxes on business and industry, and we could impose restrictive regulations, and still be competitive in the world market. That is no longer true, Mr. Speaker. The international community is now vying for our markets, our ways of producing, trying to be more productive and take away our business.

That means that we have got to take another look at how we put our companies at a competitive disadvantage, the way we tax our business and industry more than what other countries are taxing theirs. We now have a situation where Democrats are suggesting that if we have any tax changes to have a faster economic recovery, they are going to use it politically, suggesting taxation to give benefits for just the rich. We need to look at the kind of taxes that will protect workers savings and are going to help this economy recover quicker.

AMERICA'S BANKRUPTCY LAWS NEED TO BE FIXED

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, America's bankruptcy laws need to be fixed. The system is broken, and we need to act. In fact, we have acted. The House of Representatives has passed an excellent bill to do the job. Unfortunately, the other body has injected one of the most controversial issues of our time, abortion, into this legislation. Now many of us simply can no longer vote for it.

The issue of abortion does not belong in this bill. Mr. Speaker, as it is written now, the bankruptcy bill singles out peaceful, nonviolent, pro-life protesters for unusually harsh punishment if they pray or protest or hand out leaflets in front of an abortion clinic. I ask my colleagues, why is it okay to have civil rights protests, why is it okay to have union protests, why is it okay to have animal rights protests or peace protests, and why is it not okay to protest in defense of unborn babies?

This Congress should stand for equal treatment under the law. We should

not have one set of rules for liberals, another for conservatives; one set of rules for pro-choice people, another for pro-life people. It is not right, and that is why we want to see the bankruptcy bill fixed before we vote on it.

REGARDING THE JOINT MEETING OF CONGRESS IN NEW YORK CITY

(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 look forward tomorrow to joining approximately 250 of my colleagues at the Joint Meeting of Congress in New York City, where we will honor the victims and celebrate the heroes of September 11, 2001.

We will be returning to the city which terrorists targeted for devastation almost 1 year ago, and yet the terrorists did not succeed in destroying this Nation or the American spirit. Instead, our Nation is strong, our people are its strength. The people of New York are the beacon to the strength of the American spirit. Tomorrow we will see firsthand that strength, and how New York City has survived in spite of the horrible tragedy of September 11.

Our message to those terrorists is that no one in this Nation will retreat, and we will not be intimidated. Terrorism against the United States, our freedom, and our people will never be tolerated.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the people of New York for welcoming Congress to their city. May this visit symbolize not only the unity of Congress, but that of the entire country to rebuild our Nation and defend our freedom.

DAM SAFETY AND SECURITY ACT OF 2002

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GIBBONS). Pursuant to the order of the House of Wednesday, September 4, 2002, and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4727.

□ 1023

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4727) to reauthorize the national dam safety program, and for other purposes, with Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of Wednesday, September 4, 2002, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 4727, the Dam Safety and Security Act of 2002, introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER), reauthorizes and updates the national dam safety program, which was originally passed as part of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996.

This program was created to improve public safety around dams by providing grants to State dam safety agencies to assist them in improving their regulatory programs, funding research to enhance technical expertise as dams are built and rehabilitated, establishing training programs for dam safety inspectors, and creating a national inventory of dams.

Since its passage in 1996, the program has worked to provide assistance grants, training, research, and expertise in each of the 48 States that has a dam safety program.

Dams serve a number of important functions in today's society. They provide water for recreation, electricity, human and livestock consumption, crop irrigation, and flood control.

According to the Army Corps of Engineers, which maintains the national inventory, there are more than 80,000 dams in the United States. Of these, 10,000 have been classified as high risk, meaning that their failure poses a risk of either loss of life or severe loss of property.

While it is widely believed that the Federal Government owns most of America's dams, the reality is far from that. In fact, the Federal Government owns just over 5 percent of the dams in the United States, with the vast majority, some 58 percent, being owned by private individuals.

This fact highlights the need for coordinated and adequately funded inspection programs at the State level. This bipartisan legislation will reauthorize this important public works safety program for an additional 4 years, require the creation of a strategic plan, give the Interagency Board greater flexibility to provide assistance to States, allow for the inclusion of State dam safety officials on the Interagency Board, increase the amount of money available for grants and research, and require that the Board consider security when assessing the safety of dams.

Mr. Chairman, I support this very important piece of legislation. I want to commend the ranking member of our subcommittee, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO), for his diligence and willingness to continue to work with us in a bipartisan manner to produce good legislation, and also the chairman of the full committee, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), and the ranking member of the full committee, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR).

I want to pay special note at this time and give thanks to the author of