

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 339, PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN FOOD CONSUMPTION ACT

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-435) on the resolution (H. Res. 552) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 339) to prevent frivolous lawsuits against the manufacturers, distributors, or sellers of food or non-alcoholic beverage products that comply with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONNER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS SHOULD RENEW ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, assault weapons will go back on American streets in 188 days.

We pay a heavy toll at the hands of criminals, gangs, and terrorists. The average cost of a gunshot wound is more than \$16,000 to treat. Treating severe gunshot injuries like wounds to the head or spinal cord can run well over \$1 million. The direct medical costs for firearms or related injuries is \$4 billion a year; \$4 billion a year. Half of that is paid by us as taxpayers.

I know that the police across this Nation want to make sure that we keep assault weapons off the streets. Mr. Speaker, when we see that we are cutting the money for the COPS program and yet allowing assault weapons back on the street, to me it does not make any sense. Since I have been talking about this every Tuesday, we are hearing from people around the Nation. What I am saying to the people of this country is you do have a voice, and you can call Members of Congress and the Senate to make sure that we are allowed to bring the bill up on the floor so we can vote for it.

This is not the time to go backwards. In the last 10 years, we have seen certainly it come down as far as assault weapon killings. We have a report from the FBI. Before the ban went in place, one out of every five cops that were shot were shot with an assault weapon. Why should we go backwards? When we know that there might be a possibility of having terrorists here in this country, when we know that gangs and drug dealers, these are the guns of choice, why would we want assault weapons back on the street?

Mr. Speaker, \$4 billion a year in health costs. I can talk about my own son who was shot. He was shot in the head. His medical care has cost over \$1 million already, and the total keeps going higher and higher. This is going on with so many people. There are things that we can prevent. We cannot prevent every shooting; we cannot. We cannot see to it that every police officer is being protected. But we can do a better job, and that is by renewing the assault weapons ban by September 13.

Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago, before I came to Congress, I was here lobbying the Members of Congress to make sure we had an assault weapons bill passed. There are some that will say the assault weapons bill has not worked. Well, it has worked; but there are loopholes in it, and those loopholes are where the gun manufacturers are allowed to make copycats of the guns that were banned. One of the guns that everyone is watching on CNN and all of the other stations tonight is the Bushmaster, the guns that were used by the snipers in the D.C. area. That is a copycat. That is a gun that was originally banned. Yet the gun manufacturers allow these to have copycats and put back on our streets.

Do we actually want on September 14 for anyone to be able to go into a gun store and buy an assault weapon? Is this what this Nation is coming to?

Mr. Speaker, I am not for taking away the right of someone to own a gun. I happen to believe that if people want to own a gun, they have a right to own a gun. But assault weapons are made for killing machines. Assault weapons are made for our Army. When we see our police officers and they have to wear protective gear, assault weapons can go through that. One of the other things that a lot of people do not understand is, when we did the ban back 10 years ago, we cut back the amount of bullets in a clip, down to 10. On the Long Island Rail Road, the clips that were used by Collin Ferguson to do his killing and shooting of people had 15 bullets in the clip.

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And every one of those bullets made their mark. And he was able to get 30 rounds off and kill six people and injure 19.

Hunters give animals a better chance of survival than we do with these large capacity clips. Our police officers are allowed to have these large capacity clips, our military are allowed to. And that is fine. I do not believe that our hunters need them, I do not believe that our ordinary citizens need those kind of clips.

These are things that we should be doing. Those are good safety laws. Those are good gun safety laws.

I hope that the American people will take up this challenge and demand that we are able to bring this vote up before September 13. It would be a shame to see assault weapons back on the street.

ASSIGNING MEMBERS OF THE ARMED SERVICES TO BORDER PATROL DUTIES

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

Mr. GOODE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my gratitude to U.S. Border Control and the thousands of Americans from coast to coast who have taken the time and the trouble to send e-mails, letters, postcards and petitions to Congress urging their Representatives and Senators to support my legislation to authorize the Secretary of Defense to assign members of our Armed Forces to assist the Department of Homeland Security in the performance of border protection duties.

Clearly, the need for such assistance has never been greater. Every year our border crisis worsens. First it was drugs, then disease, then it was illegal aliens crossing by the hundreds, and now by the millions. And now terrorists could be crossing our borders, determined to rain death and destruction upon us.

If there were ever a time for the United States to put troops on the border, this is it. We are fighting enemies who have already brought the battle to our shores and are threatening to do it again. It makes no sense to have thousands of troops guarding borders throughout the world while our own borders are wide open and undefended in a time of war.

According to U.S. Border Control, every recent survey conducted shows the vast majority of Americans support allowing troops on the border. Constituents are beginning to question how we can claim to be serious about combating issues like drug smuggling, people smuggling and terrorism when it was unable to take such a simple and non-intrusive step as putting troops on the border. Last year the House adopted the amendment that would authorize the troops on our borders. Unfortunately, it did not survive conference. I hope this year we will be able to see it survive the entire legislative process.

I urge my colleagues to join in giving the executive branch the authority it needs to assign members of our Armed Forces to assist Homeland Security in securing our borders from these threats to our Nation.

TAX CUTS AND THE LATEST EMPLOYMENT DATA

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, on Friday the government announced its latest employment data. Unfortunately, the news for working Americans or Americans trying to find jobs was really bad. 21,000 jobs nationally were created. Now, remember, of course, it was

just 2 weeks ago that the President's principal economic advisor Mr. Mankiw, the same person who says it is good to export jobs, it helps the economy, predicted that the Bush tax cuts would produce 200,000 jobs a month. Of course, the President's former economic advisor, who was a little bit too honest about the cost of the war in Iraq, Mr. Lindsey, predicted the same thing last year and the jobs did not materialize.

Well, we are in the same situation now. They predicted 200,000. 21,000 were created. Now, were these jobs created because of tax cuts? Well, actually, no, because the 21,000 jobs that were created were government jobs. They were State and local government jobs. So the tax cuts had absolutely no impact on stimulating those governments to hire more people. That is for certain.

So, we now have 8.2 million unemployed Americans, 4.4 million Americans involuntarily working part-time. They would like to work full-time. They need to work full-time. They cannot find full-time work.

Three million private sector jobs have been lost since the beginning of the Bush 43 administration. That is the worst job creation or destruction record since Herbert Hoover in the 1920s. 3,000 manufacturing jobs lost last month, 2.8 million lost since the beginning of the Bush administration. But just today, the President was saying he is a radical free trader. There is nothing but free trade. The alternative to absolute free trade and exporting our jobs and our industrial and manufacturing base and impoverishing the working people of America is protectionism or isolationism.

Well, there is a pretty big ground between those two things. Some managed trade, something that would bring jobs or keep jobs of value here in America, might maintain our industrial and manufacturing and IT infrastructure, might not be a bad idea. But not to this President. His chief economic advisor says job exports are great. Yeah, they make a few people a lot of money: Corporate CEOs, some stockholders, but they sure do put a lot of Americans out of work and hollow out the wealth of this country long term.

Now, we saw the unemployment rate stay at 5.6 percent. Sounds pretty good except the reason it stayed there is because 392,000 people gave up looking for work. There is no prospect for them out there. So guess what? In the great world of George Bush and Mr. Mankiw, they do not count anymore. Americans who are unemployed who would like to work, but who are totally discouraged and give up looking for work, they do not count as unemployed in their world. This is pretty strange.

But the President says he has a solution to make his tax cuts permanent. That is, these unbelievably expensive tax cuts that would take place after the year 2010, now all the tax cuts he has already had which have put the country into the deepest fiscal hole in

our history, are not creating the jobs. His free trade policy is not creating the jobs. He wants more free trade, he wants more tax cuts.

Maybe it is time to think about real investments, investments in infrastructure. You create 47,500 jobs with every billion dollars you spend on roads, bridges, and highways. We have bridges and roads crumbling across America. But what has the President and the White House doing? They are stonewalling the highway bill. The highway bill has expired. And nothing is happening because they will not agree on an adequate bill. They say oh, no, we want a low-ball bill. We do not believe that building roads, bridges, and highways creates jobs.

No, it does not create jobs overseas, like Mr. Mankiw thinks are great, it does not make investors rich. It does not give them tax benefits. But it puts a heck of a lot of the people in the construction industry to work, and a whole lot of small businesses to work and a whole lot of communities with some wealth and money flowing through those communities, that would do something for this country. That would put people back to work.

He will not even extend unemployment benefits for those who cannot find work but want it. He says we cannot afford it. There are \$17 billion in the unemployment trust fund, paid in by employers and employees sitting there. He does not even have to borrow the money. He is borrowing the money for tax cuts for rich people. He does not even have to borrow the money to extend unemployment benefits for those Americans who want and cannot find work. He just has to authorize spending down some of the trust fund.

That trust fund this year is actually going to grow. It is going to grow. Of course, the money will be borrowed and given away in tax cuts to wealthy which will put people to work, he says, but it does not.

Now, just one last point on these tax cuts. One of the things he is really pushing for is a permanent extension of estates worth more than \$5 million from any taxation. He says that will really put people back to work in this country. That would be after 2010. That costs \$80 billion a year. Money drained out of the rest of the economy, drained from other taxpayers and Social Security to benefit a very, very small percentage.

This is voodoo economics at its worst, as his dad would have said.

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

(Mr. BURTON 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 California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

JOBS, ECONOMY, AND TAXES

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

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, it has been said by some that the American economy is in chaos and decline. I come to the floor today to counter such nonsense with the facts. After the shocks of the recession and the tragedy of 9/11, the economy has experienced 60 consecutive months of job growth and during that time has added a total of 364,000 new jobs to the economy. In point of fact, the unemployment rate is currently lower, lower than the average unemployment rate during the 1970s, the 1980s and even the 1990s.

Since 2001, the U.S. economy has grown more than twice as fast as the economies of Europe and Japan. Our economy is in better shape and growing faster than any member of the G-7 group of industrialized nations. America is the largest exporter in the world and the main source of economic growth in the world. Productivity growing at 4.1 percent annually over the last 3 years is at an historic high. The economy is expected to grow faster from 2003 to 2004 than any other year in the last 20.

Mr. Speaker, the number of Americans working today stands at 138.3 million, the highest number in the history of this Nation, higher even than the number of Americans who were working in January of 2001. And most Americans are prospering like they never have before, with family net worth hitting a record high of \$44.4 trillion. This is in part because the home ownership rate stands at 68.5 percent also an historic high.

I cite these figures not because I believe there is nothing that can or should be done to further promote economic growth and job creation, but instead, to provide some perspective on how the media and the other side of the aisle are misrepresenting and misportraying the facts concerning the state of our economy.

Mr. Speaker, the truth is most Americans are not fond of the pointless debate over when the recent recession began or who was responsible for it. This debate does nothing to lower the unemployment rate. It is an exercise in political histrionics.

We are now experiencing economic recovery and that is something most Americans do care about. What matters to them is how to maintain and sustain and expand that recovery. To sustain this recovery, I believe we need to simplify the Tax Code. We need to reduce the burden of frivolous lawsuits on our economy. We need to pass an energy bill to ensure an affordable and reliable energy supply. We need to streamline regulations and paperwork