

This administration has already made ominous utterances about the need for regime change in both Syria and Iran, and I would just ask this Congress before it relinquishes any more power, please examine the facts before we plunge ourselves into another military disaster in the Middle East.

HONORING HENRY HYDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. HARRIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and celebrate the extraordinary service to the Nation of Representative HENRY HYDE of Illinois. Many of us consider our election to Congress as a blessing and an opportunity to improve the lives of our constituents and our fellow Americans, and no one has merited that honor more than this esteemed and distinguished gentleman of irrefutable conviction and compassion.

In his more than 30 years as a Member of the House of Representatives and as chairman of the Committee on International Relations, Congressman HYDE has given the most vulnerable citizens a voice and focused our minds on the modern day horrors of child slavery, famine and genocide.

It was in his freshman term that colleagues would first become aware of his passionate devotion to the defense of innocent life, all human life, and at that time, tax dollars of all Americans were devoted to funding nearly 300,000 abortions annually.

Through the appropriations process, Mr. HYDE introduced an amendment to prohibit this practice and the adoption of the Hyde amendment forever changed the course of our national discussion about life and its protections.

I have considered my service on the House International Relations Committee under Chairman HYDE's stewardship as one of the most rewarding and enlightening experiences of my time in Congress. Not content to simply fund projects or engage in academic debates about geopolitics and Real Politic, our committee has played a critical role in shepherding the foreign affairs of the Nation.

The chairman's leadership has been indispensable as our Nation entered a new age of warfare and a time of bolder, more vibrant diplomacy.

A veteran of the committee, Chairman HYDE has been heard in the halls of Congress and countless administrations in the crucial interest about international arms control, the expansion of NATO, the investigation of the Iran-Contra affair and the long-overdue need for reform of the United Nations.

Earlier this year, Chairman HYDE eloquently addressed the challenges facing our Nation and the world, "We are well advanced into an unformed era in which new and unfamiliar enemies are gathering forces, where a phalanx of aspiring competitors must inevi-

table constrain and focus our options. In a world where the ratios of strength narrow, the consequences of miscalculation will become progressively more debilitating."

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The chairman's cogent argument in favor of a robust foreign policy has fueled the committee during the 109th Congress. The committee has led the way in U.N. reform, holding to account the privileged few of the United Nations who turned a blind eye as Saddam Hussein violated international law and basic human rights.

He has called attention to the tragic human drama that began long ago and today is simply known as Darfur. And most importantly, Chairman HYDE has worked to ensure the voice of this body is heard on matters of nuclear proliferation, the untenable policies of terrorist regimes, and forged ahead where Americans will stand as the world struggles through this uninformed era.

Throughout his career, HENRY HYDE has never failed to heed his own counsel nor to lose his way. And the principles of basic rights and wrongs have guided his path forward.

His most important contribution, however, has been as a husband, father and grandfather. I am certain it is this job that he has enjoyed most.

In closing, I wish to thank Congressman HENRY HYDE for his extraordinary leadership, his friendship and his scholarship. We are truly a better people as a consequence of his service and for knowing him personally.

THE ALLEN SMALL BUSINESS PLAN

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to discuss the circumstances of the small business community in Maine and across the country. Regardless of size or industry, small businesses throughout the country share a common set of challenges: skyrocketing health care and fuel costs, an unstable and outdated Federal tax structure, an insufficient labor supply and lack of qualified workers, a lack of access to Federal contracts and inadequate funding for entrepreneurial assistance programs for start-up businesses and businesses that want to grow.

And it is my experience here that many of the organizations in Washington that hold themselves out as small business organizations are really advocating, in reality, a big business agenda.

Back in my home State of Maine, small business is big business. Maine is home to over 140,000 small businesses, and we have nearly 100,000 Mainers who are self-employed. Our prosperity de-

pends on the growth and the success of small business.

I have two bills, H.R. 5288, the Small Business Health Plans Act, and H.R. 5058, the Small Business Investment and Promotion Act, that would both aid small businesses by addressing many of the challenges that they face today.

Small businesses across America are struggling to maintain health care coverage for their workers. Really, most of the people I talk to every year find their premiums going up and find it very difficult to predict how much their health insurance will cost for the next year, assuming they have coverage.

My plan, under the bill H.R. 5288, makes quality health insurance more affordable and makes it easier for small businesses to obtain coverage for their employees. I believe that employees are entitled to the same coverage that Members of Congress and other Federal employees have. That is what my Small Business Health Plans bill provides.

The legislation would establish a small employer health benefits program for employers with 50 or fewer employees by creating new purchasing tools that would guarantee quality coverage at affordable rates to small businesses and their employees without preempting State requirements, much the way the coverage for Federal employees works.

One aspect of the bill would be to attract insurance companies by subsidizing the cost of catastrophic health care cases, and that would bring private insurers into this market and make the plan attractive.

Second, we would provide some premium assistance for smaller businesses and lower-wage workers.

Now, the second bill, H.R. 5058, has six different sections that cover the other difficulties that I mentioned at the beginning. First, the high cost of fuel for transportation and heat in winter is breaking the backs of small business owners, and no relief is in sight. H.R. 5058 creates a 2-year tax credit to cover the increased cost of fuel for businesses that are especially dependent on transportation fuel or the fuel to heat businesses and buildings.

Second, the Research and Development Tax Credit has never been made permanent, and that creates a great deal of uncertainty among businesses, large and small. This tax credit, if made permanent, would help companies stay afloat until they become profitable and would benefit all manufacturers for products that they develop by expending money on R&D. And my bill would make the credit permanent, and allow biotech and high-tech companies to make innovation a part of their long-term business plan.

Third, the Federal Government must do a better job of providing opportunity for small business to compete and win Federal contracts. My bill expands opportunities for small business

by including overseas contracts which are currently excluded from Federal small business contracting targets. This is a real gap. Big business can compete for overseas contracts, but small businesses are shut out simply by the fact of the size of their business.

Fourth, the President's budget request this year called for cuts or elimination of 75 percent of the programs that benefit small business. It is hard to believe that an administration that says it favors business is, in fact, trying to kill the section 7(a) loan program for the Small Business Administration and trying to eliminate the Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership.

The final two provisions: We would create a 39-year tax depreciation rule for restaurants and small retailers and make it easier for businesses to obtain H-1B and H-2B visas.

HONORING HENRY HYDE

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

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, tonight, I am honored to take this floor to sing the praises and accolades for a man who inspired me as a young person and has continued to inspire me as I have served here in these past 18 years.

I have spent 18 years here in the House of Representatives, and 7 years before that I served in the White House under Ronald Reagan. And I am pleased to say tonight that during that entire time, I have never met a man of whom I was more proud than that of the chairman of the International Relations Committee, Chairman HENRY HYDE. Perhaps Ronald Reagan. Perhaps. But HENRY HYDE, of the people that I have worked with as a fellow colleague, there is no match.

HENRY HYDE, of course, has been here since 1974, and has had a distinguished career as a Member of Congress, but more importantly, as a leader, as an American leader. HENRY HYDE, as I say, inspired many of us by the fact that he is not just a political leader, not just a man of integrity, courage, and a person who works, to this day is working harder than most Members of this Congress.

But he is not just a political leader, but a moral leader of this country as well.

HENRY HYDE is very well known. He has been known for many years for his views on what we call the prolife movement, the idea of protecting unborn children from the threat of abortion. And HENRY HYDE has done more to inspire and inform people on this issue and, thus, if you agree with me and agree with HENRY, done more to save the unborn babies of this country than any other individual that I can think of. That, alone, is a reason to applaud HENRY HYDE and to be grateful that he has served in this body, saving so many

unborn babies, and feeling so strongly about this issue that he was able to take the heat on an issue that, in the beginning, was far more unpopular than it is today. And I believe that he has created the national trend towards life that we see today.

Consistent with that, HENRY HYDE has been a champion of human rights during his entire term in the United States Congress. He has been an enemy to tyrants, to gangsters, whether they be in Cuba, the Soviet Union or China. This has been part of HENRY HYDE's patriotic makeup, a man from Illinois, a man from the State that gave us Lincoln, who freed the slaves and freed America from the sin of slavery.

I have seen HENRY HYDE criticize Chinese leaders to their face and stand up for the human rights of believers in God in China. I have seen his courage, and his eloquence is famous throughout the world.

I have seen HENRY HYDE take on the issue of proliferation of nuclear materials by the Communist Chinese Government when other people would have had him soft-pedal the issue in order to maintain a certain friendly relationship with those gangsters who control the mainland of China. But HENRY HYDE is a man of principle.

HENRY HYDE is a patriot. HENRY HYDE was protecting our country through his patriotism when he was a young man and served in the military in World War II in the Philippines, and then in the State legislature in Illinois, and then here, on to the U.S. Congress.

Many people will remember HENRY HYDE for the fact that he was the chairman of the Judiciary Committee when President Clinton was impeached. Here, too, was an issue that HENRY HYDE could have sidestepped. Why should he take all the abuse of such a controversial issue?

HENRY HYDE has taken on controversy because he believes in principle and morality. HENRY HYDE took on the issue of the impeachment of President Clinton because he believed that President Clinton had committed perjury, that that was an impeachable offense, and that to compromise that standard would cause great damage to the future of the United States of America.

HENRY HYDE is a man who stands for standards, stands for principles. He is a man who has worked hard, who has used his skill as an orator to make sure that we cement those American values that have made this country a great country, realizing that we don't have a perfect country, but that we always need leaders like HENRY HYDE to help us perfect those imperfections.

So I gladly join with my colleagues tonight in a salute to the chairman of the International Relations Committee, a great American, a man who has served this country well, in the House of Representatives and throughout his life, Chairman HENRY HYDE.

WHAT THE LIFE OF ROSA PARKS MEANS

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

Mr. SNYDER. Earlier this evening, Mr. Speaker, I read the essay, the winning essay from Morgan Sweere, age 9, in the fourth grade in Conway, Arkansas. And the title of the essay contest, "What Rosa Parks Means to Me." I would like to read two other winners.

The next one is "What Rosa Parks Will Mean to My Children." This is the junior high level essay contest that we held. And the winner of this one in the Second District of Arkansas was Brenna Gilstrap, of the eighth grade at Horace Mann Arts and Science Magnet Middle School in Little Rock, Arkansas. And this is what Brenna Gilstrap has to say, in part, about What Rosa Parks Will Mean for My Children:

"Rosa Parks has always been an amazing icon to people everywhere, symbolizing strength and pride during a period in America where racism thrived. I believe everyone is familiar with her story, how she refused to give up her seat on the bus to another person and she had to simply because they were Caucasian, and how she was arrested for doing so. This story of a brave woman standing up for what she believed in will, in my opinion, greatly influence the attitudes of my children, teaching them important morals. Speak your mind even if your voice shakes. Ban ignorance and pay attention to the mistakes made in the past in order to prevent them in the future. Always stand up for what you believe in because even one little person could make a difference in thousands of lives. These are the things that my children will learn from her story. This is why it will mean something.

"Examine the first moral. Speak your mind even if your voice shakes. What this means is that even if you are nervous, even if you know the consequences to what you are saying can be brutal, as long as you feel deeply in your heart that a change needs to be made, express what you feel. Say exactly what you're thinking and say why. Rosa Parks knew that the fuss she was making wasn't just about a good seat. It was about rights, equal rights for one and all. The right to sit in the good seats, use the good bathrooms, go to the good parties, live the good life, a life without oppression."

And her essay goes on. This is by Brenna Gilstrap, the winner of the What Rosa Park Will Mean for My Children essay contest in the Second District of Arkansas, and Brenna is in the eighth grade at Horace Mann Arts and Science Magnet Middle School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

The winner of the high school version of the contest, "What Rosa Parks Will Mean for My Grandchildren," was won by Alyx Vanness, Conway High School East.