

Protection Agency has proposed ludicrous standards for Florida's nitrogen and phosphorus levels for the State's lakes, rivers, streams, and springs.

Until 2009, the State of Florida was working cooperatively with the EPA to improve our water quality standards. However, in 2009, in an attempt to settle a lawsuit brought by environmental groups, the EPA decided to abandon that cooperative approach, federally preempt our water quality State standards, and impose new criteria on our State.

Like all Floridians, I want clean and safe water. For several years now, Florida has been working to improve its water quality, and in many respects, the State's efforts have been a model for other States throughout this country.

As Florida Wildlife Commissioner Ron Bergeron explains, "A water standard of 10 parts per billion required by numeric nutrient criteria, is more stringent," Mr. Speaker, "than rainwater which is 15 parts per billion, and is a quality of water that is humanly impossible to achieve."

Even the EPA's own Science Advisory Board has expressed serious concerns about the science used to support the regulation, and the EPA has repeatedly refused to allow a third-party review of the proposal.

But there is no doubt about one thing, Mr. Speaker. This mandate is poisonous to the economy. These regulations are not about whether we want clean water for Florida. These regulations are about how we reach that goal and at what cost.

This EPA mandate, which singles out the State of Florida, will drive up the cost of doing business, double water bills for all Florida families, and will destroy jobs. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection estimates this Federal mandate may force municipal wastewater and storm water utilities to spend as much as \$26 billion in capital improvements to upgrade their facilities. This \$26 billion will eventually be paid by each Floridian who uses water, and that means every resident.

A study by the University of Florida and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services concluded that the EPA's numeric nutrient criteria regulations would directly cost Florida's agricultural community roughly \$1 billion each year, with additional indirect costs also exceeding \$1 billion. This billion dollar cost eventually will be paid by every American who wants to enjoy an orange, a grapefruit, or other produce that comes from our State.

The study goes on to say that implementation of the EPA regulations could put more than 14,000 agricultural workers out of a job and would cost the average household up to \$990 in higher sewer rates. That is per year, per family, \$990 more in higher water bills.

Can our already stagnant economy in Florida take that? Will families move to Florida and choose to buy homes in

our already depressed housing market if they're going to have to pay nearly \$1,000 more in their annual water bills for years to come?

The EPA has repeatedly refused to allow any third-party review of the science behind the proposed mandate of numeric nutrient criteria. The EPA has also failed to complete an economic analysis.

In a disturbing article in *The New York Times* on February 16, 2011, an EPA official said they have no plans to implement this regulation in any other State except for the State of Florida.

Excessive EPA regulations hamper business expansion and job growth in nearly every industry. They hurt farmers. They hurt utility workers, pipe fitters, construction workers, coal miners, factory workers, truck drivers, and machinists.

Sixty national companies and dozens of Florida-based companies and organizations, including the United States Chamber of Commerce and the American Farm Bureau, have sent letters to the United States Congress to oppose these burdensome regulations.

Mr. Speaker, we must reduce the regulatory burden on our Nation's businesses and help put Americans back to work. We must get the Federal Government out of the way of our small businesses and entrepreneurs so that they can succeed and prosper.

When there is a need for regulations, they should be developed in concert with the private sector and, of course, done with common sense.

Over the last few months, the United States House of Representatives has passed more than two dozen bills designed to do just that—staunch the toxic regulatory flow coming from the Federal agencies. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, they're all still sitting on Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID's desk, which really does stink.

John Engler, the President of the Business Roundtable, recently stated that:

Regulations are hidden taxes that strangle job creation. We need action by government agencies to clear out obsolete rules and streamline permitting to reduce delays and impediments for companies to invest and grow.

The private sector is the only hope for future job creation. We need to recognize this and work together to let businesses, small and large, invest in people.

Mr. Speaker, I could not have said that any better.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the remainder of my time.

□ 1400

BUDGET AUTONOMY FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Members may be aware that I come to the floor occasionally in order to make certain that Members have the full background as they find themselves in the perplexing situation of receiving legislation on a local government and local residents.

We had a misunderstanding—I can only think it was a misunderstanding this week—when Senator RAND PAUL, who I know has been a student of history when it comes to the Constitution, engaged in actions that had the effect of compelling a bipartisan group of Senators to pull back their budget autonomy bill for the District of Columbia.

First, recognize that the Framers didn't go to war with American citizens, including citizens who live right in the very city in which we are now meeting, the District of Columbia, only to leave them out of the very franchise and local control that made the Framers commit what, I'm sure, the British believed were acts of treason when they rebelled against England for its refusal to recognize that taxes are a matter of local control. Bear in mind that those who went to war included the residents of this city and that the Framers in every respect showed that they respected the fact that the citizens of this city were included among those who went to war.

For example, in the transition period—10 years—as the District of Columbia moved to become the Nation's Capital—the four Framers of the Constitution from Maryland and from Virginia made sure through legislation that their members lost nothing, in as much as Maryland and Virginia had donated the land to the Nation for our Nation's Capital. Maryland and Virginia citizens were allowed to vote in their jurisdictions in Maryland and Virginia. They voted for Congress, and they were treated in every way like other Americans at that time. In 1802, when full transition to become the Nation's capital occurred, they lost what they had been promised. They lost their full rights as American citizens.

The District got back some of those rights under a Republican President 39 years ago when the District was granted home rule, the right to govern itself, under the Home Rule Act.

Richard Nixon said at the time:

I share the chagrin that most Americans feel at the fact that Congress continues to deny self-government to the Nation's Capital. I would remind the Congress that the Founding Fathers did nothing of the sort. Home rule was taken from the District only after more than 70 years of self-government, and this was done on grounds that were either factually shaky or morally doubtful.

So the Congress returned to the District some measure of home rule in 1973. In returning a good measure of home rule, the Congress nevertheless said to the District that, while it had

authority over its own budget, the budget had to come to the Congress of the United States before it became final.

We are trying, as I speak, to make sure that that budget does not become a vehicle for denying the very principles that the Framers fought for and that every American stands for. This is not a country where you can pay taxes and somebody else can have something to say over how those taxes will be used. That would cause another rebellion. When this matter was put to the American people in a recent poll, here is what they said: more than seven in 10 believe that the District of Columbia should control its own budget.

I suppose in America people are saying, Duh, of course. That's a basic founding principle. Why do you need to tell us that?

We need to tell you that because there are attempts here—and there was an attempt just this week in the Senate—that contradicted the increasing bipartisan consensus for local control by the District of its own local funds, funds that not one Member of this body has had anything to do with raising. So when you put that to the American people, you get a predictable answer: seven in 10 say yes to local control by the District alone of its own local funds.

What does that mean in terms of Democrats and Republicans?

Seventy-one percent of Democrats and, by the way, 72 percent of Republicans support it. I'm not surprised at those figures. Seventy-one percent of Democrats—and slightly more—72 percent of Republicans believe that the people who pay taxes and happen to live in their Nation's Capital should be treated as full American citizens when it comes to how they spend their own local funds.

That principle is not always recognized in this body, and that's why I've come to the floor today, because I do not believe that the failure to recognize this principle comes from venality. I think it comes because there is turnover in the Congress and because people don't focus on the anti-democratic bills that come before them, so they simply do what they are told to do. They don't do much analysis of their own about why they may be voting as a Member of Congress to overturn local laws.

Last year, the District of Columbia government was almost shut down three separate times. I don't think I could find a Member of this body—in fact, I'm sure I can't—who would say that when the Federal Government is engaged in a Federal fight over Federal spending that the District of Columbia should have to shut down, too; but that was the case because the District of Columbia local budget—its balanced budget (unlike our own)—which had been approved by the Appropriations Committee, was still here. Because it was still here and for no other reason, the District of Columbia three dif-

ferent times had to prepare for a shutdown of the city government, and had to prepare for the consequences of the possible violation of contracts and other serious consequences through no fault of their own.

It's important to note that a Senate appropriations bill this year does contain my no-shutdown bill for the District of Columbia, which simply says that the District of Columbia doesn't shut down if the Federal Government shuts down; of course, if the city is spending only its own local money, that's okay for the city to do.

When I refer to a bipartisan group of congressional leaders who support budget autonomy, I'm speaking of leaders who have been in the Congress, and have been in the District and have seen what the effects of not treating the District as a full local-controlled jurisdiction have been. In the House today, I am grateful to Chairman DARRELL ISSA, chairman of the committee with some jurisdiction over the District of Columbia, who is a leading proponent of budget autonomy for the District of Columbia, so much so that he has his own bill for budget autonomy, which is very much like my own.

□ 1410

In the Senate, Senator JOE LIEBERMAN and Senator SUSAN COLLINS had a bipartisan bill in committee this week for budget autonomy for the District of Columbia much like Chairman ISSA's. Budget autonomy has been supported by majority leader ERIC CANTOR. Budget autonomy has been supported by the Republican Governor of the State of Virginia.

When we note what happened in the Senate on the bill, we cannot believe that it came from animus or some sense that the District of Columbia is not a city whose citizens should be treated as other American citizens are treated. Yet, as the bill went to committee, Senator RAND PAUL appeared to have proposed any and every amendment he could think of, amendments that no self-respecting American jurisdiction could possibly abide, not because there is anything inherently wrong with these amendments, but because they violate what the voting majority of taxpaying residents of the District of Columbia have approved as local law.

The Senator did not stay he disagrees with this or that policy and he wants to make sure that the District does this or that thing. He said: I think it's a good way to call attention to some issues that have national implications. We don't have control over the States, but we do for D.C.

Oh, really? What control do you have over our local funds? Do you raise a cent of it?

This must be a misunderstanding. Since Senator RAND PAUL founded the Tea Party Caucus in the Senate and is the champion of small government and local control there, I choose to believe that this freshman Senator had not yet

come to grips with the rather complicated history of the Nation's capital. If he had, I don't think he would have put forward an amendment that would require the city to allow conceal-and-carry permits. We may not have a problem with conceal and carry in the United States, but that's not what the people of the District of Columbia, who pay taxes here, have written into their constitutional local laws.

Moreover, public safety is the essence of local control. If you look to the two or three issues that nobody should have anything to say about in another local jurisdiction, surely at the head of the list would be local police power, when that power is consistent with the Constitution.

Then a stream of other amendments came forward from Senator PAUL on abortion, one of them on licensed firearms dealer, one of them having to do with labor organizations. It's as if the Senator went down a checklist. He virtually said so himself. He said: What national issues can I highlight using the District of Columbia?—as if the city were nothing but a plaything and not a jurisdiction of 600,000 American citizens who have fought and died in every war, including the war that created the United States of America, of 600,000 citizens who pay the second highest Federal taxes per capita in the United States. That's 600,000 citizens, one of whom was killed in Afghanistan last month. It means 600,000 Americans who have every right to demand equal citizenship.

Nevertheless, good news, from bipartisan support and from national polls, continues to roll in. The Senate has just passed out of committee the D.C. budget. The most the Senate and the most the House should do is act as a pass-through as long as the D.C. budget does not violate the Constitution. Of course, no local budget belongs in the United States Congress. However, D.C. does not yet have budget autonomy. Yet there is nothing, in American principle or American history which says that once you have the local budget through here, you can just do anything you want to do, overturn local laws or restrict funds that Congress had nothing to do with raising.

I met Tea Party people for the first time when they came to Congress. I thought local control was their most basic principle. In fact, Senator RAND PAUL would like to get the Federal Government out of issues where the Constitution allows the Federal Government to be. But what about hopping over Federal issues and trying to interfere in the business of a local jurisdiction? That's against his principles; that's against everything the Framers stood for.

Polls within the last few months show that the overwhelming majority of Americans believe Congress should pass a D.C. budget without changes. Who is this overwhelming majority? Seventy eight percent of them are Democrats. Once again, Republicans lead the pack at 81 percent.

This is how the question was framed: "Today, Members of Congress are withholding approval of Washington, D.C.'s local budget unless the city agrees to a series of unrelated provisions on issues ranging from guns to abortion. Do you think Congress should or should not interfere in the city's local affairs and budget in this way?"

If anything, the issue was framed against D.C. Because you can bet your bottom dollar that of this 81 percent of Republicans who answered that Congress should not interfere with D.C.'s local affairs and budget were many who, in fact, oppose abortion and oppose any restrictions on guns or gun owners. Yet this is how they responded when asked a base question, a fundamental question regarding, if it is local money, should a national body in Washington have any right, whatsoever, to impose its will on a local budget.

Congress does lag occasionally behind the American people. This is a big lag. But the lag does not include several leaders of this House and of the Senate.

□ 1420

Senator JOE LIEBERMAN is retiring this year. He has been a champion of equal citizenship for the residents of the District of Columbia, whether it was voting rights or statehood or budget autonomy. Equal citizenship rights for District of Columbia citizens, in many ways, partially define his service.

Yet the first budget autonomy bill to pass at all in Congress came from Senator SUSAN COLLINS, when Democrats were in the minority. That was in 2003. That bill went all the way to the floor and was passed in a Republican Senate. It was the House that did not pass it or D.C. budget autonomy would be law today.

So when I speak of first principles, I think there is great evidence that those first principles resonate in the Senate and resonate in the House. They resonate in the House when Representative ISSA puts forward a budget autonomy bill, it resonates in the House, when Majority Leader CANTOR, in fact, says he supports budget autonomy.

I don't believe that the average Member even desires the opportunity to use 600,000 American citizens as playthings through a local budget. We joust with one another. We disagree with one another. But I don't believe when it comes to this serious matter that if we had an opportunity, one on one, to speak with Members of this body they would give you a justification for a federal body overturning the will of the people of a local jurisdiction.

That is why I say this afternoon that by assuming that disparate treatment of any American citizens, even those who live in the District of Columbia, must reflect a misunderstanding that I hope, by coming to the floor from time

to time, I can help clear up. Unequal treatment of American citizens flies in the face of the very principles that particularly Members of this House have professed from the moment the 112th Congress convened: Get the Federal Government out of our lives, even where the Federal Government has historically been in our lives; get the Federal Government out of any opportunity to get involved in our lives.

Witness the view of Republicans on the Affordable Health Care Act. Up with local control, and when it comes to local money, hands off.

You might imagine that when the District raises \$6 billion from local citizens, they wouldn't want anybody telling them anything about how to spend their local funds. The District spends that money on some matters and in some ways that are different from the way the jurisdictions of my colleagues spend their own money. Isn't tolerating these differences what is most wonderful about America?

The Framers put together a nation that was very different, that has kept us from going to war with one another over issues by above all separating out local from Federal, meaning if you stay in your part, we won't go there. We will only go where matters of national concern are to be found. That was the promise.

I must say, to my colleagues, that's the promise that's been kept for every American district, except my own. And that is why I have called Senator RAND PAUL. I have not been able to speak to him yet. I am going to ask to sit down with him. I am going to walk over to the Senate to see if I can have a good conversation with him about the District of Columbia, because I have no reason to believe, given his own short history in the Senate, that he means to do anything but carry out his own originalist principles, his principles that local control is different from Federal intervention. Given a conversation, we can at least make some headway on what the District means to our country and how the citizens of this city feel when they are basically kicked around.

We're powerless to do anything about it. If a bill comes to the floor which keeps us from spending our own money, every Member of this body can vote on that bill except the Member that represents the District of Columbia because, as of yet, the Congress has not, in fact, given the District the voting rights that we have given to the people of Afghanistan and Iraq, with citizens from the District of Columbia among those fighting for their freedom. So I don't think anybody would blame us for coming forward to ask for what every other American takes for granted.

What is truly gratifying to me, even as I complain about the withdrawal of a budget autonomy bill in committee, which Senator JOE LIEBERMAN and Senator SUSAN COLLINS had worked so hard to perfect, what encourages me is,

first, the leadership we have in the House for budget autonomy, the leadership that continues to stand strong with us in the Senate. But most of all, Mr. Speaker, what encourages me is what these two charts tell us about our country, tell us about what the American public believes, tells us what they overwhelmingly believe—that American citizens have a right when it comes to their own funds raised by them and them alone.

Yes, I take heart in the fact that while there are only small differences between Democrats and Republicans on subject autonomy, those who most favor control of the city's own budget by its own local citizens are Republicans, who are, it seems to me, only confirming their own principles.

And when it comes to whether or not the Congress, when the D.C. budget comes here, should pass it clean, just as it was when it came, or should in some way use it to profile national issues, you have even greater majorities essentially sending Congress a message that it should pass the D.C. local budget without changes. Seventy-eight percent of Democrats and 81 percent of Americans regard this as something of a truism. My colleagues represent the people included in these massive majorities.

I don't expect my colleagues to spend a lot of time on the District of Columbia. I ask only that when the budget of a local jurisdiction comes here that there be some thought behind what you do when you have the vote on that budget and I do not. In a real sense, I ask you to put yourself in my position. I am a Member of the House of Representatives. I have the same standing that all of you have, except I do not have a vote.

I would be so bold as to ask my colleagues to put themselves in my position when they see Members of this House or Members of the Senate try to direct the District about how it ought to spend its own local funds. I ask you to put yourself in my position because I think there would be some genuine empathy with the position in which I find myself, representing 600,000 citizens who have lived up to every obligation of citizenship ever since the founding of the Republic of which they have always been a part, but never with equal citizenship.

We will continue to come forward in good faith and in the spirit of understanding and in the hope that, with greater highlighting of the discrepancies between professed principles and how they are occasionally carried out, change will come in a country which is always striving to live up to its own ideals.

I yield back the balance of my time.
[From the Washington Post, June 27, 2012]

RAND PAUL'S SITUATIONAL PRINCIPLE
(By Editorial Board)

Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) came to Washington on the wave of the tea party movement to limit big government. "I think a lot of things could be handled locally . . . the

more local the better, and the more common sense the decisions are, rather than having a federal government make those decisions," he said during his 2010 campaign. So how to explain his spoiling a move to give the District autonomy over its own tax dollars by—and this is really rich—injecting the federal government into local affairs?

We thought we could no longer be surprised by congressional hypocrisy when it comes to the nation's capital, but Mr. Paul's willingness to turn his back on his supposed libertarian principles and devotion to local rule is truly stunning.

A bill that would give D.C. officials the ability to spend local dollars—we repeat, locally collected, locally paid tax dollars—without congressional approval was pulled from consideration this week after Mr. Paul introduced a set of amendments that would dictate to the city policies on guns, abortions and unions. "The last senator I would expect it from," said Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.), telling us that she has never seen so many amendments offered at one time by a single member to restrict D.C. rights. Ironically, Ilir Zherka, head of the advocacy group DC Vote, said that Mr. Paul initially had been seen as a potential ally for the District because of his views on small government.

Mr. Paul told The Post's Ben Pershing, "I think it's a good way to call attention to some issues that have national implications. We don't have [control] over the states, but we do for D.C." In other words, "I am doing this because I can"—not exactly the argument one expects to hear from someone who has railed about federal intrusion. As Mr. Zherka pointed out, Mr. Paul's brief for small government is not whether the federal government has the power but whether it should use it.

A spokesman for Mr. Paul e-mailed us a reminder that the District is not a state but a federal jurisdiction: "Efforts to change that have failed, and until it is changed it is not only the prerogative but the duty of Congress to have jurisdiction over the Federal District." What we don't get is how someone who raises the banner of a movement inspired by a time when Americans were ruled without representation could be so unsympathetic to the rights of D.C. citizens who are in the same position.

□ 1430

SUPREME COURT HEALTH CARE DECISION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. It's always an honor to speak before the House of Representatives, a great storied history here, just as the Supreme Court has a great storied history. There's some moments in time with regard to the United States Supreme Court which show it to have consisted of a bastion of strong-willed, determined, principled, constitutionally minded Justices. There are other times when the Supreme Court has shown itself to consist of some great judges and some who are more interested in politics, more interested in feathering their friends' nests than they are in doing what was right under the Constitution, even though it was easy enough for them to ration-

alize that, gee, if they did what helped their friends, then obviously that would make it better for the whole country.

I think we get some of that rationalization from this administration. Gee, if they just throw billions or hundreds of billions of dollars at friends, then their friends will do better. And if their friends are doing better, surely the rest of the country would. We have also found that to be true with regard to things like Solyndra and the massive number of other cronies of the administration that have received hundreds of billions of dollars over time and also at a time when this country is sorely hurting from overspending and running up debt.

In fact, today we had a bill regarding transportation and a conference report. I know my friend JOHN MICA from Florida worked exceedingly hard, as had other members of Transportation, trying to reach an agreement with the conference report. It looked like the Senate got the better end of the deal. But I know these people, I know their hearts, and I know they try to do what is right for America when it comes to Chairman MICA and those who are assisting him.

But, nonetheless, we heard our friends across the aisle over and over today talk about how critically important infrastructure is, how we ought to be spending money, and how just \$1 billion added to the transportation budget could really make a tremendous difference. I hearken back to a year-and-a-half ago when the President of the United States, Barack Obama, had told people that if you will give me basically a trillion—whether it's \$800 billion, \$900 billion, apparently it looked more like a trillion dollars by the time it was finished—you just hand me over a trillion bucks and we'll get this economy going. If you don't give it to me, then it will turn out that we may see as high as 8.5 percent unemployment. But if you do give it to me, we'll never see 8.

Of course, he was wrong that we would never see 8 percent unemployment. We've gone for many months—I guess that was 3½ years ago now—that he was telling us about his big stimulus. How quickly time flies.

As the transportation proponents were pushing their bill today and talking about what the good infrastructure will do, many of us believed that was true back in January of 2009, that it would be good. If we're going to spend money on anything, spend it on the things that we really need to do: bridges, roads, all these things that need construction, need renovation.

So the President sold America large-ly on his stimulus because we're going to fix all the infrastructure in America. But the last 3½ years have borne out that the President did not spend \$800 billion, \$900 billion on infrastructure. He spent maybe 6 percent of the largest giveaway in American history. He surpassed the terrible mistake that

TARP was—\$700 billion. And we haven't been able to get an exact number, but of the \$700 billion, it may be \$450 billion-or-so that his administration inherited. So when you get the \$800 billion, \$900 billion, trillion-dollar stimulus giveaway—porkulus, as some called it—and you combine that with \$400 billion, \$450 billion, \$500 billion that he was able to inherit from the TARP fund, you think maybe a trillion and a trillion-and-a-half dollars he had to give away.

And we hear debate over what difference \$1 billion would make. He was talking about a thousand times that for infrastructure. And he spent a tiny fraction on infrastructure, preferring instead to have massive grants and giveaways to programs that were his cronies, his pets, that are now producing no dividends and in fact are increasing further debt.

So we hear those things, how wonderful infrastructure would be, and yet we know when we as a Congress provided this administration with massive amounts of money for infrastructure, they diverted it. They did more damage to the country than they did good. And we look at the people that this President has surrounded himself with. He had a Solicitor General named Elena Kagan. The Solicitor General's job is to assist the White House, assist the administration with potential legislation that may come to litigation, assist them with litigation. As I know from working 30 years ago in the private sector, you can't advise people about existing litigation and do your job without advising them about the way to avoid future litigation problems that you run into.

So we know that the biggest legislative agenda item for this administration was the complete takeover of health care. And as most thinking people would understand, if you could control all health care, you can pretty well control all people. You get to decide who gets what treatments, who can have a new hip, who can have a new knee, who can have radiation therapy, who can have the surgery. And as one secretary in my hometown pointed out, her mother acquired breast cancer in England, and since the English Government's wonderful health care system decided how long you had to wait before you could get to have diagnostic tests done, before you could have therapeutic activity occur, her mother didn't get the diagnostic tests in time to find out she had it for sure, didn't get the surgery in time, didn't get the treatment in time and she said, My mother died of breast cancer because she lived in England and the government was in charge of health care.

□ 1440

She said I have been found to have cancer since I've been here in the U.S., and because the government was not in charge of my health care, I got it diagnosed in time. I got treatment in time.