I remember in 1993 reading an article in Forbes magazine, one of the Nation's most conservative magazines. This article said that we had quadrupled the Justice Department just between 1980 and 1993 and that Federal prosecutors were falling all over themselves trying to find cases to prosecute. We have kept on expanding the Justice Department since then and have had explosive growth in the number of Federal crimes.

We have had far too many cases where overzealous prosecutors have prosecuted high-profile defendants just so that a prosecutor could make a name for himself. I remember the totally unjustified case against Secretary of Labor, Ray Donovan, in which, after he was acquitted, made the famous statement: ''Where do I go to get my reputation back?''

Our Federal Government has become far too big, and it is far too powerful. We all have heard how particularly the IRS is running roughshod over individual citizens. Newsweek magazine a few years had on its cover: ''Inside The IRS—Lawless, Abusive, and Out of Control.''

Unfortunately, while there are many good Federal prosecutors, there are far too many of them and, unfortunately, some who, like the IRS, are lawless, abusive, and out of control.

Mr. Speaker, there are now so many laws, rules, and regulations on the books today that people are being prosecuted for violating laws they didn't even know were in existence.

Paul Larkin, whom I quoted earlier, said that we need a ''mistake of law'' defense. An innocent mistake is not supposed to be criminal, but a zealous prosecutor can make even an innocent mistake look criminal, and there is an old saying that a prosecutor could indict a ham sandwich if he wanted to.

Almost everyone has violated some tax law—they are so convoluted and confusing—and almost every person in any type of business has unknowingly violated some law, rule, or regulation for which they could be prosecuted.

That is why, yesterday, we had at our hearing a conservative Republican like Senator JOHN CORNYN, a former justice of the Texas Supreme Court; and Senator CORY BOOKER, a liberal Democrat; and a conservative like Representative SENSENBRENNER; and a liberal like Representative BOBBY SCOTT—all joining together to urge reform.

Lastly, let me mention one other aspect of our Nation's crime problem. In my years as a judge, I handled over 10,000 cases because probably 97 or 98 percent of the defendants enter some type of guilty plea and then apply for probation.

Every day, for 7½ years, I would read several 8- or 10-page reports into a defendant's background, and I would read, ''Defendant's father left home when defendant was 2 and never returned,'' or ''Defendant's father left home to get a pack of cigarettes and never came back.''

Mr. Speaker, over 90 percent of the defendants in felony cases in my court came from father-absent households. Drugs and/or alcohol are involved in most cases, but they are secondary to the absent father problem.

Years ago, I read a report that said 57 percent of marriages break up in arguments, disputes, or disagreements about money. As government has grown so much at all levels, Federal, State, and local over the past 40 or 50 years, it has become a major factor in the breakup of the American family by taking so much money and making it so much more difficult for families to stay together.

This, Mr. Speaker, has had a major impact on our Nation's crime problem.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in order to stand in strong support of a foundational American law and principle that I feel has been woefully neglected recently. I rise in defense of the First Amendment, which in part states: ''Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.''

Due to the recent Supreme Court decision on marriage, I feel that the First Amendment is at risk of being horribly violated in the name of judicial activism. I am deeply concerned for the First Amendment rights of all American citizens and feel strongly that the Court did not act within its limited constitutional constraints.

Due to this decision, Mr. Speaker, there now exists a direct conflict between the law of man and the law of God, and we have tens of millions of Americans who are now facing a dilemma to choose between their faith and their religious convictions and the government. As Christians, we must obey the law of God.

This decision by the Supreme Court is devastating, and it directly ignored the will of the people and the will of most States. It was a direct rejection of previously held decisions; it rejected dozens of State laws and Constitutions, and, yes, it rejected God's law.

In effect, this decision took the people's prerogative and the States' prerogative and threw it out the window in favor of incorrectly defining and interpreting that which is detrimental to our First Amendment, the First Amendment which guarantees not only the freedom of speech, but also the freedom of religious expression without fear of harassment or penalty from our government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we must find different avenues where citizens and lawmakers can get involved to address this egregious offense to our First Amendment. In my home State of Georgia, local legislatures are considering the Pastor Protection Act which would endeavor to ensure that no pastor or minister or house of faith would be forced to perform a wedding that they believe violates their religious beliefs. That is good, but we must do more. It is a good first step.

Frankly, it is my hope that other States would raise the mantle of our Constitution and protect it and protect not just pastors and ministers, but all citizens, including businessmen and -women.

In addition to State action, Congress also must be heavily involved at this time. As an initial step, I am personally proud to have cosponsored H.R. 2802, the First Amendment Defense Act, offered by my good friend and colleague Representative RAÚL LABRADOR from Idaho.

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This bill includes many provisions that would both reaffirm and safeguard our First Amendment rights. It would ensure that the Federal Government could not penalize institutions, churches, and individuals for simply exercising their First Amendment right.

Furthermore, it prohibits the Federal Government from blocking access due to deeply held religious convictions from those who are seeking grants or licenses or contracts or accreditation or tax-exempt status. I believe this bill would help greatly to deal with the uncertainty that currently is held by millions.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, it is my sincere hope and desire that we can all come together to defend our First Amendment. I think DANIEL WEBSTER said it best when he said:

> If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on to prosper, but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity.

I, for one, Mr. Speaker, will continue fighting for our First Amendment.

HIGHWAY TRUST FUND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RIBBLE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, this body is going to come together and in bipartisan fashion—I think that is normally a good thing, in bipartisan fashion—be able to applaud themselves for fixing the highway trust fund. Like the proverbial magician that takes the shiny object in one hand to distract you, they will, with sleight of hand, with the other hand borrow $8.1 billion when the American people aren't watching.

I want to refer you to the chart on my left. You will see three lines. I want to talk about the bottom two first.

The very bottom line is the revenue line. That is the amount of money we receive from excise taxes and gasoline taxes to pay for roads and bridges and infrastructure. The red line above it is

the expenditures. That is the money that we are spending. The difference between the two is the deficit. That is the borrowed money. I will show you where it is.

For decades—for decades—we have been adding red ink to the American people's debt. We have been borrowing billions of dollars annually each year to spend on our infrastructure rather than telling the American people the truth: that if we believe as Members of Congress and this body that roads and bridges and airports are important enough to buy, they are important enough to pay for. But we don't want to do that. We don't want to tell the American people we are going to raise taxes.

But I want you to know that this afternoon when we borrow $1.8 billion to build roads and bridges, we are going to raise taxes. Here is what I mean. We are going to raise taxes on kids, on our children, on my 11-year-old grandson. Do you want to know why? Because we don't want to tell them, we don't want to tell adults today that they have to pay for the roads and bridges that they buy today. What we would rather do is say you can have these things for free. We are going to wave the shiny magic object here. We are going to borrow money while telling the American people it is paid for, and then we are going to ask our children when they grow up to buy our roads and bridges when the bill comes due.

We are perfectly fine on raising taxes on kids, raising taxes on children. Do you want to know why? Because they can't vote. So let's tell them they have got to pay for this stuff rather than us paying for this stuff. Remember, all deficit spending is nothing more than future taxation.

What is the top line here, the hash line? Back in 1992, the last time that we raised the national gas tax, Congress, before I came here and before many of my colleagues came here, decided not to index the gas tax to inflation. So our purchasing power is disappearing because we have left it where it is.

Now, I am going to use a green pen here. All that green is lost opportunity.

I don't know how many of you have flown into LaGuardia, JFK, O'Hare, these international airports. They are the international gateway to the United States economy, and they are also an international embarrassment on a global scale.

We continue to let these places degrade and fall apart, and yet none of us in our own spending would do that in our homes. If the roof leaks, we fix it. If the House needs painting, we paint it. We take care of these things and maintain them because they are our assets. They are what we are passing on to the next generation. We have lost all this opportunity.

What I would much rather see is either we are honest with the American people, Mr. Speaker, and say, if it is worth buying and worth doing, we should pay for it, and then raise the taxes necessary to do that, like Ronald Reagan did, like George Bush did, like Dwight Eisenhower did—all Republican Presidents. They said it is worth paying for. Let's not burden our children. Let's not tax them. If it is worth doing that, we should do that.

If it is not worth doing that, we should bring our expenditures down to the revenue level and not spend the money in the first place so that we are sending a clear message back to each of the States that are getting Federal largess on highways and roads that we are not going to do that and that you need to raise your taxes to cover the gap.

Both of those ideas would be better than what we are doing right now, which is nothing but a magic trick on children, and we ought to stop it.

IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I don't know how adequately to express my alarm and outrage over the President's agreement with Iran. It is a breathtakingly dangerous act. Some have compared it to Neville Chamberlain's Munich accord with Nazi Germany, but that does not fully illustrate the danger. In this case, we are talking about a rogue state with all of Nazi Germany's genocidal intentions, but this one will be armed with nuclear weapons.

In its preamble, the agreement asserts that Iran will comply with the nuclear nonproliferation treaty that it signed long ago. Well, wait a second. If it had obeyed this treaty, we wouldn't be having this discussion to begin with now, would we?

The fact is that Iran has a well-established and consistent record of routinely violating international law. Its intention to acquire nuclear weapons is obvious.

The immediate effect of the President's action is to release hundreds of billions of dollars of direct and indirect resources to Iran with which its government can pursue its military and terrorist activities, activities that aren't even addressed in this agreement. It is sobering to consider that Iran's extensive terrorist operations, which reportedly now reach into South America, are about to get a huge infusion of cash.

But lifting the sanctions does far more damage than merely releasing resources to this outlaw regime with which to kill Israelis and Americans, as its leader vowed to do just last week. The sanctions were having a major impact on destabilizing the regime according to all of the Iranian expatriates I have talked with. Relieving those sanctions undermines what had been a rapidly building uprise against the regime from within.

Over the last several years, the Iranian opposition had grown dramatically for two reasons: there was a strong and growing perception among the Iranian people that the Iranian dictatorship was a pariah in the international community, and that the resulting international economic sanctions had created conditions that make the regime's overthrow imperative—that is, until Barack Obama blundered onto the scene.

This agreement cannot be verified. We are now learning that the 24/7 access to inspections promised by the President does not exist. Under this agreement, the regime can stall any inspection for many weeks or even months.

The President's promise that violations will result in a snapback of sanctions is also completely empty. Restoring sanctions would require the assent of China and Russia, something much less likely, given our rapidly deteriorating relations with them.

And even if Iran scrupulously abided by every detail of the agreement, they can continue to run centrifuges for low-level enrichment, continue their research and development of advanced centrifuges, continue their heavy water research, and within 8 years acquire intercontinental ballistic missiles. That means, even under this agreement, within a decade, Iran will have a nuclear breakout capability and the launch vehicles necessary to deliver those weapons anywhere in the world with the solemn vow of its government to wipe Israel and the United States off the map.

Indeed, just last week, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff warned: ''Under no circumstances should we relieve pressure on Iran relative to ballistic missile capabilities and arms trafficking.'' Yet a week later, that is exactly what this agreement does.

The President says there is no alternative. Well, this is utter nonsense. The sanctions were working. The domestic resistance to this Islamic-fascist dictatorship mustered over 100,000 Iranian expatriates at its annual meeting in Paris last month. This movement desperately needs the moral and material support of our Nation to bring down this regime from within. That is precisely what this administration has denied them.

Last month, I fear the Congress became complicit in this agreement by adopting a completely extraconstitutional process for ratification that I believe was a sham. Instead of two-thirds vote of the Senate to approve treaties, it requires an almost impossible two-thirds vote of both Houses to reject it as an agreement. But at this moment in time, nothing is more important to the world than for two-thirds of this Congress to repudiate this dangerous falling.

Despite all of the indignities, retreats, and self-inflicted wounds our country has endured these past 6½ years, the freedom-loving people of the