

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TRAFICANT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

UNFAIRNESS IN TAX CODE:  
MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

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

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, questions are often asked why should we pass the Marriage Tax Elimination Act, and I think a series of questions best explain why. Do Americans feel that it is fair that working married couples pay more, that they pay higher taxes than identical couples living together outside of marriage? Do Americans feel that it is fair that 21 million married working couples pay on the average of \$1,400 more in higher taxes just because they are married? Do Americans feel that it is fair that there is actually an incentive in our Tax Code which encourages divorce? Of course not.

Americans recognize the marriage tax penalty is unfair, that 21 million married working couples pay \$1,400 more in higher taxes just because they are married. On the south side of Chicago and the south suburbs, \$1,400 is 1 year's tuition at Joleit Junior College, 3 months of day care at a local day care center in the south suburbs.

The Marriage Tax Elimination Act, which would eliminate the marriage tax penalty, eliminate it now, now has 238 cosponsors. It deserves bipartisan support. Let us eliminate the marriage tax penalty. Let us eliminate it now.

## THE CONSTITUTION NEVER INTENDED TO BAN SCHOOL PRAYER

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, America is still in shock. Two boys, age 11 and 13, gunned down four young students in a middle school in Arkansas, and the experts are asking what happened to parents? What happened to values? What happened to our schools?

Schools are overrun with drugs, violence, guns, rape, murder, and now even mass murder. It seems America's schools have everything, Congress, everything except prayer. Maybe the so-called experts might finally realize that a nation that denies God in our schools is a nation that encourages the devil in our schools. The Constitution never, never intended to ban school prayer and never intended to separate God and the American people. Think about it.

## YUCCA MOUNTAIN IS NOT SUITABLE FOR NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE

(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, when I was a child, people thought that little green men lived on Mars and that the Moon was made of cheese. That was when imagination was stronger than science. Unfortunately, many of my colleagues look at transporting and storing nuclear waste in much the same way.

A recent scientific study claimed that the proposed storage site at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, is at least 10 times, that is right, 10 times more prone to earthquakes and lava flows than government scientists previously estimated. Nevada ranks third in the Nation for current earthquake activity.

Recognition and proper use of this information could potentially save thousands of lives. With over 30 earthquakes a year, clearly, Yucca Mountain is not suitable, and it may very well be the worst place to store the deadliest material man has ever created.

The space program proved that little green men did not live on Mars. And as long as the DOE applies this new scientific information, America will not force little green people to live in Nevada.

## SECOND ANNUAL UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER CONFERENCE TO BE HELD ON CAPITOL HILL TOMORROW

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

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, the second annual U.S.-Mexico Border Conference will be held on Capitol Hill. The purpose of this conference is to familiarize Members of Congress and their staff with the unique changes facing the U.S.-Mexico border.

Speakers from the border area will address issues under consideration by Congress that directly affected the southwest border, including infrastructure and economic development, education and the workforce, immigration and drug trafficking, health and the environment. The luncheon keynote speaker will be Ambassador of Mexico to the United States Jesus Reyes-Heroles.

During this 1-day event, you will hear about the effects of immigration policy, problems with illegal drugs, dislocated workers, the economy of both sides of the border, and the strain on our border infrastructure due to issues in NAFTA, and health care will also be discussed.

I hope that you will join me and the U.S.-Mexico Chamber of Commerce as we explore the needs of our 2,000-mile border with Mexico and discuss serious

policy issues concerning the U.S.-Mexican border. I urge my colleagues to come and spend 1 day learning about the U.S.-Mexican border.

## TAX SYSTEM IN THIS COUNTRY IS ANTIFAMILY

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I see a lot of problems with our current tax burden, but today I want to highlight one of the biggest. The tax system in this country is antifamily. American families today spend more money on taxes than they spend on food, clothing and housing combined. They are taxed for most everything they do, even for taking the first step in getting married.

The marriage penalty is just one of many antifamily taxes in this country. It penalizes more than 21 million couples an average of \$1,400 annually simply because they are married. In my opinion, this penalty goes against the tradition moral fabric of our Nation.

It is past time that we terminate the marriage penalty and other antifamily taxes that are placing such a tremendous burden on American families. Mr. Speaker, we need to be helping families, not penalizing families.

## MORALITY IN LEADERSHIP

(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, the current situation at the White House has, at some point, caused each of us to pause and ask how has this soap opera changed the debate in this country? What do people care about? Is it really just the economy, stupid? Or do American citizens, as I know each of us wants to believe, hope for a truly honest and moral individual in the White House and, for that matter, in all positions of leadership.

Whatever happened to the expecting leaders who exemplified ideals of fidelity, character, honesty, and trustworthiness. If our children are not seeing these traits in us from the White House to the Halls of Congress, can we expect them to hold this high and timeless standard for themselves?

How unfortunate, the first thing that Americans now think of when we hear the name, President Clinton, has nothing to do with an African safari or balanced budget. What message is Bill Clinton sending to America? By his silence, is Bill Clinton condoning improper behavior? When will the Americans finally hear the truth? Character counts. It is that simple.

## PUT THE SOCIAL SECURITY SURPLUS IN A TRUE TRUST FUND

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

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, not since Neil Armstrong walked on the Moon and Mod Squad was on our television screens in the houses of America, the New York Mets were on their way back to one of the best come-back stories in baseball history, have we had a balanced budget or surplus in the budget.

But it is true, this year we are on our way to a budget surplus. So how does Washington react? The President goes out and breaks last year's budget agreement and calls for \$56 billion in new spending. And there you go, status quo in Washington.

Why do we have this balanced budget to begin with? Well, a couple things. Number one, we have slowed down the growth of government spending. Number two, we have a robust economy. And number three, sadly to say, we have put the Social Security surplus in with general revenues.

I believe, as do most Republican Members of Congress, if you want to put Social Security first and protect and preserve it, not just for the current generation of retirees, but for future generations, that you must separate the Social Security surplus and take it off budget and put it in a true trust fund with a fire wall from general revenue. I believe that is the number one thing this Congress should be doing.

#### U.S. SHOULD LEARN HOW TO DISPOSE OF NUCLEAR WASTE

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my personal welcome to the distinguished members of the House of Commons, the Parliament of Canada. They are members of the Canadian Parliament Committee on International Relations and Trade.

They have expressed an interest to discuss with our colleagues the important issues of nuclear nonproliferation and its impact, not only to our Nation, to the region, and to the world for that matter.

Mr. Speaker, with approximately a \$34 billion budget for the production and safeguard for our own nuclear arsenal, Mr. Speaker, we do not even know what to do with the billions of dollars expended on what to do with nuclear waste.

Why is Nevada made the only State to carry such a tremendous burden? We have developed the technology on perfecting the nuclear trigger, Mr. Speaker, but we do not even know how to control nuclear waste. What a travesty, Mr. Speaker. We need to look a little closer into this important issue.

#### SUPPORT BESTEA

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

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2400, the Building Efficient Surface Transportation and Equity Act or BESTEA. The House will consider BESTEA on Wednesday, and I urge my colleagues to support this violation legislation.

BESTEA provides \$217 billion in contract authority from the Highway Trust Fund over the next 6 years. This amount represents a 43 percent increase in funding over the 6 years of ISTE. Further, this legislation was off the Transportation Trust Fund and ends the assault on the fund to mask the deficit and fund other domestic priorities.

A few of my colleagues have expressed concern over funding levels in BESTEA, and I would like to address this for a moment. Mr. Speaker, BESTEA keeps our commitment to the American people to spend gas tax revenue solely for transportation.

Mr. Speaker, I am a budget hawk who came here to balance the budget. BESTEA ends the Washington charade of masking the deficit with money that should have been spent on the Nation's transportation. I look forward to the overwhelming passage of BESTEA Wednesday and urge my colleagues to support it.

#### CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

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

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, certainly the American people have a great deal of cynicism and outright apathy some days about the United States Congress because of the way that they handle campaign finance reform and other kinds of activities, sometimes late at night, sometimes at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, and sometimes not at all.

Tonight, I think we have the worst of all possible worlds. The Republican leadership has put an important issue to the American people, campaign finance reform, on the Suspension Calendar. Many Members are coming back home. They will not even be able to be involved in the debate. It requires two-thirds vote for passage on the Suspension Calendar. That is an unbelievably high hurdle or obstacle to overcome for any bill, let alone campaign finance. So we have got more and more cynicism, more and more distrust of our system here in Washington, D.C.

Let us debate this bill in the middle of the day so the American people can pay attention and decide which way they think legitimate campaign finance reform needs to go.

#### CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

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

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today just to point out to the House what we have been doing this year when we have been here, both the House and the Senate when they began looking into campaign filings of the White House.

This House subpoenaed 587 subpoenas. They deposed 114 people. They held 13 days of public hearings. They had 33 witnesses. The House gave them \$5 million. On the Senate side figures are about the same, only the Senate gave them \$3.5 million.

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In addition to what the House gave the committee they have now appropriated another \$1.8 million, and what have we gotten for it? Nothing but a sham.

These bills that come before my colleagues tonight are bills that require a two-thirds vote. Most of the Members of Congress are not even here for the debate. This is not campaign finance reform, this is a travesty on democracy.

#### CYNICISM IN THE AMERICAN ELECTORATE

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

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I began my political career after I left the University of Hawaii, was teaching at Leeward Community College, had little or nothing in the way of fiscal resources. We had the backing of young people, ran a grass roots campaign in 1974 when we had campaign expenditure limits. No matter how wealthy one was, and I was up against candidates who had great wealth available to them, we could not spend any more than the amount that was allocated.

We will not have an opportunity today to even debate whether we can get democracy back to the ordinary person. That is why we have such cynicism in the electorate today. And the approach today, and I ask my Republican colleagues to take this into account, I do not want to make this a partisan issue; but if we put this bill forward today with the two-thirds requirement when the membership is not even here, it will add to the cynicism of the American people that prevents young people from being able to run for office or even consider it.

Please do not move forward with this bill today.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GIBBONS). Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5, rule I, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV.