

I see the ideal measure as one that fosters competition, avoids Federal mandates, and lowers rates for all consumers. To create this legislation, we must eliminate outdated laws, inject fairness into the process, and delineate the proper role of the Federal Government and State governments. But do not misunderstand me. Reforming the electric industry is no simple matter. This is an enormous undertaking. Next January, in the 106th Congress, we will consider the livelihoods of entire industries, constitutional questions, and the interests of the entire rate-paying public. Accordingly, we must address these points to fully realize the benefits of energy reform:

Every customer must benefit from this deregulation, not just the large industrial users of electricity. I am concerned that any rush next year in reforming the electric utility industry could result in large industrial users seeing greater benefits, while residential users and small businesses would pay for that benefit. One must look at the State-level experiences of Massachusetts and California to see that if we do not effectively address consumer issues, we will certainly face a consumer backlash. The ballot measures in these States underscore how unique the electric power industry is: it permeates every aspect of our lives and, of course, our economy.

We must honor past regulatory schemes and commitments and allow recovery of stranded investments. Electric utilities incurred "stranded costs" under a regulatory scheme not of their own choosing. These utilities made long-term decisions based upon decades of regulation. To deny industry recovery of these costs would go against the fairness that I spoke of earlier. That being said, lower rates would be fostered by real deregulation and industrial and regulation innovation, not by just merely shifting costs. We should not merely "reshuffle the deck," so to speak, on who pays.

A significant hurdle to deregulation is the diverse nature of power generators, including public power providers, municipalities, investor-owned utilities, and Power Marketing Associations. Reconciling these disparate views will be a monumental task, no doubt, yet fairness demands that we produce a level playing field for all energy providers and transmitters.

Reforming the energy industry on a Federal level means clarifying the roles of the Federal and State governments. Where does the Federal responsibility end and the State responsibility begin? The diverse situation among the States adds to the difficulties of this reform. Some States have always supported regulation; others have taken progressive stances, while still others, like my home State of Florida, enjoy the benefits of moderately priced electricity, and, of course, they see very little need for reform.

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Eliminating the barriers to entry into the electricity market is fundamental, of course, to this reform. We must repeal, one, the Public Utility Regulatory Policy Act, PURPA, and the Public Utilities Holding Company Act, PUHCA, to ensure that any transition to retail competition should be truly competitive.

The entire efficacy of PURPA centered on the supposition that producing electricity would become more expensive. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it has become cheaper. Thanks to PURPA, Americans will pay \$38 billion in higher electricity bills over the next 10 years than they normally would have.

In conclusion, deregulation of the electric industry requires consideration of a myriad of factors. The stakes are high but so, of course, are the benefits. In the 106th Congress let us not rush. Let us work together and consider all these issues.

TRIBUTE TO CONGRESSMAN ESTEBAN TORRES

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

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I just want to take a few minutes to give my appreciation to a great leader in this Congress but also a great leader in the Hispanic community. As this term ends, the gentleman from California (Mr. TORRES) will be retiring. I have had the honor of working with ESTEBAN for the past 30 years. I first met him when he was involved with Telecue, a community based organization, whose objective was to give a voice to the Hispanic community in southern California.

He was very effective in organizing that organization and today in southern California many Mexican Americans have great pride in this organization. ESTEBAN was recognized for the fine work that he did when he was named ambassador, and he served for many years in Paris, representing this great country and was called by President Carter to come back to the White House and work in his administration.

ESTEBAN was a voice for many of us. ESTEBAN was an advocate for us and again gave us great leadership. Since he has been in the Congress, he has been involved in many endeavors. Whether it be civil rights, betterment of education, ensuring that the Smithsonian Institute reflected the makeup of our country in terms of its diversity, ESTEBAN has been out there.

I know that very recently he was honored because of a scholarship program he promoted on a national basis. The people of Miami, Arizona, are very proud because ESTEBAN was born in Arizona but moved to California to continue his career.

On a personal note, Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you that ESTEBAN has been

a friend, a mentor and a leader for me personally. It is with great regret that I see him retire from this great institution, but I know that he and Arcy are going to have a great time with their grandchildren and their children, but I know that he will continue to be the advocate that he has been for our community.

So I congratulate ESTEBAN for the fine work he has done. We are going to miss him, but we know that he is still going to be out there for us.

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PASTOR. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his tribute to me during this special order. Indeed, I am honored. He mentioned Miami, Arizona. It should be noted for my colleagues here that the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. PASTOR) and I are both natives of Miami, Arizona, a small mining town in southeastern Arizona. He comes from that stock of people who have worked hard to make this nation what it is today, and I am proud that I come from the same part of the country. Perhaps it must be something that was in the water in Miami, Arizona, but it has yielded two great sons to the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the kind words about me from the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. PASTOR). He has been, indeed, a friend of mine throughout my period of time here and before that, as he mentioned, and I will continue seeing him in our lives as they continue on, as we continue our commitment to our communities.

INDEPENDENT AND FREE ELECTIONS IN SLOVAKIA

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

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House this evening to talk very briefly about a great European leader, Alexander Dubcek, and also to talk about the Slovak elections. Recently, in Slovakia, we had the opportunity, after a thousand years, to witness free and independent elections. As some may know, Slovakia gained its freedom some 5 years ago and independence as a free nation in the Western European host of nations. In the last few weeks Slovakia has had the opportunity to elect for the first time representatives to their government that potentially will allow a true, free, honest government for that nation.

In the past years, there has been some conflict, there have been some problems in Slovakia, and in an election, which was a record by all Western democratic standards, 85 percent of the Slovaks turned out to cast their ballot. They decided to make a change in government, an important change in Slovakia, and it is very important to the Congress and to the Western world the

change that took place in that free and open election. They decided that they would form a new government and, again, create an opportunity for that country, which has had a thousand years of oppression, to be free and independent. Once again Slovakia will form a Western-leaning government.

My grandfather was a Slovak American immigrant, and I know the oppression that that country has seen with domination not only by the Nazis, not only by Russia and Stalin, not only under its own communist regime. Even as part of the Czech Republic they did not have the opportunity to be a free and independent nation.

So today we celebrate a free, independent election, the potential to continue as a free and independent nation, and Western-leaning democracy. Because of its importance, Slovakia, which juts out into the west between Hungary and the Czech Republic now has an opportunity to participate as a full partner in NATO, in the European Union and as a Western partner.

The world has seen many great leaders from Slovakia, and I know great leaders will emerge from this coalition that is to be formed in the new government.

Alexander Dubcek, a Slovak, in 1968, led the revolution, the revolution that was oppressed by Soviet tanks that trampled Slovakia. Now, for the first time, that country has an opportunity to be new, to have a new "Spring" of freedom. That revolution has been known as the "Prague Spring" but it was really the "Dubcek Spring," sprung from the heart of a native Slovakian.

So we as Americans, we as Members of Congress, we as Slovak Americans, salute these free and independent elections. This bright new opportunity for freedom, the standard that was set by Alexander Dubcek, can now rise, and the Soviet domination of the past is behind us; the Nazi domination and a thousand years of oppression are behind us. A bright future for Slovakia is before us.

I come to the floor as a Slovak American, as an American, as a Member of Congress, to salute the Slovak people on their great accomplishment, their new opportunity for freedom and independence and express my hope and prayers for a new government that will work closely and participate with other Western Democracies.

TRIBUTE TO CONGRESSMAN HARRIS FAWELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their re-

marks in relationship to the honor we wish to pay to a remarkable Member of the Congress and of our committee, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FAWELL).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, before we honor the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FAWELL), I just want to make sure that my good friend, the gentleman from West Virginia understands that perhaps his committee did not do everything he wanted to but he would sure be offended if he were a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. Just to mention a few things that we have done, the Higher Education Act, the Reading Excellence Act, the school nutrition bill, the vocational technical education bill, quality Head Start bill, a charter school bill, Individuals with Disability Education Act, prepaid college tuition plan, job training reform, bilingual education reform, emergency student loans, equitable child care resolution, juvenile justice, just to mention a few. So do not paint us all with the same brush. We have been hard at work.

It gives me great pleasure to have this special order this evening. I have served with HARRIS on the Committee on Education and the Workforce for 14 years, back when it was the Committee on Education and Labor. I have always looked to HARRIS for his expertise and his enthusiasm on labor issues to help me appreciate the finer points of labor law. As a matter of fact, I would be willing to say there is not anyone on the committee, with the exception of HARRIS, who truly understands labor law, who truly has been made it a labor love to understand it, and to try to improve it and try and get us into the 21st Century so we can survive as a great Nation.

I also know that over those years, he may have been challenged many times but he had always done his homework 100 percent better than anyone else on the committee, and I think the only other person that I can remember who really understood what they were talking about when they talked about labor law was probably John Elernborn, who I served with also.

In fact, HARRIS is so renowned in the House, among other things, for his focus on the details and for his expertise in health care and pension law. In fact, he speaks so lovingly about ERISA that I only recently found out that his wife's name is actually Ruth. I thought it was Erisa.

When he first came to the committee, we Republicans were in the minority, and he always led the fight against any excesses proposed by the other side on many issues. Because of differences in our seniority, I never had the luxury of sitting next to him and see him take all of those notes so that he was ready to fire back as soon as somebody made a statement and they did not know what they were talking about, because

he knew what was in the law. He always did his homework prior to any hearing or any markup, and then fought passionately in support of his position on every issue, much to the exasperation of his adversaries.

I can remember one time when Chairman FORD became so exasperated by HARRIS' insistence on an issue that he finally said to HARRIS if he would simply agree to drop his opposition to the amendment, BILL said he would retire from Congress. HARRIS hesitated for a few seconds and then he leaned into the microphone and simply said, "Do not tempt me."

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And the room, of course, went up and laughter. The incident demonstrates why HARRIS was such an effective member of the committee and of the House as a whole. He always fought for what he thought was right, never compromised his principles, and he still kept his sense of humor.

In the 14 years that he has served under our committee, he has worked tirelessly to better the lives of working Americans from his leadership on health care to his efforts to improve productivity, safety, and health in the workplace, and his overall philosophy that there should be a level playing field between labor and management. He has been on the front lines of all the major work force policy debates in the Congress, and, HARRIS, we certainly are going to miss you.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS).

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, HARRIS has been a true friend and fellow Illinoisan, and I will miss him.

There is some benefit to being a new Member of Congress, and that is getting a chance to meet some of the great personalities of this Republic. And I include HARRIS FAWELL in that. A real "Pork Buster" before pork busting was cool. And as we have now a conservative Congress that looks at saving money, he was in the trenches long before many of us realized the importance of that fight.

But I am really here to read a statement from your staff, HARRIS, that they have asked me to read. And it is a great honor for me to carry this message from your staff to you in this opportunity. Envision me as your staff. They are a little more efficient than I am.

"We count ourselves tremendously lucky to have worked for you. Your kindness and humility, quiet leadership, the fact that you listen to us and care what we say shows us each day what it means to be a true public servant.

"In these cynical times, it is easy for staffers to become disillusioned with government service. Working with you has shown us how an honest and caring man of integrity can still make a difference here in Washington. Our time spent with you has maintained our faith in leadership. You have forever