

for voluntary school prayer. The Founding Fathers intended religion to provide a moral anchor for our democracy. Wouldn't they be puzzled to return to modern-day America and find, among elite circles in academia and the media, a scorn for the public expression of religious values. I find it ironic that while taxpayer's dollars are being used by bureaucrats to distribute condoms in our public schools across America, our children are prohibited from reading the Bible or offering voluntary prayer in public schools. This sends a powerful message to our children—and it is the wrong message.

One of the many liberties our forefathers founded this great Nation upon was freedom of religion; a freedom to pray to the God we want, when we want, and where we want. Unfortunately, this freedom has been eroded by the Supreme Court over the last few decades. I firmly believe that no one should be forced to pray, especially if a certain prayer is contrary to an individual's beliefs. But, there can be no question that every American citizen has the right to pray voluntarily whenever and wherever he or she chooses, and that includes children in public schools. This is protected under the first amendment; "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." It is that second part that I ask you to pay special attention to today.

As President Reagan so eloquently stated in 1982, "the First Amendment of the Constitution was not written to protect the people of this country from religious values; it was written to protect religious values from government tyranny."

SOURCE TAX LEGISLATION

HON. BOB STUMP

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 4, 1995

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, today I reintroduce legislation to prohibit State governments from taxing the pension income of people who reside in other States.

The so-called source tax has become a major cause of anger and concern among retirees in Arizona and other States. Many of these retirees are being forced to pay income tax to States in which they no longer live, nor have lived for many years.

In my opinion, the authority of California and other source tax States to tax Arizona residents merely because those residents may at one time have lived in those States and were covered by a pension plan, is dubious at best. The legislation I am introducing today would make clear that one State cannot tax the pensions of people who live in another. It is my belief and the belief of my constituents, that if source tax States need to raise revenue, they should do so from their own residents—not from people who cannot respond at the ballot box.

REFORMING THE HOUSE

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 4, 1995

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, December 28, 1994 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

REFORMING THE HOUSE

In early January, the House of Representatives will consider and likely pass the most significant reforms of its internal operations in decades. These changes were proposed by the new leadership, but many are drawn from the reform plan of last session's Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress.

More generally, the reforms continue a tradition of institutional renewal, dating from the mid-1970s, which aims to open up congressional deliberations, increase the authority of party leaders, and make the House leadership more accountable to rank-and-file Members of Congress and the public. My sense is that most of the new reforms are constructive, and will lead to meaningful improvements in the way business is conducted in the House.

JOINT COMMITTEE REFORMS

Many of the reforms in this package were derived from the work of the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, a bicameral and bipartisan panel which I co-chaired. The Joint Committee made its recommendations for reform in November 1993, and last year the House did pass one of its major recommendations—requiring Congress to live under the same laws it applies to the private sector.

Unfortunately, the remainder of the Joint Committee's reform plan was not considered by the full House during the 103rd Congress. But the new House leadership has adopted or built on many of the key reform recommendations: First, again require the application of private sector laws to Congress. It is critical that Members of Congress follow the laws they pass for private citizens. Second, streamline the bloated congressional committee system, by reducing the total number of committees and restricting the number of committee assignments Members can have. The leadership also adopted a Joint Committee proposal to significantly reduce the number of subcommittees. Third, cut congressional staff. The leadership has proposed a one-third reduction in committee staff. It recommended no reduction in Members' personal staff or in large congressional support agencies such as the General Accounting Office. The Joint Committee recommended a reduction in the entire legislative branch of up to 12%. Fourth, open up Congress to enhanced public scrutiny by publishing committee attendance and roll call votes, requiring that the Congressional Record be a verbatim account of congressional proceedings, and requiring that special interest projects included in spending bills be publicized, thus providing additional barriers to wasteful spending.

ADDITIONAL REFORMS

The new leadership has also proposed changes that were not included in the Joint Committee package, some of which are constructive, others of which are problematic. For example, to streamline the House it has proposed that three standing committees be abolished. The Joint Committee adopted a more flexible, "attrition" approach to committee abolition, providing incentives for Members to leave less important committees through strict assignment limitations and a

requirement that committees losing one half of their members be considered for abolition. The basic approach of the leadership proposal should modestly improve the committee system, but it does not address the fundamental problem of several committees having huge jurisdictions.

Drawing on the proposals of an earlier reform commission, the leadership would create a new chief administrative officer for the House who would be responsible for managing its non-legislative functions. I support this attempt to reduce patronage. But the leadership has made the chief administrative officer a partisan position, appointed and supervised by the Speaker. Instead, the administrative functions of Congress should be handled in a bipartisan fashion, with the chief administrative officer reporting to leaders from both parties.

Another proposal would require a three-fifths "supermajority" in the House to increase income tax rates. However, almost all substantive issues in the House are now settled by majority rule, and it is unclear why a three-fifths vote is appropriate for revenue matters but not for other legislation. If such supermajorities proliferate in the House, the result would be more legislative gridlock in Washington. In addition, the constitutionality of this proposal is in question.

REFORM OMISSIONS

From my viewpoint, a number of important reform recommendations in the Joint Committee plan are not included in the proposals made by the new leadership. I intend to work for the passage of these reforms during the 104th Congress. Among the omitted recommendations are proposals to: First, include private citizens in the ethics process in a meaningful way. The Joint Committee proposed that private citizens investigate ethics complaints against Members of the House, but major ethics reforms are not included in the package under consideration.

Second, publicize the special interest tax breaks included in revenue bills and the budget resolution. My sense is that special interest loopholes should be treated the same as special interest spending projects. Such items should not be hidden from the public in huge bills. Third, streamline the budget process by shifting it from an annual to a biennial cycle, reducing redundant decisions and allowing more time for oversight.

CONCLUSION

The new House leadership has made a good start toward the passage of meaningful congressional reform. Their efforts have been assisted by the work of prior reform commissions, as well as the public demand for change and the transition to a new leadership with less invested in the institutional status quo. I intend to introduce and push for additional reforms aimed at making the House more efficient and publicly accountable. Reform is an on-going process. And reform is no panacea—many difficult issues are on the agenda. But sustained and meaningful institutional change is crucial for the restoration of public confidence in Congress.

INTRODUCTION OF POLICE AND FIREFIGHTERS TAX CLARIFICATION

HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 4, 1995

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that is of vital interest to police and firefighters in Connecticut.