

children. Are the children a special interest group Republicans want to do away with?

The voices of the American people are being heard. Do not hurt the children.

#### CHANGES IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, this is a true story. A man in New York tried to commit suicide by jumping in front of a subway train? He survived, and then he sued the city for damages, and he won \$1.2 million.

This is just the type of case which tells why three-fourths of Americans say that the current liability lawsuit system is in need of major repair.

The American people are sick and tired of our culture of victimization. Murderers go free because they were supposedly abused as children. A woman spills coffee on herself, and then she collects millions of dollars in punitive damages.

Whatever happened to personal responsibility? This is no small matter. Frivolous lawsuits cost Americans \$300 billion in higher prices and in lost wages, but we are going to reform this system, while ensuring that all those with legitimate grievances will have access to the justice system. This is our Contract With America.

#### SCHOOL LUNCHES NOT JUST A LUXURY, SAYS MISSISSIPPI EDUCATOR

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

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, William Billups, the Principal at the all black Jefferson Elementary School in Jefferson County, MS, rural, poor, and 85 percent black, says that school lunch programs are not just a luxury.

Principal Billups is a Republican, and he says he likes a lot of the changes that are taking place in Washington these days, but ending the Federal School Lunch Program and block granting the money to the States is not his idea of making things better.

Billups calls it a crapshoot. Adding that you just do not know what they will do with the money.

Having watched Mississippi State politics like I have watched politics in my State of Pennsylvania, Billups knows that "They'll take a little here and take a little there. It'll be political." And he adds, we shouldn't be political, about food. Maybe we should send our Republican friends back to Jefferson Elementary School in Jefferson County, MS, to learn that lesson.

#### PROTECT BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEMS

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

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Norse, chief scientist for the Center for Marine Conservation, reminds us that biodiversity and ecosystems do such things as maintaining climate, removing pollutants from the atmosphere, building soils to sustain the agricultural industry, and protect coastlines, and these are essential, all of the things I just described, to human existence.

Just as our astronauts are absolutely dependent on expensive, engineered life support systems to sustain them in the cold void of space, what sustains the entire Earth in the cold void of space is the life-supporting functions of the world's ecosystems and biodiversity. These things provide the habitat that all species need, including humans.

Unfortunately, our responsibility for being stewards of the land often conflicts with our apparent and obvious need to produce and consume resources.

Just as we would never sell the original Constitution of the United States or the Chesapeake Bay to foreign investors for any amount of money, we should not sell our biological diversity for a percentage. We must reexamine our knowledge on these issues.

#### SAVE THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM; REJECT CAPITAL GAINS TAX CUT

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I visited three elementary schools in my district, Hamilton and Homewood in Lorain, OH, and Franklin Elementary in Elyria. I talked with students, parents, cafeteria workers, teachers, and administrators about school lunches. The school lunch program, they told me, begun in 1946 by Harry Truman, is a Government program that works. They simply said "Don't mess with it."

Almost one in three children in the Lorain and Elyria public school systems, middle American cities, certainly qualify for some type of assistance in school lunches. That is good, sound, fundamental policy. It helps the kids, for sure. For some of them it is the most nutrition they will get in a day. Just ask some of the physicians and nurses in Lorain County whether they think the school lunch program is a good investment.

I am a budget deficit hawk, but cutting school lunches for working-class and poor kids, Mr. Speaker, simply goes too far. Republican extremists last week, though, increased military spending by \$3.2 billion, and Republican extremists announced that they

will pass a capital gains tax break for the wealthiest 1 percent of our society. Mr. Speaker, this is extremism. It should be rejected.

#### GOOD NEWS FOR SENIOR COMMUNITIES

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

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, this week we expect some long-overdue good news for seniors. The Department of Housing and Urban Development will release its new rule defining the "significant facilities and services" requirement for senior communities under the Fair Housing Act. We well remember HUD's first attempt to set such standards—a disaster that sparked vigorous and legitimate protest from seniors across the country. From what we have seen, it appears HUD learned its lesson the second time through. I thank all those who made themselves heard. It made a difference. The new rule recognizes the unique social and physical characteristics of senior communities. And it will enable existing senior-only communities to qualify for the exemption without great expense. It is about time the bureaucracy acts to alleviate the unnecessary fears and anxiety caused by the vagueness in current law. I hope the millions of Americans impacted by this proposed new rule will take a close look and let us know what they think.

#### UNDER "LOSER PAYS," WINNERS TREATED AS LOSERS

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, the legal bill we are debating today can be summed up in two words.

Loser pays.

Loser pays. An appropriate phrase for this Congress.

Because all across America, people who are winners are being treated like losers.

Hard-working American families who are busy meeting their mortgage and making their car payment and saving for school supplies.

Middle income Americans who are too busy trying to stretch their dollars to attend the thousand dollar a plate dinners for Republican insiders.

Loser pays.

Well, to my Republican colleagues, I guess the people who hold the champagne glasses and wear the designer dresses at their fundraisers are the winners, and the people who serve the drinks and clean up afterward are the losers.

But today we have a chance to preserve the right of Americans to be winners in court by rejecting the lobbyist-sellout the majority calls "legal reform."