WAIVING A REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 4(b) OF RULE XI WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED FROM THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Mr. SOLOMON (during the special order of Mr. EHRLICH) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105–216) on the resolution (H. Res. 201) waiving a requirement of clause 4(b) of rule XI with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered printed.

□ 1745

ACCORD ON TAX CUTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. EHRLICH] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my good friend, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH], who will be joining us shortly on the floor. The gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH] and I certainly extend an invitation to our colleague, the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF] as well to join us in a very important day, Mr. Speaker.

We have an agreement. We just came off the steps of the House of Representatives and told the American people a lot of the things that we have been debating over the last 3 years in this town.

I notice I am joined now by my colleague, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH], my good friend.

Mr. Speaker, days like today get us thinking about where we came from and where we are and where we are going. Because in politics, Mr. Speaker, you cannot always get what you want. Sometimes you can get what you need, to paraphrase the rock and roll song.

Today, people of different political philosophies came together and signed an accord. Included in that accord are many things we have debated on this House floor over the last 3 years, many items in the Contract with America, many items that brought the last couple of freshman classes to this town, particularly the 104th freshman class, of which the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH] and I are members.

I cannot help but thinking about President Reagan and President Bush today, tax cuts from President Reagan. President Bush was the victim of some demagoguery of such class warfare rhetoric about cutting capital gains for rich people and the class warfare we see on this floor time and time again on a daily basis. Yet, we bring the American people a significant capital gains tax cut.

Is it zero? No. Should it be zero? In my view, and in the view of many of us, yes. But is 28 down to 20 a step in the right direction? You better believe it. And that is the nature of dividing government. The folks that control this Congress are pretty much to the right of center philosophically. The folks that control that big house down the street are to the left of center.

We have vastly different views of the role of government in our lives. We have a vastly different philosophical orientation. Yet today, we have come before the American people with an agreement.

I am really happy to be joined by my really good friend, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH], one of the leaders of this Congress, 105th Congress. I keep thinking of the 104th Congress. And we are going to talk about a few specific items, a few specific initiatives in this particular package.

I know my friend from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH] wants to make a few words of introduction, as well.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, today is a tremendous day. We have seen people from all generations of politics come together for an agreement where the American people are the winners.

The gentleman from Maryland [Mr. EHRLICH] and I were fortunate enough to come in in the 1994 elections with that freshman class, now sophomore class. The gentleman from New York [Mr. SOLOMON], chairman of the Committee on Rules, has been here quite a bit longer. But all of us can celebrate.

Frankly, I think we do need to say thank you to President Clinton for agreeing to sign this legislation, thank you to Speaker GINGRICH, thank you to leader TRENT LOTT, and thank you to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARCHER] and the others who have worked to negotiate out this bill.

It is the American people who are the winners in the bottom line. We came here with the promise to cut taxes and shrink Government. We came here with the promise to change the way Washington does business. I do not want to tell my colleagues that we have accomplished everything in this bill. But we have made a tremendous step forward. In particular, I was delighted to see that we are now going to have the $500 tax credit for children become part of the law in this land so that families who need that money will be able to benefit from that.

I would like to share with my colleagues, if I may, Mr. Speaker, an example of a family that I know from my hometown of Muncie. It is a young man and his wife who have worked hard to get ahead in this country, Gerald Hunt and Debra Darnall. They make about $30,000 a year. Gerald and Debra work in their own independent business. He is a contractor. They will benefit from this plan because they have two daughters and their daughters will qualify them to get $1,000 more each year in their take-home pay because the Government will not be taking it in taxes.

What does that mean for the Darnalls? It means a lot, I will tell my colleagues that. It means six bags of groceries each week will be paid for by this tax cut that we are going to pass this week, 2 months' worth of groceries in all, real dollars to fill their gas tanks. At about 20 bucks a week, that is 50 weeks, the whole year, that they can put gas in their gas tanks because the Government is not taking that money out the Darnalls' paycheck; new school clothes for Kellie and Ashlee, who will grow out of their school clothes every year and need that $1,000 in order to help them. Or if the Darnalls decide to start saving today in order to send their two daughters to college, we now have a new savings plan that will allow them to put aside money for those two girls to go to college and not have to pay taxes on the interest that that money earns in that savings account.

This new IRA for education will mean that literally millions of Americans can afford to send their children to college who may not have had any hope to do that for a better future. I am very proud of what we have done today. Those are just a few of the details in our tax bill.

I look forward in the next hour to working with the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. EHRLICH] in explaining to the American people what all of us, Democrats, Republicans, all Americans can be proud of the work that is being done today in Washington to finally cut taxes for working families in this country.

I look forward to having a discussion with the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. EHRLICH] now about the details of that.

Mr. EHRLICH. It is easy to discuss these issues with the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH] because we agree and it is nice.

Mr. MCINTOSH. If the gentleman would yield, the great thing, though, is that President Clinton is going to sign this bill and our colleagues across the aisle are going to help us pass it. So it is not going to be a partisan rancor. We won the day, I think, on some of these issues. We are going to have a tax cut finally, but we won by joining together and all sides agreeing to go do that for the American people.

Mr. EHRLICH. Reclaiming my time, could we have received odds on this tax cut being signed 6 months ago, I think the odds would have been very long. I think the American people will wake up tomorrow somewhat surprised that this deal got done, and not only that there was an agreement made, but that the agreement was made with numbers that are not phoney, real numbers and real tax cuts and real entitlement reform and real policy initiatives, not the phoney stuff we see coming out of this town so often.

There are two taxes that I know are near and dear to the heart of my friend from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH], and they have been near and dear to my heart. We have campaigned on these taxes, as two Members who pride themselves on

championing the merits of small business people, small business men and small business women, who, it is a cliche these days but it is a fact, they are the backbone of the American economy. We create jobs, small business people.

What two tax issues, what two tax initiatives have been so important to that small business group? Capital gains and estate taxes. As I said earlier, President Bush, and I hope he is on the golf course today, it is a great day and he probably is, and he deserves it. But I hope he is smiling, Because he has been vindicated.

When I think back to all the class warfare and negative ads and all the silly stuff that had been brought out in President Bush in his elections, against the Republican freshmen, against the Republican conference in the 1996 elections, against the conservative Democrats, I think back to all that sort of rhetoric and I am no longer frustrated today because we are making progress.

A few facts for the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH]. As he knows, we are cutting capital gains from 28 to 20 for upper income taxpayers, 10 percent for lower income taxpayers, 10 percent. Housing exemptions, I know the gentleman wants to talk about this in a bit, $500,000 for joint filers, $250,000 for single filers. No longer will they be punished for making a good economic decision in life, buying a house.

But I have a few facts I want to run by the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH]. First, as of 1995, American households have more equity invested in stock markets than their homes. Think about that. Americans now put more of their savings into stocks than into their savings accounts.

According to the Federal Reserve, about 70 cents of every dollar saved by American households in the first 6 months of last year went into mutual funds. Stock ownership has doubled in the last 7 years. Listen to this, 43 percent of all adults in this country today are now investors; 47 percent of those folks are women and the clear majority are under 50 years of age.

With respect to the class warfare demagoguery, of which I am tired, my colleague is tired, the country is tired, let us get over it. Two-thirds of individuals reporting capital gains had incomes of less than $50,000, incomes of less than $50,000.

Mr. MCINTOSH. If the gentleman would yield, two points that he just made need to be repeated. First of all, over 40 percent of the investors are women. This is not a tax cut for the white male club in this country, for the rich male club. This is a tax cut for the average American person who is trying to save and get ahead and save for their family, save for their future investment, save for their retirement, and take advantage of a stock market that is just skyrocketing, without having to fear that they are going to be punished by the tax man if they actually succeed in investing and get a return on the investment.

I think my colleague's point is that 40 percent of the investors who benefit from tax cuts are women; 50 percent of the investors make less than $50,000 a year. This is a tax cut for the middle class. And I am glad that the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. EHRLICH] is pointing out that the demagoguery that this is a tax cut for the rich just does not stand up under the scrutiny of the examination of the facts.

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, but it is not just the middle class. It is a tax cut for every stage of life.

Getting back to capital gains for just a moment. The elderly realize a disproportionate amount of capital gains. In 1993, think about this, those over age 65 realized 40 percent of all capital gains. All those folks make up just 12 percent of the population. Tax relief for every stage of life. It is a cliche, it is a theme, but it is real when it comes to this tax package.

I know there is another tax initiative near and dear to the heart of my friend, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH], family-owned small businesses and farms, estate taxes, the death tax, or, as we like to call it around here, the tax-on-success tax.

I know my colleague is very familiar with the history of estate taxes in this country. Only 3 years ago, the minority leader in this House was talking about lowering the threshold from $600,000 to $300,000. That was actually debated in this House.

Today, we stand before the American people and we talk about an immediate exclusion up to $1.3 million for small businesses and family farms, those folks who are not surviving to the second generation, let alone the third generation. And that is un-American. It is very un-American, in my view, and in the view of the majority of folks in the Second District of Maryland, that the Federal Tax Code penalizes folks because they happen to be successful small business people. They are the backbone of the economy, as we have discussed. They are the folks that should not be punished for our Tax Code.

My friend, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. MCINTOSH] knows very well of the estate tax. It came about early on to get at the very wealthy in this country. Today, it serves as a disincentive for folks to pass on their small businesses and their farms through their own family. That is not right. Third generation small businesses in this country have a survival rate of 10 percent in this country. That is wrong. That is immoral. This bill has, at least, a pretty good start toward a real remedy.

Mr. MCINTOSH. If the gentleman would yield further, let me talk a little bit more about those death taxes and the reforms that we are going to have as a result of this compromise with President Clinton.

Two provisions are very important for family farms, for family farms and small businesses. There is an immediate exclusion of $1.3 million from their estate. The people might say that sounds like a lot of money. But when somebody has worked 50 years in their life farming a farm that they inherited from their parents and they find that land prices have gone up, they will often discover that, although they do not have a lot of cash on hand, they are considered to be millionaires by the government when they pass away and try to hand on the family farm to the next generation.

□ 1800

I wanted to share with the gentleman and my colleagues a story about a family in my district. Gerald Hunt of Hagerstown, IN, is a family farmer. He owns 160 acres of land that was purchased in 1948. He is getting ready to retire, starting to think about passing on that farm to the next generation. He has a son Niles and a daughter Claudia. But he is afraid that under the current law, if he tries to pass on the farm to that generation, they will have to sell it just to pay the taxes, the death taxes that are in our Tax Code. Fortunately our reform will help Gerald Hunt with immediate tax relief so that he can pass on the family farm to his 2 children. This is another step in tax relief for the average American that is in this tax bill.

Mr. EHRLICH. The gentleman raises a great point. I think we need to talk about this to the American people because they hear numbers like $600,000, $1.3 million. ''My God, they're rich people.'' But he made the point, and it needs to be repeated time and again, many of these small businesses have no cash, no liquidity. They literally have to take apart what their parents have built up in order to pay Uncle Sam just to pass the business on from one generation to another. It is not fair. It is immoral.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Oftentimes the community is the loser. If it is a small business and they have to sell the assets to pay the tax bill, then we lose the jobs. That business goes out of business. People who worked with them, maybe 10, 12, 20 people who worked in that family business, are out on the street looking for a new job.

Mr. EHRLICH. What is also a potential loser is open space, because when farmers sell, that land gets developed. We need farmers in this country. I know we both represent a lot of farmers. We need farmers to stay in business. We have to stop punishing them for being successful in life.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Frankly, I like the fact that people want to pass on to the next generation the rewards of their hard work. Families are the institutions that have made this country great, and we should reward families who work and stay together and try to do that.

If I could interject a minute on another part of the tax cuts that I find very, very important, I live in the town

of Muncie, IN. We have a State university there, Ball State University. Most of the students who go there are first generation college attendees. Their parents have to scrape and save in order to pay the tuition, on average about $2,000 a year, plus room and board and books, and they are quite frankly a lot of times having to really struggle in order to stay in college. I have talked to a lot of those students when I go up to campus and visit with them about their concerns.

This tax bill, and again I think we do have to give credit where credit is due on this one, President Clinton proposed the HOPE Scholarships. He campaigned on it in the last election. We were not quite sure what it meant on the Republican side of the aisle, but we have come together to write the HOPE Scholarships into law, and I think it is a good provision for those college students and for their families.

Here is the way it would work. Up to 50 percent of the first $3,000 of tuition will be a tax credit for people who are paying taxes and paying that tuition. That means effectively the first $1,500 of that tuition will be paid out of the money that would otherwise go to Uncle Sam. That helps a lot in a family budget when they are trying to send one, two, maybe three students to college at the same time.

I think it is also important that we have been able to extend that to vocational school, where 75 percent of the first $2,000 will be credited in taxes, and for people who extend that beyond the first 2 years to their third and fourth year of education.

The other aspect of this that I find very appealing is the tax-free IRA that parents can now establish and take benefit of the fact that they will be saving their money in advance of sending their children to college, without having to pay taxes on those savings and the return on that investment. My State recently passed a bill that would encourage parents to do that in order to send students to the State colleges in Indiana.

I have to brag about them. IU has a great basketball team, also a great liberal arts school, Purdue has one of the best engineering and science schools in the country. Ball State, that I mentioned earlier, is a great teachers' training college and architecture school. These are fine institutions.

But unfortunately more and more people are struggling in order to be able to attend those institutions. Today if you find yourself with having a new baby arrive and thinking, ''Gosh, in 18 years, I'm going to have to pay out a lot of money to send that child to college,'' we want to increase the incentive for parents to start saving right now to send their children to school. These new college tuition IRA's, which will allow them to save over time, build up the cost of that tuition and then deduct it in order to pay for the tuition without having to pay taxes, are a tremendous way to allow families to plan to send their children to college.

As you and Kendel know, Ruthie and I are expecting our first child this October. I have to tell the gentleman it has already started to change my thoughts on how things should be done in the McIntosh household. But one thing I can tell the gentleman we are going to do is start up one of these IRA's so that our young child will have a chance to go to school and we will be able to afford to pay it without asking for a pay increase here in Congress.

Mr. EHRLICH. I hope that does not get the gentleman a negative ad in his next campaign, by the way. As the gentleman knows, his wife is a special person to us. I congratulate him prematurely. She is a wonderful lady.

I know that there is so much in this agreement we would like to talk about, and time is short. We have reform of the earned income tax credit, very important. We have the alternative minimum tax relief, very important for capital-intensive small businesses. I work with the printers a lot in my district and they need to invest so much in capital, in new machines, in a very competitive industry. We have exempted small corporations from the alternative minimum tax, a very important provision. Welfare privatization, an experiment in Texas, very important.

But there is one thing I think we really need to talk about before we leave today, and I know my friend from Indiana has something else he wants to say, but I just cannot resist talking about entitlement reform.

The gentleman saw the ads. How many ads were run in the 1996 campaign?

Mr. MCINTOSH. Hundreds of millions of dollars of ads.

Mr. EHRLICH. Hundreds of millions of dollars of ads were run to scare seniors, with one purpose, to get votes. Forget facts, forget what the Medicare trustees had told the Congress and the American people. Forget what people knew about how in trouble the system was at the time and is today. But in order to generate resentment for votes, let us scare seniors. That was a very important tactic in some campaigns in the 1996 elections.

Here we come today, in late July of 1997, a mere, what, 7 months later, 8 months later, and the President is signing a package containing almost all of the provisions in the package from 1995 that gave rise to those negative ads. I congratulate AARP, I congratulate the Seniors Coalition, I congratulate the over 60 folks, I congratulate all the senior groups who had the guts and the determination to be honest with the American people and their membership, which sometimes does not pay, as we know in politics, but to be honest with the American people about the problems with Medicare and particularly in the trust fund, part A.

Here we have $115 billion in savings over 5 years. We have extended the trust fund, the part A trust fund to the year 2007. We have MSA's. We remember how horrible MSA's were and all the ads about medical savings accounts. We have PSO's giving freedom to physicians and hospitals to form their own networks to compete in the private marketplace. Freedom of choice is breaking out for our seniors. We are saving Medicare. I do not see one ad on TV today. Why?

Mr. MCINTOSH. Nobody seems to want to benefit politically from telling the truth at this point.

Mr. EHRLICH. That is the right answer.

Mr. MCINTOSH. I wanted to share with the gentleman a story that happened to me over the summer. Ruthie and I were at a family reunion with her family, the McManis family, and her grandmother Ruth McManis stopped me and said, ''I'm reading things about Medicare again. Can you tell me what's happening?'' They are in their eighties, they are retired, they are in good health, thank God, but they are worried that if something should happen and they need to go to the hospital or they need to see their doctor, will Medicare be there for them?

I could reassure Ruth at that point that we are going to save Medicare. We are going to put it on a sound financial footing by getting rid of the fraud, by getting rid of the excess payments, and by giving seniors more choice, so that if they want to keep Medicare exactly as it is now, they can do that. If they want to go into an HMO or some other managed care unit where they do not have to pay the monthly payment because they cannot afford it, they can do that. If they want to go outside Medicare and hire their own doctors and take out their own insurance plan, they can now do that with this bill.

But we are going to make sure that senior citizens like Ruth and Lester McManis, my wife's grandparents, and senior citizens all over this country, are going to be able to count on Medicare being there so that they can have their health care needs taken care of.

The gentleman is right. We do need to point out that it was used politically in the last election. But I think we also, and this is becoming a recurring theme, my constituents will wonder what happened to me, because I have criticized President Clinton a lot. But now that he has agreed to do what I think is right, I do think we ought to say thank you to him as well.

Mr. EHRLICH. I agree.

Mr. MCINTOSH. That he did put politics aside in order to pass this bill.

Mr. EHRLICH. I congratulate the President as well, and I join my colleague in that. I just hope that the American people do not have such a short memory that the stuff that we saw, and I do mean stuff that we saw in 1996, is not repeated anytime again. Because it is one thing to engage in real debate about real policy with legitimate philosophical differences between the parties. I love that, I know the gentleman loves that. That is why we do this.

But to have to contend with a lot of the stuff that we saw, some people tried to sell the American people last campaign in order to create class warfare and generational, and that is what we are talking about, generational warfare here, turning grandparents against grandchildren. It does not work.

I think that was one of the lessons in the 1996 campaign. I think the White House learned it, we learned it, the folks on the other side of the aisle learned it, that when we stop that stuff and actually negotiate for the common good of the American people, we can make progress. That is what this budget agreement represents.

That is why I am happy to join with my good friend from Indiana today to talk about this. I am not going to use the term ''historic,'' but I am going to use the term ''important budget agreement,'' and I leave the last word to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, a lot of people have asked me the question, where do we go from here, what happens next? I would like to mention one thing that I think is critical in this, and that is, as we look at these tax cuts, and I have been a strong advocate of these tax cut provisions in the Contract With America from the very first day, they are not everything that we would want.

The gentleman from Maryland [Mr. EHRLICH] mentioned we would like to go to a zero capital gains tax on investment and savings. One other issue that I want to just mention because I think it is important, and I have gotten assurance from the Speaker and the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARCHER], we will bring another tax bill forward in this Congress. One issue that I am going to really beg that we put on the table because I think it is so important for American families is the marriage penalty in our Tax Code.

One of our classmates, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. WELLER] sits on the Committee on Ways and Means. He told me today he is going to make abolition of that marriage tax one of his top priorities on that committee. But I wanted to share with the gentleman a letter that I got, and I have talked on this floor before about this letter. It moved me and it is something that I will never forget in my career here in Congress. It is a letter from Sharon Mallory and Darryl Pierce.

''Dear Representative McIntosh, my boyfriend Darryl Pierce and I would very much like to get married.'' Sharon goes on to explain she works for about $8 an hour at the Ford electronics plant in Connersville, IN, and then she says, ''I can't tell you how disgusted we both are over this tax issue. If we get married, not only would I forfeit my $900 refund check, we would be writing a check to the IRS for $2,800 in taxes. This amount was figured for us by an accountant at the local H and R Block office in New Castle.''

She then says, ''Now there is nothing right about this. After we continually hear the government preach to us about family values. I don't understand how the Government can ask such questions as single? Married? Dependents? Darryl and I would very much like to be married and I must say it broke our hearts when we found out we can't afford it. We hope someday the Government will allow us to get married by not penalizing us.''

I wanted to share with folks today at home a picture of Sharon and Darryl, because they are the American people who will not benefit as much from this tax cut because they are not yet married, they do not have children.

□ 1815

So our next tax cut has to help them overcome that marriage penalty so that we can strengthen families in this country and they can have their fondest dream of once finally becoming a couple come true.

So our work is still ahead of us, but today is a day to celebrate because this is a very, very important tax bill for the American people, and I thank the gentleman from Maryland for allowing me to participate in this time with him. It is very important that we get this message out.

Mr. EHRLICH. The bottom line is, my friend, when you empower families, when you return money to people, when you stop the ability of government to always, always, always grow, you hardly ever go wrong, and that is the bottom line to this package. I thank my friend from Indiana, Mr. MCINTOSH.

HOUSE LEADERSHIP QUESTIONED IN CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION INVESTIGATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentlewoman from New York [Ms. VELÁZQUEZ] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, there is an unprecedented attack currently under way in this Congress. Right now Republicans are engaging in a war on women, on Hispanics and on the gentlewoman from California [Ms. SANCHEZ].

Last November the gentlewoman from California [Ms. SANCHEZ] was elected to the House of Representatives for the 46th District of California, fair and square. The loser, Bob Dornan and the Republicans, have refused to concede defeat. The story about how far they will go to defeat this woman, Hispanic Member of Congress, is shameful. After 9 months and after spending $300,000 of the taxpayers money, they still have not given up. They have issued subpoenas at Bob Dornan's request, they have forced the gentlewoman from California [Ms. SANCHEZ] to prove that the people who voted for her had the right to vote.

Mr. Speaker, this is not only unprecedented, it is wrong. The burden of proof is on the loser. The Washington Post agrees. Yesterday they said that the burden of proof falls on the plaintiff, in this case Bob Dornan. The Post takes it further. They said that there is no credible evidence to change the outcome of this race. The message is clear: admit defeat and give up.

That has not stopped the Republicans from harassing law abiding citizens though. They have subpoenaed INS records, and the result is that the INS offices has been spending all their time responding to the subpoenas and are unable to do their real work.

But that is not all. The Republicans have used this so-called investigation as a way of harassing their political enemies. They have harassed Catholic Charities, they have examined the records of 20,000 community college students, and they have admitted targeting unions that employed immigrant workers. This kind of behavior is just outrageous. The Republican leadership is using the Committee on House Oversight to try to throw out the election of a Member of Congress without being able to prove any wrongdoing.

Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman from California [Ms. SANCHEZ] should be allowed to do what she does best, represent the people of the 46th district of California. Instead she has been forced to bear the burden of proof of her innocence. This is a total abuse of power by the Republicans.

This is not just a personal attack on the gentlewoman from California [Ms. SANCHEZ]. This is an attack on women, and it is a clear attack on Latinos. By using this opportunity to crosscheck voting records with records of the INS, the Republicans are trying to intimidate Hispanics and trying to keep them from voting.

Mr. Speaker, I have news for the Republicans. Hispanics are here to stay. They are a growing economic force, and, as the Republicans are finding out, they are a growing political force.

I will give the Republicans a bit of free advice: If they want to win elections, the best way to do it is to respond to the needs of the voters. Instead of trying to show that every Latino is an illegal and trying to deny them the right to vote, they should listen to what Latinos have to say. Instead of trying to intimidate women, they should listen to what they have to say.

Mr. Speaker, instead of learning their lesson when they lose an election, as most people do, the Republicans are using their power to distort the democratic process. Is that what the American people want? Is that what the democratic process is all about? I do not think so.

Now I will yield to the gentlewoman from California [Ms. LOFGREN].

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I am known here in the House as someone who is not a ranter and a raver, if I can use that phrase. I like to work whenever possible in a bipartisan manner to find common ground and to achieve