

encouraging the police to work hand in hand with the community to address problems before they become crises he has been instrumental in increasing community confidence and police effectiveness.

I join my fellow St. Louisans in congratulating Chief Harmon on a job well done and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF LIVERMORE, CA

HON. BILL BAKER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 1996

Mr. BAKER of California. Mr. Speaker, in 1871, a group of nine farmers drew together to form a new church in the Livermore Valley in northern California. Started at a time when bars were more prevalent in Livermore than churches, what became the First Presbyterian Church of Livermore has witnessed the remarkable events that have shaped our country—the sorrow of war and the prosperity of peace, the anxiety of drought and the blessing of abundant harvest. And throughout its 125 year history, First Presbyterian has celebrated the importance of family and the centrality of enduring values.

Over its 125 year history, the First Presbyterian Church has grown to a ministry serving not only its 800 members but the greater Livermore Community. Very deliberately, the Church has chosen to stay in its downtown location rather than move to a more comfortable suburban area precisely because of its desire to serve those who most need its assistance. First Presbyterian has been a leader in supporting such vital efforts as the Family Crisis Center and the Emergency Fund Center, which help persons needing food, shelter, and other critical assistance.

In addition, the Church has worked actively with the Tri-Valley Haven for Women, which ministers to women and children suffering from abusive situations. First Presbyterian has also played a lead role in the Interfaith Backpack project, through which the greater religious community works together at the beginning of each school year to provide backpacks for young people whose families can't afford them.

First Presbyterian celebrates its 125th anniversary with the grateful knowledge that it has improved the lives of countless men, women, and children in central California. In coming years, this legacy will serve to inspire new acts of charity and generosity that, in themselves, will encourage others to serve as they have been served. It is an honor for me to recognize First Presbyterian Church of Livermore in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, and to express my personal thanks to Pastor William E. Nebo and all the members of the Church for what they are doing to build the Livermore community. My best to each of them on this unique and special occasion.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 1996

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, January 3, 1996, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

COMMON-SENSE CAMPAIGN REFORMS

The past year was productive for congressional reform. Congress acted to apply private sector laws to Congress, ban gifts, and restrict lobbying. These common-sense reforms are important, and Congress should build on this momentum and pass sweeping campaign finance reform this year.

In the past few decades, Congress has made substantial progress in opening up the political process and making Members more accountable. Members of Congress are now required to make comprehensive financial disclosure, and public and private transactions are subject to careful scrutiny. This exposure is directly responsible for the numerous successful ethics investigations in recent years. Prior to these changes—thirty, fifty, or a hundred years ago—such ethics violations were rarely prosecuted because the public knew nothing about them. We need to build continually on this progress, including the important steps taken last year.

CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Last January Congress passed a law to apply private sector laws to Congress. This legislation was based on a recommendation of the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, which I co-chaired, and is an expansion of a measure passed by the House in 1994. This new law establishes an Office of Compliance to apply these laws to Congress, including labor regulations of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

LOBBYING REFORM

With my strong support, Congress passed a lobbying reform law that requires paid lobbyists to disclose who pays them, whom they lobby, what issues they lobby for, and how much they are paid to influence the government. A similar bill was filibustered by the Senate in 1994. I am pleased that leaders of both parties removed their opposition to these reforms.

GIFT BAN

The House passed a bill to ban all gifts to Members, with limited exceptions for close family or friends. There is simply no reason to take valuable gifts, meals, or vacations from lobbyists.

THE 1996 REFORM AGENDA

We must push hard for additional reforms in 1996. The forces against reform are strong—last year lobbying reform and the gift ban were blocked five times before public pressure forced the House leadership to have a vote. Congress must build on these successes to complete additional reforms.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

The overriding reform issue for 1996 is campaign finance reform. Some observers liken congressional reform to a three-legged stool. Banning gifts and restricting lobbying are the first two legs, but without the third leg—campaign finance reform—the stool will fall over. Hoosiers are fed up with the flood of campaign money and favors from lobbyists.

I have expressed the concern for many years that money plays a disproportionate role in American politics. The system forces candidates to spend too much time raising

money instead of meeting with the public and focusing on issues of national importance. My sense is that the public will demand major change in the present system. Reforming campaign finance is critical if Congress is to be a truly representative body.

There are a number of key issues in campaign finance reform:

Political action committees (PAC's)

The importance of PACs should be reduced. We should cap total PAC contributions to a candidate and reduce the limit on contributions from a single PAC. Members of Congress should also be prohibited from running "leadership PACs", which a few Members use to gain power and influence over other Members for their own personal agenda. We should also block "bundling" of checks by PACs, which evades the \$5,000 limit on PAC contributions.

"Soft money"

We should limit contributions by corporations, wealthy individuals, and other organizations to political parties and PACs affiliated with Members of Congress. These donors now give hundreds of thousands of dollars for "independent" expenditures. While direct expenditures for candidates are prohibited—advertising, campaign salaries, etc.—the indirect efforts, such as organization and issue or party advertising, can be as influential. Because these actions are theoretically not for federal candidates, they skirt federal campaign limits and can avoid public disclosure.

Small contributors

Reforms should emphasize the importance of grassroots political fundraising over big-ticket donors. The number of large contributions should be capped, and candidates should be encouraged to seek a broad base of support from contributions of less than \$200—perhaps with a tax deduction for individuals who make small contributions. A balance should also be struck between small in-state contributions and larger national contributions.

Spending limits

Congress passed some mandatory spending limits in 1974, but the Supreme Court overturned them as an unconstitutional restriction on free speech. We should examine ways to encourage voluntary limits, such as providing reduced-cost television and radio time to candidates who abide by the limits. Presidential campaigns now provide public matching funds for candidates who agree to abide by voluntary spending limits.

Enforcement

Congress must also give more authority to the Federal Election Commission to crack down on election law violations. In one recent case, the FEC needed 12 months to audit a House Member's campaign records that turned out to be fraudulent. Prompt, tough enforcement is the key to cleaning up the system.

CONCLUSION

Congress made significant progress on reforms in 1995, but it must build on that momentum in 1996. Major campaign finance reform will be the overriding reform issue this year in Congress. The purpose of reform is to reduce special interest influence and increase political competition. The campaign finance system may never be perfect, but the influence of money can and should be reduced. Until we begin limiting money's disproportionate influence, public cynicism will continue to grow.

The passage of a complete reform agenda will help demonstrate that members are serious about enhancing the openness, effectiveness, and public credibility of Congress. I