

the Foster Grandparent Program, the Senior Companion Program, and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program that people like Mary Lloyd in Montgomery County and others across America who are volunteers in those programs are making a difference. Tonight, along with other colleagues, I salute the Foster Grandparent Program and all they have done for America.

A REVOLUTIONARY REFORM CONGRESS?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, last January 1995, this House began its proceedings with great fanfare and with claims that this would be in fact a revolutionary reform Congress. In fact, things have changed quite a bit over the course of the last few months.

The taxpayers have seen this House squander \$1.5 billion of taxpayer money with costly Government shutdowns. They have seen the extremism of this House in one failure after another, with almost no legislative accomplishments to point to. And now we get to 1996, and the reform Congress has, by the Republican leadership, been reduced to a reform week. This is reform week.

The only problem is that all the reforms that our Republican colleagues have come up with they now have taken their reform week, and I think they are reducing it to a reform hour. At the rate they are going, they may be down to a reform minute for this Congress.

The strange thing about the reform of this Republican Congress is that not many Members, Republican or Democrat, have much motion of what this reform hour will actually consider. Because, Mr. Speaker, in the reform hour that we will now have out of this reform Congress in this reform year, the Committee on Rules has yet to meet to even decide what amendments will be in order with reference to reforming the way this Congress operates.

Most people do not really realize that the Members themselves will not have an opportunity to vote on many of the reform ideas that people across America are talking about that they would like to see this Congress adopt. Indeed, we will consider two of the most important issues facing America: That of welfare reform and that of campaign finance reform and the way this Congress operates, without having adequate forewarning of what amendments will be considered in order, and what alternatives that people across America have advocated might be considered.

But, of course, all of this is consistent with the experience that America had last year leading up to the costly Government shutdowns. Because people across America will remember that we struggled against the Speaker, the

gentleman from Georgia [Mr. GINGRICH], to get a gift ban to end the ties that bind legislators and lobbyists. We finally were able to overcome his opposition and obtain that reform last year.

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He held here at the desk, at his Speaker's rostrum, last year for a matter of months the first lobby reform bill in almost 50 years. We were able to build up enough public concern over lobby reform that we overcame the Speaker's opposition to that reform. Now we are finally to the most important issue, that of campaign finance reform for which there is some bipartisan support in this House. There are Members on both sides of the aisle that have come up and have spoken out in favor of genuine campaign finance reform. Indeed, it was the Speaker himself who a little over a year ago stood there in front of a crowd in New Hampshire with President Clinton, shook hands and said, "We will have a bipartisan effort to address this issue of campaign finance reform." Yet once the smile was over and the cameras had gone away, nothing happened. Indeed, it took the Speaker from the summer until the end of October or the beginning of November to even announce his plans. Those plans were to appoint a commission to look at the issue. Of course, a commission has never been appointed in all the ensuing months. With all that valuable time going by, the chance that any reform, even from this reform hour that we have left, affecting the elections this year has simply gone down the drain.

I think that is extremely unfortunate. Because there was a proposal out there supported by Common Cause, supported by the Reform Party, supported by a number of independent organizations that neither the Republican Party nor frankly the Democratic Party, many elements of it, liked all that much. I think the only kind of reform that will really change this system once and for all is one that hurts each side a little bit, that there is dissatisfaction on from each side a little bit. I believe we have such a proposal in the bipartisan approach that Members of both sides have come together on and have advocated, but it now appears, not through any formal action of the leadership at this point but my word of mouth of what they may do, that they will refuse to even let this House consider that proposal in the very little time for reform, the hour or so for reform that we will have the day after tomorrow, to deal with the way that campaign dollars and campaign financing are polluting and affecting in a most negative way the way that this House operates. It is wrong that we have been narrowed to this little time. It is time for the American people to speak out and demand that this system be genuinely reformed.

FIXING A BROKEN WELFARE SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LONGLEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. RIGGS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, before my colleague from Texas departs the floor, I just want to quickly hasten to point out that this Congress, the 104th Congress, has made reform a priority. In fact the reforms that we have enacted to date, a few of which the gentleman alluded to, have been enacted through this House of Representatives on an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis: The Congressional Accountability Act, which applies the same laws to Congress as the rest of the country and basically makes Congress work under the same laws that it imposes on American families and businesses; the very strict gift ban that was enacted last year; and very comprehensive lobbying reforms.

So it is a shame, really, that the gentleman comes to the well and attempts to make congressional reform and campaign reform a partisan issue. But to the extent that it becomes a partisan issue, I should tell the gentleman that I very well remember from my service in the 102d Congress the House of Representatives under Democratic control, and I very well remember the House bank and post office scandals that sort of gave new meaning to the term "the check is in the mail," at least back here in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk, though, about our broken welfare system. I subscribe to the old adage that if it ain't broke, don't fix it, but our Nation's outdated and failed welfare system is definitely broken and it is in desperate need of major repair. We must fix it now. Time is simply running out.

In 1965, our country launched a war on poverty. The intentions were good, but this led, I think we know now, to the creation of the welfare state as we know it and this whole political constituency of dependency in our country. Thirty-one years and \$5.4 trillion later, we have nothing really to show for the war on poverty but more poverty, despair, hopelessness, broken families, and a very damaged work ethic in American society. Doing nothing and allowing this destructive system to continue is one of the most uncompassionate things we can do.

Eighteen months ago, the new Republican majority in this Congress set out to truly reform welfare. We tried to help the Democratic President make good on his campaign promise to end welfare as we know it. But twice our efforts were stopped by Presidential vetoes. However, this week we are trying again.

Our welfare reform plan is built upon five principles; we call them pillars. We believe that welfare should not be a way of life; we feel that welfare should be replaced with work; we want to shift