

In a few days I will be introducing a bill which will counteract H.R. 400. My bill, like a similar bill that I had last year, will be entitled "the Patent Term Restoration Act." This bill offers us a chance to restore to the American people the guaranteed patent term which has been our right since our country's founding. I am asking my colleagues to sign on as cosponsors.

The other side has already had their multinational corporate interests putting pressure on our colleagues here. This is a free society. They have a right to speak. They have a right to talk to their representatives. But it is important that the American people have their influence as well. Every American needs to talk to his or her Member of Congress, his or her Member of the House of Representatives, and ask that that representative cosponsor the Patent Term Restoration Act, and oppose, please, and oppose the Steal American Technologies Act, H.R. 400.

Last year my bill, which is basically similar to the bill that will be reintroduced in the next few days, last year we had the support of biotech companies, we had the support of those who are under attack from all over the world, we had the support of labor unions, we had the support of venture capitalists, the pharmaceutical companies, major universities like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. But more importantly, we had support from every individual inventors' organization in the country. In short, we had the support of the little guys versus the big guys.

This is the ultimate fight of the little guys versus the big guys. In America's history, in America's history, the average person, the little guy, has always come through because our Government is designed not for the protection of people who can hire stables of lawyers to do their bidding, and that is what H.R. 400 would do, the Steal American Technologies Act will do. It will mean that the big corporations who can hire the lawyers will have Government protection of their rights, but the rest of us will be left out.

But we are not going to permit that to happen, because we can mobilize support in Congress if the American people will speak to their Congressmen, if they will call their Representative in the House of Representatives and say, "We want you to support H.R.," whatever the bill will be, which is basically the Patent Restoration Act, the Patent Restoration Act, and to oppose H.R. 400, which is the Steal American Technologies Act.

Japanese corporations, as I say, and Chinese, and all these people, when you hear people talking about the global economy, by the way, I believe in a global economy. No matter what we do, we are going to have a global economy. We are going to have a more global system, because communications and transportation are better than ever, thanks to the Wright Brothers and thanks to Thomas Edison and a lot of

other people. But the fact is that we cannot use that concept as an excuse to diminish the rights of our people.

If we are going to harmonize our law with Japan or anyone else, we must bring their standard of protection up to that of the American people. That is what this debate will be all about, of whether or not we can—the big shots, of course, they can just have their lawyers do the work for them, but the rest of us depend on these things being written into law, these protections to be written into law.

We need to restore the American guaranteed patent rights. We need to restore them, and when we face these issues of global economy in the future, we must face them with the understanding that we will not be entering the global economy by basically diminishing the rights of our people. The American people can understand that. The American people, if they speak to their elected Representatives, their will, their will will take precedence over the powerful special interests.

Today we join the battle. Today we will begin a fight that will be decided before August, and before August, through this body, will come through either a bill that is aimed at restoring the guaranteed patent term to the American people, or H.R. 400, the Steal American Technologies Act.

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This will determine the future of our country. People will not fight for the American people unless the American people fight for themselves. We must all participate. I am confident that just as in the past, the American people will be the winners and that in the future of our country, when we evermore in the years ahead look to technology, we will be the technological leaders. We will not, our people will not go out to do battle, to do battle with enemies and adversaries around the world in equipment and weapons that are inferior technologically.

Think about having to disclose every new patent idea after 18 months, whether or not the patent has been issued. That means our adversaries, who might want to destroy us, will have technology that can actually target America for destruction. Certainly they will have information that can target American jobs and the standard of living of our people for destruction.

But we will win this battle and we will win the battles in the future because we will be strong and the American people will speak loudly and rise up and prevent this abomination of H.R. 400, the Steal American Technologies Act, from passing and will demand their rights be restored, patent rights and their rights to decency and their rights to opportunity as American citizens.

PROBLEMS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CALLAHAN). Under a previous order of

the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the attention that the Speaker and, more recently, the President has given to the problems of the District of Columbia. The reason for that attention is that those problems are indeed desperate.

Let me concede that there are operational problems of the city that must be laid at the feet of the city and the city has accepted that challenge.

I come as an advocate for my city, not as an apologist. All the analysts also say that there are structural defects in the financial relationship between the city and the Federal Government. They can perhaps be summed up in the notion that this city pays for State, county, and municipal functions and, though the vast majority of those who work in the city come from the suburbs, it is the District that must pay for the services they use. And they make no contribution.

As a result, I have introduced a bipartisan bill, the District of Columbia Economic Recovery Act. It is a progressive tax cut. Essentially it would allow the residents of the District of Columbia to use their own money to save the Capital of the United States.

Why is this necessary? Perhaps that is best understood by looking at this chart, "Frightening Decline of D.C. Tax Base." Mr. Speaker, this is 1990. This is the year 2000.

When cities begin to lose their tax base at this rate, the State kicks in and keeps them from going belly up. There is no State to do that for the District of Columbia. Most cities, particularly the large cities of the United States, Detroit, New York, Chicago, Newark, LA, would not have been left standing if, given similar flight, they had not had a State as a safety net. If the District were not stateless, I would not have put in my tax-cut bill. The President will speak tonight, I believe, of a proposal he has to help the District by taking some of the cost of State functions from the District and taking back pension liability that the Congress built up.

The fact is that as grateful as we are for a proposal that is serious, it is marginal. It would take about 10 percent of what District taxpayers pay now and, remember, those taxpayers are rapidly disappearing. It would leave those same disappearing taxpayers with 90 percent of the costs they now pay.

My bill contains protections against gentrification. It is a progressive tax cut based on income. Mr. Speaker, no one even speaks today of the underlying democratic flaw that afflicts the Capital of the United States. It is the last great injustice on American soil, that the District is third per capita in Federal income taxes and yet has indeed taxation without representation. The four territories have a delegate just as the District does. They pay no Federal income taxes. I even won the

right to vote on the House floor in the Committee of the Whole and in one of this body's most ungenerous acts, this vote was taken from me by rule by the majority, an act that violates the principles of the majority and the minority. It is a vote I hope to reclaim.

More important than my vote, Mr. Speaker, however, is the survival of my city and your Capital. As we begin the 105th Congress, I ask Members to keep an open mind as we try to find a way toward recovery for the Capital of the United States. We are not asking to tax others. We are asking that the money we spend in Federal taxes be cut somewhat so that we can help revive our city. You must not allow the Capital of the United States to become an absolute disgrace because its problems have been laid only at its feet and its own great country has not come forward to help it. The President wants to help. I now ask my own colleagues to help as well.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 8:40 p.m., for the purpose of receiving in joint session, the President of the United States.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.) the House stood in recess until approximately 8:40 p.m.

JOINT SESSION OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE HELD PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 9 TO HEAR AN ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The Speaker of the House presided.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms, Mr. William Sims, announced the Vice President and Members of the U.S. Senate, who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the Vice President taking the chair at the right of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort the President of the United States into the Chamber:

The gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY];

The gentleman from Texas [Mr. DELAY];

The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BOEHNER];

The gentleman from California [Mr. COX];

The gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. DICKEY];

The gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. HUTCHINSON];

The gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT];

The gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BONIOR];

The gentleman from California [Mr. FAZIO];

The gentlewoman from Connecticut [Mrs. KENNELLY];

The gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. BERRY]; and

The gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. SNYDER].

The VICE PRESIDENT. The President of the Senate, at the direction of that body, appoints the following Senators as members of the committee on the part of the Senate to escort the President of the United States into the House Chamber:

The Senator from Mississippi [Mr. LOTT];

The Senator from Oklahoma [Mr. NICKLES];

The Senator from Florida [Mr. MACK];

The Senator from Georgia [Mr. COVERDELL];

The Senator from Idaho [Mr. CRAIG];

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL];

The Senator from Arkansas [Mr. HUTCHINSON];

The Senator from South Dakota [Mr. DASCHLE];

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. FORD];

The Senator from Maryland [Ms. MICKULSKI];

The Senator from Louisiana [Mr. BREAU];

The Senator from Massachusetts [Mr. KERRY];

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID];

The Senator from West Virginia [Mr. ROCKEFELLER];

The Senator from North Dakota [Mr. DORGAN]; and

The Senator from New Jersey [Mr. TORRICELLI].

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the acting dean of the diplomatic corps, His Excellency Mohsen A. Alaini, Ambassador of Yemen.

The acting dean of the diplomatic corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

The members of the Cabinet of the President of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

At 9 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m., the Sergeant at Arms, Mr. Wilson Livingood, announced the President of the United States.

The President of the United States, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, and stood at the Clerk's desk.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

The SPEAKER. Members of the Congress, I have the high privilege and the distinct honor of presenting to you the President of the United States.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The PRESIDENT. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of the 105th Congress, distinguished guests, and my fellow Americans:

I think I should start by saying thanks for inviting me back.

I come before you tonight with a challenge as great as any in our peacetime history, and a plan of action to meet that challenge, to prepare our people for the bold new world of the 21st century.

We have much to be thankful for. With 4 years of growth, we have won back the basic strength of our economy. With crime and welfare rolls declining, we are winning back our optimism, the enduring faith that we can master any difficulty. With the Cold War receding and global commerce at record levels, we are helping to win an unrivaled peace and prosperity all across the world.

My fellow Americans, the state of our union is strong, but now we must rise to the decisive moment, to make a Nation and a world better than any we have ever known. The new promise of the global economy, the information age, unimagined new work, life-enhancing technology, all these are ours to seize. That is our honor and our challenge. We must be shapers of events, not observers. For if we do not act, the moment will pass, and we will lose the best possibilities of our future.

We face no imminent threat, but we do have an enemy: The enemy of our time is inaction.

So tonight I issue a call to action, action by this Congress, action by our States, by our people, to prepare America for the 21st century. Action to keep our economy and our democracy strong and working for all our people; action to strengthen education and harness the forces of technology and science; action to build stronger families and stronger communities and a safer environment; action to keep America the world's strongest force for peace, freedom, and prosperity. And above all, action to build a more perfect union here at home.

The spirit we bring to our work will make all the difference. We must be committed to the pursuit of opportunity for all Americans, responsibility from all Americans, in a community of all Americans. And we must be committed to a new kind of government, not to solve all our problems for us, but to give our people, all our people, the tools they need to make the most of their own lives.

And we must work together. The people of this Nation elected us all. They