STATEMENT ON MOTHER TERESA

HON. KAREN McCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Ms. McCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the life and the contributions of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, a woman devoted to helping the poorest of the poor find solace. Although her presence will be missed, her legacy of charity continues to inspire the entire world.

I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to participate in the presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal to Mother Teresa for her outstanding and enduring record of humanitarianism. She challenged all Members of Congress to extend our hearts and our resources to those in need. As a Nobel Laureate, Mother Teresa unselfishly created the Missionaries of Charity, a religious order that operates 517 missions in over 100 different countries. She led 4,000 Sisters in seeking out the poor, the abandoned, the sick and the destitute. Malcomb Mudderidge wrote of Mother Teresa, in his book ''Something Beautiful for God,'' that she could ''hear in the cry of every abandoned child the cry of the Bethlehem child; recognize in every leper's stumps the hands which once touched sightless eyes and made them see.'' She said she saw God in the eyes of those who suffered. She created hospices for the dying, and places of rest for the tired. She reached out and elevated the awareness of millions to the realities of those less fortunate.

While we mourn the loss of a great humanitarian, we must ensure that her giving and loving spirit lives on in each of us. Mother Teresa once said, ''the poverty in the West is not only a poverty of loneliness, but also of spirituality. There's a hunger for love, as there is a hunger for God.'' As servants and representatives of the public, we have an obligation to make Government and Congress a benevolent and merciful institution dedicated to meeting the needs of all its citizens. Mr. Speaker, I join in honoring Mother Teresa for all that she accomplished and for her lasting impact on our world.

CONGRATULATING J. FLETCHER CREAMER SR., ON HIS INDUCTION TO THE NEW JERSEY CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY HALL OF FAME

HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate J. Fletcher Creamer Sr. on being inducted into the New Jersey Construction Hall of Fame by the Utility and Transportation Contractors Association of New Jersey. This well deserved honor comes in recognition of Mr. Creamer's many contributions to the construction industry and the welfare of our State.

As chairman and CEO of J. Fletcher Creamer & Son, Inc. since 1946, Mr. Creamer is a wonderful example of the American ideals of entrepreneurship—an example of the American dream come true. Mr. Creamer is a third generation of Creamers to head this family owned enterprise. His son, J. Fletcher Creamer Jr., serves as president and his grandson, 22-year-old Fletch, has recently joined the company as well. This continuity of family contractors has helped this important local business become a thriving, successful force in the local economy. As evidence of that, Creamer & Son was ranked 254th in Engineering News Record's recent listing of the top 400 construction contractors in the Nation. This is a family business that grew because it adhered to the standards for quality set by Mr. Creamer's grandfather and carried on by each successive generation. Whenever this company is discussed, it is always in terms of the highest professional and personal standards. People know they're dealing with honest, ethical professionals when they deal with Creamer & Son.

Mr. Creamer willingly shares his lifetime of expertise with others in the business world. He serves on the boards of the American Pipe and Plastics Co., Orange and Rockland Utilities Inc., Commerce Bank/North, the New Jersey Alliance for Action, and the Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey, where he is a former chairman. His guidance has helped make all of those organizations the successes they are today.

Mr. Creamer is more than a businessman, however. He is a truly dedicated and active member of his community. Many people can talk about giving something back to the community that has made them successful, but Mr. Creamer actually does something about it. He and his family have worked with a wide variety of organizations, dedicating themselves to helping make their community a better place.

He has served as chief of the Fort Lee Fire Department, a trustee of the Englewood Hospital Association, vice chairman of the Bergen County United Fund, chairman of advance gifts for the Boy Scouts of America, chairman of the Private Enterprise Political Action Committee, director of the Fort Lee Chamber of Commerce, member of the Saddle River Planning Board, Bergen County Finance Chairman for former Gov. Thomas Kean's first-term election campaign, cochairman of Governor Kean's first Inaugural Committee, member of the Board of Governors of Hackensack Medical Center, member of the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission, commissioner of the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority, chairman of the National Multiple Sclerosis Golf Outing, chairman of the capital campaign for the Hackensack Medical Center, finance chairman for DARE of New Jersey, and member of the Bergen Economic Development Corporation.

As might be expected, this is only one of the many honors and awards Mr. Creamer has received during his lifetime. He has been named Man of the Year by both the Englewood Cliffs and Fort Lee Chambers of Commerce; received the De La Salle Award from Paramus Catholic Boys High School; the Brotherhood Award from the National Conference of Christians and Jews; the Catholic Youth Organization Big Guy of the Year Award; the Distinguished Service Award from the West Bergen Mental Health Center; the Foundation for Free Enterprise Hall of Fame. He has also been honored by the Boy Scouts of America, Bergen Community College, and the 200 Club of Bergen County among others.

A veteran of the U.S. Navy, Mr. Creamer served in both World War II and the Korean war. An avid outdoorsman, he enjoys hunting, fishing, and dog breeding. He is a member of the Nantucket Billfish Club, Hudson Tuna Club, Black Meadow Rod and Gun Club, and the Holiday Beagle Club.

Mr. Creamer and his wife, Katherine, make their home in Saddle River. They have three children, J. Fletcher Jr., Jeffrey (deceased), Glenn, and Dale.

With such a long and varied record of accomplishments, Mr. Creamer is certainly one of the most outstanding citizens of New Jersey. While this current award recognizes his work in the construction industry, his contributions to the community go far beyond those made on-the-job. He is a shining example of what someone who cares about others can do to help those around him. He carries with him the values instilled by his father and grandfather, and is passing those values on to his sons and grandsons. I wish Fletch, his wife, affectionately known as Kissie, and his family many more years of continued success.

CURRENT ECONOMIC EXPANSION

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, for those who missed it during the August recess, I would like to bring a column by James K. Glassman of the American Enterprise Institute to the attention of my colleagues. The subject of the piece is the current economic expansion.

The most important economic lesson Ronald Reagan taught us is that high tax rates inevitably discourage investment and productivity. The theory behind reducing taxes remains perfectly sound—namely, that people will have a greater incentive to engage in fruitful enterprise if the government confiscates less of their earnings.

Through deregulation, privatization, and across-the-board tax cuts, Ronald Reagan unleashed the longest economic expansion in U.S. peacetime history. He also inaugurated a new era of American enterprise and prosperity.

The author is right on target when it comes to attacks on so-called trickle-down economics. What the opponents of supply-side tax cuts are really assailing is the simple idea of allowing people to keep more of their own money, so they may invest capital, hire workers, and produce goods and services.

Although I would, of course, give the Congress more credit than does the author for the prevailing economic figures, I could not agree more that President Reagan set it all in motion. I would only remind him that the same principles guide today's Congress and, whether they like it or not, members of the current administration.

Again Mr. Speaker, I commend the following column by Jim Glassman to the attention of all interested parties.

[From the Washington Post, August 12, 1997]

THE REAGAN BOOM

(By James K. Glassman)

Whose economy is this anyway?

Both President Clinton and Congress are eager to take credit for our 3 percent GDP growth, 4.8 percent unemployment and 2.3 percent inflation—amazing figures, all.

But government doesn't make things or sell them. People and the companies they create do. What has happened in the past 15 years is that businesses are making things (and providing services) better and cheaper. Through risk-taking, hard work, good management and the exercise of sheet talent, the economy is booming.

What have Washington politicians done to effect this success? Practically nothing, except to have the sense, occasionally, to get out of the way. President Clinton and Hill leaders are little more than supernumeraries, bit players in this great economic opera, but they still can't resist shoving to the front of the stage for the curtain calls.

For instance, last week, it was particularly annoying to see both Republicans and Democrats reveling in the balanced budget deal—as though this fictive creation were revitalizing the economy.

The truth is precisely the opposite: It's the economy that is balancing the budget, not the budget that is boosting the economy. The reason the deficit has fallen from $290 billion in 1992 to $34 billion this year is that a tidal wave of tax revenues, generated by the private sector, has washed into the U.S. Treasury.

The figures are astounding. In fiscal 1992, the government collected $1,090 billion in taxes. This year, which ends Sept. 30, it will collect $1,578 billion, according to new estimates by the Congressional Budget Office.

Tax receipts are up 45 percent in five years, while inflation has risen only 14 percent.

In other words, the government is taking in $488 billion more in 1997 than it did five years ago. Unfortunately, it is also spending $231 billion more. If that rise in spending has only been kept down to the rise in inflation, we'd be running a surplus of about $50 billion this year.

This flood of cash is not the result of higher tax rates. Yes, Bill Clinton imposed some increases in 1993, but they were paltry compared with Ronald Reagan's cuts in 1981 and 1986. The top rate, pre-Reagan, was 70 percent on ''unearned'' (meaning investment) income, 50 percent on earned income and 35 percent on capital gains. Those rates have fallen to a maximum of 39.6 percent for income and 28 percent (now 20 percent) for capital gains.

And what's happened? Revenues poured in, just as the supply-side economists predicted they would. In 1980, government tax receipts were only $517 billion. Since then, they've risen 205 percent, while consumer prices are up just 85 percent.

If not higher tax rates, then what's the reason for the increase in revenues? Businesses are generating more profits, hiring more workers and compensating them better. And government gets a lower percentage of a much higher take.

But why are businesses doing so well? The best answers may come from the people who run them. Last month, Investor's Business Daily commissioned a survey of 200 CEOs and chief financial officers from the nation's largest publicly traded firms. They were asked, ''What triggered recent economic growth?''

Leading the list: productivity (making more with less). Second: Federal Reserve policies, which have helped keep inflation low. Next, in order: information technology, restructuring and globalization.

The first politician to appear on the list was Ronald Reagan, in sixth place. His policies were credited by 26 percent of the CEOs and CFOs as triggering the surge in growth. Farther down the list, at 14 percent, were ''Bush policies.'' And near the bottom, at 8 percent, were ''Clinton policies.''

Now, I'll admit these captains of industry have GOP leanings, and their answers may be self-serving. But their answers have the force of logic.

Consider Silicon Valley, subject of a cover story in Business Week. How did it ''reach its zenith?'' the magazine asks.

''What we found was a huge brain trust, companies galore to service the tech machine, and a daredevil, risk-taking culture.'' No mention of an increasingly irrelevant Washington.

In fact, the CEOs and CFOs have it right. Reagan is the only politician who deserves credit for the rebirth of the American economy. But at his Aug. 6 press conference, Clinton could not resist taking a swipe at him. ''In 1993,'' he said, ''we abandoned supply-side, trickle-down economics.'' Nonsense.

Supply-side economics is still with us, and it's performed as advertised. In fact, the past 15 years, the longest stretch in U.S. history with just one shallow recession, should be called the Reagan Boom.

The incentives of lower tax rates and deregulation have encouraged more risk-taking, less diversion of valuable resources into tax shelters, more sensible investment and work.

Revisionism dominates the press today, but the facts were clear nearly a decade ago. ''Measured in 1982–84 dollars, the income tax revenue collected from the top 10 percent of earners rose from $150.6 billion in 1981 to $199.8 billion in 1988, an increase of 32.7 percent,'' wrote James D. Gwartney of Florida State University in the ''Fortune Encyclopedia of Economics.'' ''In effect, lower rates soaked the rich.''

The current flood of revenues is merely one result of what is literally a supply-side boom. For all this, politicians shouldn't be congratulating themselves. They should be thanking the robust private sector, plus, of course, Ronald Wilson Reagan.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN OFFICIAL MASS MAILING ALLOWANCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 9, 1997

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, the congressional franking privilege combines two of the American people's worst pet peeves—one being the fact that Congress is perceived to enjoy perks and privileges unavailable to average citizens. The second is junk mail. American mailboxes are flooded with junk mail, and some of that is unsolicited mass mail from their Representative here in Congress.

Members have a legitimate need to respond to the inquiries and concerns of their constituents, and the franking privilege facilities this. I think the public understands this, and supports this use of their tax dollars. Unsolicited mass mail from Members, however, is another story.

In recent years, Congress has done an excellent job cutting back the taxpayer funding of franked mail. Fiscal year 1997's level of funding was 40 percent lower than 1996's level of funding—a very impressive reduction. Furthermore, Members are prohibited from sending mailings 90 days within the general election.

But there is still room for improvement. We need to codify the reforms we've made in statute, and keep moving forward down the road to complete reform. For example, the volume of outgoing franked mail continues to outpace the volume of incoming mail. In 1995, the House sent out four times more mail than it received. If the House had responded only to letters it received, franked mail costs would have been only $12.4 million, saving $18.6 million or 60 percent from actual mail costs.

In addition, use of the frank increases cyclically during every election year. During the 103d Congress, the House spent $24 million in 1993, and $42 million in 1994. The 104th Congress has narrowed this gap in total spending, but the irresistible temptation for individual Members facing tough re-election campaigns to use their franking perk extensively in election years remains.

That is why I am introducing this bill today to further improve our franked mail system. It creates a separate account to fund mass mail, and bans transfers of funds into the mass mail account. It bans mass mailings in election years. It tightens the definition of mass mailings to include mailings over 250 pieces, excluding solicited responses and town meeting notices. And it statutorily reduces the funding for franked mail to a maximum level equivalent to the one mailing per address.

By making statutory changes, this bill will make sure that future Congresses don't get off track and undermine the franking reforms we've made in recent years. I hope many of my colleagues will join me in cosponsoring this important piece of legislation.

FRANKED MAIL REFORM—SECTION-BY-SECTION SUMMARY

SECTION 2—OFFICIAL MASS MAILING ALLOWANCE

(1) Create a separate account to fund mass mail. Currently, mass mail is funded out of the same account as constituent response mail. Under the bill, expenditures on mass mail would be identified under a new and separate Official Mass Mail Account.

(2) Limit the funds available for mass mail. The bill limits funding of mass mail to no more than ½ of the total mail allowance. Funding of the Official Mass Mail Account could not exceed funding of the Official Mail Account.

(3 & 4) Ban transfers of funds into the Official Mass Mail Account.

(5) Ban mass mailings in election years. Mass mail would not be allowed in election years until after the general election. This prohibition does not include direct response mail, federal publications, town meeting notices, communications with the media, and correspondence with other Members of Congress, Federal, State or local government officials. It also does not include mailings which relate to an emergency or disaster declared by the President, as long as the mailing is sent within 60 days and the mailing relates solely to the emergency or disaster.

(6) Commission Approval mass mailings. Require the Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards to approve mass mail.

(7) Public Disclosure of Member expenditures. Require the quarterly Report of the Clerk to include the cost and number of mass mailings sent by each Member of the House. The current Report documents total spending on franked mail only.

Public inspection of mass mailings. Require the Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards to make available to the public for inspection and photocopying samples of mass mail, town meeting notices, and unsolicited mail in excess of 50 pieces. Recent rules changes have allowed watchdog groups and other citizens greater access than in the past, and allow photocopies to be made, but this should be put into statute.

(8) Strengthen definition of mass mailing. The definition of mass mail would include