

it. Sir I have three young children, babies ages three, five and six years of age. My oldest daughter has Cystic Fibrosis, and she needs the care and love of both of her parents. Sir I'm not a bad person, I'm not a terrorist. I'm a man who made some mistakes, when I was very foolish kid. Sir I love my children very much, more than life itself, and I have means to support my children very well with the career I intend to make for myself.

Sir I can go anywhere in this country and get a good paying job driving tractor trailers. Sir I love this country. I came to this country in 1966 and this country is all I know. I don't know how to write or read Portuguese. I know just enough language to get by. Sir where am I going to live, how am I going to eat. I don't know these questions myself, I'm terrified Sir. All my families are here in the U.S. I don't know why they want to take a father away from his children. Did I do something that bad where my children are going to lose their father for. Sir why even live anymore. I'm scared Sir. I'm sorry for the people who died in Oklahoma, but I didn't kill them. I didn't blow up the Trade Center. I'm sorry for the people who lost their children, the children who lost their father, the wife who lost her husband. But that's what the country is doing to me and my family. I'm a 31 year old Catholic that want to work hard, pay his taxes, become a citizen and vote, raise my children the best I know how and help them live the American Dream. Like my parents did, work hard and they became citizens of this great land. Sir in my heart and soul I am an American. I love this land and would die for it if I had to, to protect it and protect democracy here and in the world. I don't know if you can help someone like myself a statistic to the I.N.S., but a father and financier to my family. If you can help me in anyway, I thank you and am in your debt and prayers for my lifetime, "thank you Sir."

Thank you Congressman Barney Frank.

WHAT IS REALLY NEEDED FOR CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Good morning, Madam Speaker. The only thing more complicated today, Madam Speaker, than our current campaign finance system is the Tax Code. But the solution of ridding the ills of the current system is not by making things more complicated, as much of the legislation that is being offered today in Congress does.

Now, some have suggested that our first amendment rights should be curtailed in order to create some type of mythical level playing field for Federal elections. Now, the minority leader, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT], was quoted this year as saying, in *Time Magazine*, 1997, February 3, "What we have here are two important values in direct conflict. Freedom of speech and our desire for healthy campaigns and a healthy democracy. You can't have both."

Quite frankly, I find this viewpoint wrong. In fact, I believe one can have freedom of speech and healthy campaigns. The American people should

never be forced to lose a part of their precious freedom in order to pursue a socially engineered campaign finance system.

The courts have been very clear that the Government cannot restrict the freedom of American citizens in an effort to implement strict expenditure and contribution limits. In *Buckley versus Valeo* the U.S. Supreme Court, in 1976, ruled that "In the free society ordained by our Constitution, it is not the Government, but the people, individually as citizens and candidates and collectively as associations and political committees, who must retain control over the quantity and range of debate on public issues in a political campaign."

What we need to do is to enforce the campaign finance laws that are already on the books and then work together to simplify the laws so the American people are being well served.

The modern campaign finance system was dramatically affected in 1908 during President Teddy Roosevelt's administration, when corporate contributions were banned. Congress then mandated in 1910 that Federal candidates disclose all campaign contributions.

Congress thoughtfully extended a corporate ban to include labor unions beginning in 1943. Corporations and unions, after these bans, could then only give to Federal candidates through Political Action Committees, PAC's. PAC's are separate, segregated funds that pool voluntary contributions from designated classes of individuals such as members of unions and employees of a company to give or spend in Federal elections.

Now, the Hatch Act in 1940 had also limited all campaign contributions to \$5,000. The Hatch Act was then applied to union PAC's when union contributions were banned from Federal elections.

Now, as we all know, the flurry of campaign finance laws in the 1970's revolved around the Watergate scandal. The legislation from the 1970's imposed limits on contributions, required uniform disclosure of campaign receipts and expenditures, and established the Federal Election Campaign Commission, the FEC, as a central administrative enforcement agency. A part of these reforms that limited certain expenditures was struck down by the Supreme Court in the landmark case of *Buckley versus Valeo*.

These laws imposed limits of \$1,000 per individual every election on contributions to candidates, parties, and PAC's, and a \$5,000 limit for PAC's every year. An aggregate limit was set on individuals and PAC's at \$25,000 per year that could be given to all Federal candidates, parties, and PAC's.

Again, what is needed now is not to make the laws more complicated. Rather, simplicity is the path to strengthening our system and gaining credibility with the American people. We can also gain a tremendous amount of credibility with the American people

by actually investigating and enforcing the current law.

So, Madam Speaker, this morning my message is, like the Tax Code, simplicity and enforceability are what is needed today in the campaign finance reform matter. No matter what laws are put in place, we will have smart people stretching those laws. We need to enforce the laws that are on the books and keep them simple and understandable.

IMMEDIATE FUNDING FOR EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997 the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, Democrats this week will continue our effort to improve our Nation's public schools. We believe strongly that every child in America should have access to quality public education. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership keeps trying to erode support for public schools. House Democrats' priorities for education include reducing overcrowding in schools, as well as rebuilding crumbling schools.

The dire need to invest in the physical infrastructure of our schools is a matter that every Member of this body has become very familiar with in the last several weeks, and I am referring of course to the delayed opening of the school year right here in the District of Columbia. Because of the decrepit physical conditions of many schools in the District of Columbia, the opening of the school year has been postponed by a minimum of 3 weeks. Talk has surfaced in recent days that the 3-week extension may not be enough, and this is indeed a sad state of affairs. Many school systems across the Nation, including schools in my home State of New Jersey, are badly in need of physical improvements and other upgrades to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

The General Accounting Office has noted that approximately one-third of all schools serving 14 million students are now in need of substantial repair or outright replacement. The GAO has also noted that half of the Nation's schools have at least one unsatisfactory environmental condition. Indeed, as school enrollment continues to grow in the coming years, the need for additional space and modern facilities will be more acute than ever.

For this school year, 1996-97, elementary and secondary school enrollment was a record 51.7 million. That record has been broken by this year's all-time high enrollment figure of 52.2 million. In other words, from last year to this year, the record was broken again.

To put it in perspective, there are more students enrolled in school now than there were when the baby boomers reached their peak school enrollment number in 1971. According to