

I see the ideal measure as one that fosters competition, avoids Federal mandates, and lowers rates for all consumers. To create this legislation, we must eliminate outdated laws, inject fairness into the process, and delineate the proper role of the Federal Government and State governments. But do not misunderstand me. Reforming the electric industry is no simple matter. This is an enormous undertaking. Next January, in the 106th Congress, we will consider the livelihoods of entire industries, constitutional questions, and the interests of the entire rate-paying public. Accordingly, we must address these points to fully realize the benefits of energy reform:

Every customer must benefit from this deregulation, not just the large industrial users of electricity. I am concerned that any rush next year in reforming the electric utility industry could result in large industrial users seeing greater benefits, while residential users and small businesses would pay for that benefit. One must look at the State-level experiences of Massachusetts and California to see that if we do not effectively address consumer issues, we will certainly face a consumer backlash. The ballot measures in these States underscore how unique the electric power industry is: it permeates every aspect of our lives and, of course, our economy.

We must honor past regulatory schemes and commitments and allow recovery of stranded investments. Electric utilities incurred "stranded costs" under a regulatory scheme not of their own choosing. These utilities made long-term decisions based upon decades of regulation. To deny industry recovery of these costs would go against the fairness that I spoke of earlier. That being said, lower rates would be fostered by real deregulation and industrial and regulation innovation, not by just merely shifting costs. We should not merely "reshuffle the deck," so to speak, on who pays.

A significant hurdle to deregulation is the diverse nature of power generators, including public power providers, municipalities, investor-owned utilities, and Power Marketing Associations. Reconciling these disparate views will be a monumental task, no doubt, yet fairness demands that we produce a level playing field for all energy providers and transmitters.

Reforming the energy industry on a Federal level means clarifying the roles of the Federal and State governments. Where does the Federal responsibility end and the State responsibility begin? The diverse situation among the States adds to the difficulties of this reform. Some States have always supported regulation; others have taken progressive stances, while still others, like my home State of Florida, enjoy the benefits of moderately priced electricity, and, of course, they see very little need for reform.

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Eliminating the barriers to entry into the electricity market is fundamental, of course, to this reform. We must repeal, one, the Public Utility Regulatory Policy Act, PURPA, and the Public Utilities Holding Company Act, PUHCA, to ensure that any transition to retail competition should be truly competitive.

The entire efficacy of PURPA centered on the supposition that producing electricity would become more expensive. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it has become cheaper. Thanks to PURPA, Americans will pay \$38 billion in higher electricity bills over the next 10 years than they normally would have.

In conclusion, deregulation of the electric industry requires consideration of a myriad of factors. The stakes are high but so, of course, are the benefits. In the 106th Congress let us not rush. Let us work together and consider all these issues.

#### TRIBUTE TO CONGRESSMAN ESTEBAN TORRES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. PASTOR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I just want to take a few minutes to give my appreciation to a great leader in this Congress but also a great leader in the Hispanic community. As this term ends, the gentleman from California (Mr. TORRES) will be retiring. I have had the honor of working with ESTEBAN for the past 30 years. I first met him when he was involved with Telecue, a community based organization, whose objective was to give a voice to the Hispanic community in southern California.

He was very effective in organizing that organization and today in southern California many Mexican Americans have great pride in this organization. ESTEBAN was recognized for the fine work that he did when he was named ambassador, and he served for many years in Paris, representing this great country and was called by President Carter to come back to the White House and work in his administration.

ESTEBAN was a voice for many of us. ESTEBAN was an advocate for us and again gave us great leadership. Since he has been in the Congress, he has been involved in many endeavors. Whether it be civil rights, betterment of education, ensuring that the Smithsonian Institute reflected the makeup of our country in terms of its diversity, ESTEBAN has been out there.

I know that very recently he was honored because of a scholarship program he promoted on a national basis. The people of Miami, Arizona, are very proud because ESTEBAN was born in Arizona but moved to California to continue his career.

On a personal note, Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you that ESTEBAN has been

a friend, a mentor and a leader for me personally. It is with great regret that I see him retire from this great institution, but I know that he and Arcy are going to have a great time with their grandchildren and their children, but I know that he will continue to be the advocate that he has been for our community.

So I congratulate ESTEBAN for the fine work he has done. We are going to miss him, but we know that he is still going to be out there for us.

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PASTOR. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his tribute to me during this special order. Indeed, I am honored. He mentioned Miami, Arizona. It should be noted for my colleagues here that the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. PASTOR) and I are both natives of Miami, Arizona, a small mining town in southeastern Arizona. He comes from that stock of people who have worked hard to make this nation what it is today, and I am proud that I come from the same part of the country. Perhaps it must be something that was in the water in Miami, Arizona, but it has yielded two great sons to the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the kind words about me from the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. PASTOR). He has been, indeed, a friend of mine throughout my period of time here and before that, as he mentioned, and I will continue seeing him in our lives as they continue on, as we continue our commitment to our communities.

#### INDEPENDENT AND FREE ELECTIONS IN SLOVAKIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House this evening to talk very briefly about a great European leader, Alexander Dubcek, and also to talk about the Slovak elections. Recently, in Slovakia, we had the opportunity, after a thousand years, to witness free and independent elections. As some may know, Slovakia gained its freedom some 5 years ago and independence as a free nation in the Western European host of nations. In the last few weeks Slovakia has had the opportunity to elect for the first time representatives to their government that potentially will allow a true, free, honest government for that nation.

In the past years, there has been some conflict, there have been some problems in Slovakia, and in an election, which was a record by all Western democratic standards, 85 percent of the Slovaks turned out to cast their ballot. They decided to make a change in government, an important change in Slovakia, and it is very important to the Congress and to the Western world the