

Does not allow deadbeat parents to discharge other obligations relating to divorce or separation agreements.

Requires those who are responsible for the administration of bankruptcy cases to provide important information and notices to their holders of spousal or child support claims as well as to state child support agencies.

Many professionals and organizations responsible for federal child support enforcement programs such as the National District Attorneys Association, the National Association of Attorneys General, and the National Child Support Enforcement Association (which represents more than 60,000 child support professionals across America) have enthusiastically expressed their support for these important reforms.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 333, the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2001.

□ 1245

#### SUPPORT SALES TAX DEDUCTION ACT OF 2001

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

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of a bill that the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD) and myself have worked so hard on and we are introducing today that would restore the sales tax deduction to the Federal Income Tax Code. We are talking about an oversight that occurred in 1986, where seven States cannot deduct their State sales tax from their Federal income tax return, which they could do prior to 1986. This is an issue of tax fairness that has been wrongly denied to the citizens of Tennessee and six other States for 15 years.

Mr. Speaker, due to the elimination of the State sales tax deduction from the Federal Tax Code in 1986, the people of Tennessee are paying significantly more in taxes to the Federal Government than a taxpayer with an identical profile in a State that does have a State income tax. In the last fiscal year alone, my colleagues, my friends, constituents in Tennessee, paid an average of \$727 in State sales taxes but could not deduct \$1 of it from their Federal income tax return. We are being forced to pay taxes on our taxes. This is unfair, it is unjust, and it must be corrected here in the 107th Congress. The people of Tennessee and the other States deserve better from the Federal Government.

Our bill is very simple. It would allow taxpayers to deduct their State sales taxes from their Federal income tax return. Those living in a State with an income tax would be completely unaffected, since they would still be able to take an income tax deduction as they do today. For example, a family with a combined income of \$50,000 that lives in Tennessee, for example, who are blessed with beautiful twin daugh-

ters would save \$350. That, Mr. Speaker, is a lot of diapers.

I am calling on my colleagues to take this opportunity to restore fairness and equity to the Tax Code in this Congress without making the Tax Code more complex and without abandoning our fiscal discipline. In a year when all the talk now is about bipartisan tax cuts and bipartisan tax reform, I say we come together and pass tax fairness and ensure tax equity now. Let us take this opportunity to do something about our tax burdens and not just talk about them.

In this last Congress, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD) and myself were able to offer it on the floor of the House, and 173 of our colleagues voted in favor of similar tax language. I would like to call on those Members of the House to cosponsor this legislation. It is a fair bill, it makes a lot of sense, and it will treat all States equal. Is that not what it is all about, when we call ourselves the United States of America?

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to have a colloquy with my good friend and a real leader in the House of Representatives, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD).

Mr. BAIRD. I thank the gentleman from Tennessee, and I want to commend him for his efforts on this bill and for his fight for fairness for his citizens.

It really is this simple. What we propose is to have the IRS create simple tables. A person will not have to save their receipts in a shoe box or keep track of all their expenditures. They will simply look on a simple table. On the left column is their income, the top row is the family size. They will find where that intersects and that is the amount they put on their tax form. Literally, 30 seconds to a minute for fundamental fairness, for a bill that will save the average working family, who itemizes their deductions, between \$300 to \$500 every year.

The \$500 million that Washington State taxpayers paid to the Federal treasury could have been spent on their families, their kids' educations, and in a lot of other ways. I am sure it is true in Tennessee as well.

Mr. CLEMENT. The gentleman is absolutely right. And I have heard so many people in Tennessee say why not? We should not have been overlooked in 1986. I know neither one of us were in Congress when that happened, when they passed the 1986 tax reform, but the fact is someone did not fight for us. Someone did not fight for those seven States.

I know some of those northeastern Congressmen say, well, we wanted to make sure that if an individual lived in a State with a State income tax that they could deduct that from their Federal income tax returns. Well, treat us fairly as well, where we can deduct some taxes from our Federal income tax return, so we have fairness and equity for all in the United States.

#### FAITH-BASED INITIATIVES A PRIORITY WITH PRESIDENT BUSH

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

Mr. SOUDER. Earlier this week, President George Bush announced his faith-based initiatives office and different proposals that he will be sending down to Congress. Earlier today, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS), who has been a leader in this effort, and Senator RICK SANTORUM, along with the gentlewoman from Kentucky (Mrs. NORTHUP) and myself, and Senators TIM HUTCHINSON and SAM BROWNBACK held a press conference with a number of leaders from Michigan, Florida, and other places around the United States to highlight some of these initiatives.

There are a number of questions that I wanted to address here as we prepare to analyze and hopefully report the President's package and add different things we have considered here in the House and Senate to it as well.

First and foremost, this is not a new idea. Former Congressman and Senator Dan Coats, when he was in the House, had a number of these initiatives. In the Senate, the Agenda for American Renewal. Former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Jack Kemp had a number of faith-based initiatives there because a lot of people would not reach out and care for those with AIDS. In the early stages of the AIDS crisis, as people were dying, there were all sorts of false rumors around and many people did not care for them. Without the faith-based communities, if the government had not reached out to the faith-based communities and involved them, there would have been many people dying of AIDS who would not have received any assistance whatsoever. Nobody objected to the faith-based communities coming and working.

Similarly in homelessness, the Federal dollars, the State dollars, and the local dollars were not enough to address the homeless questions. So, under HUD, they expanded into the faith-based organizations back in the Bush administration. That was continued under Secretary Cisneros and continued under Secretary Cuomo. It is not fair to say that these things are suddenly new and that President Bush is trying to insert religion into the national debate. It has been there. The difference is, instead of an afterthought, President Bush wants to make it a focus. He is saying that all these flowering organizations that are developed in every neighborhood, particularly those that are hurting the most, there are people making a difference and we need to tap into that.

Now, a second question that comes up is, well, these examples that are brought forth and are talked about at press conferences or that are talked about by Gene Rivers in Boston or Freddie Garcia in San Antonio, they