

deduction twice that of the single taxpayer's deduction.

Current law	Collins bill	Effective date
\$7,600	\$12,000	Jan. 1, 2001.
\$4,500	\$6,000	Jan. 1, 2001.
\$6,650	\$8,500	Jan. 1, 2001.

This legislation will provide taxpayers with over \$30 billion in tax relief this year alone. Over the next ten years, wage earners will see their income tax bills reduced by over \$1.5 trillion. It is anticipated that the Congressional Budget Office will soon update their projected budgetary estimates and report that there will be billions more available in unanticipated non-Social Security excess revenues. That is more reason than ever to provide taxpayers with meaningful tax reductions. Please join me in cosponsoring the Individual Income Tax Rate Reduction Act of 2001, so that we can provide tax relief as soon as possible.

DISAPPROVING DEPARTMENT OF
LABOR RULE RELATING TO
ERGONOMICS

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this harmful resolution which will prevent America's workers from safer working conditions.

Over two years ago, Congress mandated that the National Academy of Sciences conduct a study to review the impact of repetitive workplace motions. Now that the results are back, the Republican majority is disappointed. They don't like the results. So, they are trying to kill the rule entirely.

This Disapproval Resolution is simply another attempt to delay and ultimately block implementation of critical ergonomic workplace guidelines. These reasonable standards, already issued by the Department of Labor, will ensure that workplace safety guidelines are in place to prevent increasingly common workplace injuries.

More than 647,000 Americans suffer serious injuries and illness due to musculo-skeletal disorders each year. These injuries are currently costing businesses \$15 to \$20 billion annually in workers' compensation costs. Yet, it has been estimated that the ergonomics standards will prevent 4.6 million injuries over the next decade, and will actually save employers and workers \$9 billion each year.

Tragically, these injuries disproportionately affect women workers. Although women make up 46 percent of the workforce and 33 percent of those injured, 63 percent of repetitive motion injuries happen to women.

Women experience 70 percent of carpal tunnel syndrome injuries that result in lost work time. This is unacceptable and we must act now to prevent these injuries.

Americans who are willing to work hard each day to support themselves and their families deserve reasonable standards to prevent workplace injuries.

Many of the workers who will be covered by these common sense guidelines often work more than one job just to make ends meet. They work long hours loading trucks, moving

boxes, and delivering packages. Their jobs aren't easy, but they are willing to show up every day and do their best.

The last thing these hard-working Americans want is to get hurt. These sensible standards will keep them on the job and prevent costly workplace injuries.

Opponents of these common-sense guidelines claim that they will "regulate every ache and pain in the workplace." This is simply not true. These standards will only ensure that companies make someone responsible for ergonomics standards and that employees are not afraid to report these injuries. This is hardly an overwhelming request.

We must keep the Ergonomics standards in place. These standards protect hard-working Americans who deserve to work without the threat of injury.

I urge all of my colleagues to stand with hard-working Americans and to oppose this harmful legislation.

SAINT PATRICK'S DAY MARCH 17,
2001

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 8, 2001

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, on March 17th, again we approach another glorious, joyous Saint Patrick's Day. The Irish people around the globe, along with the millions here in our nation linked to the Emerald Isle by heritage, as well as their friends worldwide, join in celebrating this glorious day honoring the patron saint of that beautiful country of so many warm and generous people.

The American experience is linked closely with the Irish people. Ireland has given us numerous Presidents with links to both the north and south. Its diaspora fought for our nation as early as with General George Washington as we gained our own independence from Great Britain. Today, more than 44 million Americans claim Irish heritage.

It is only fitting that our nation assist the Irish people in finding lasting peace and justice in the north of Ireland and in ending the bitter, divisive, and tragic conflict, that the Irish call the "Troubles." For the past eight years the U.S. Congress in a bipartisan way fully supported President Clinton in all of his Irish peace process initiatives which eventually helped produce the Good Friday Accord of April 1998, under the guidance and steady hand of former U.S. Senator George Mitchell.

The Good Friday Accord is the road map for lasting peace and justice in the north of Ireland, which we and all the parties to that accord, as well as both governments in the region should honor, abide by, and use for the new shared governance created so that both traditions can live in harmony, peace, and equality in the north under the concept of mutual consent. The Irish people north and south approved the accord in referendum. They want peace!

Now, with a new Administration coming to power in Washington, many wonder if the Irish peace process will be given the same priority by the Administration of George W. Bush. We in the Congress stand ready to provide the same kind of across the board bi-partisanship support for the new Administration in the con-

tinuing search for a lasting peace and justice in Ireland. We owe that to the new Administration, as well as to the Irish people, who have given so much to this nation of ours from its very founding until today.

Candidate George W. Bush supported the GOP platform in Philadelphia in 2000 which said: "The next President will use the prestige and influence of the United States to help the parties achieve a lasting peace." Candidate Bush himself went on to set out his own approach in a letter to the Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern on September 8, 2000, stating ". . . the entire island of Ireland have a friend in George W. Bush. America should remain engaged in the Irish peace process, and I will work hard and pray always for a lasting peace in Northern Ireland."

For those of us who have observed President George W. Bush in his first weeks of office abiding by and living up to his 2000 campaign promises and pledges, no one doubts that Ireland will be high on his foreign policy agenda, and that the Congress will support him.

Mr. Speaker, I submit the letter from George W. Bush to the Irish Prime Minister at this point in the RECORD and I invite my colleagues to join in wishing our Irish-American friends and all of Ireland a Happy Saint Patrick's Day!

GOVERNOR OF TEXAS,

Austin, TX, September 8, 2000.

HON. BERTIE AHERN, T.D.,
Taoiseach, Republic of Ireland.
Dublin, Ireland.

DEAR BERTIE: I want to extend my personal greetings to you, and to express my admiration for your commitment to peace in Northern Ireland. The road has been long, and it has not been easy, but you have succeeded in furthering reconciliation and bringing an elected representative Assembly to Northern Ireland.

You may be assured of my personal interest and full commitment to helping move the peace process forward. I believe that the support of the United States was an important element in helping the parties achieve the Good Friday Agreement, and that America should be ready, if necessary, to appoint a special envoy to further facilitate the search for lasting peace, justice, and reconciliation.

I am encouraged by the very real economic growth that has come to the entire island of Ireland. At least part of this growth can be credited to the strengthening of business ties between the United States and Ireland, and I strongly support continued and increased private American investment in both Northern Ireland and the Republic.

I am also encouraged by the work of Chris Patten and his Commission in reviewing and recommending reforms of the police authorities in Northern Ireland. I appreciate the importance of tradition and symbols, and the sensitivities of the communities in Northern Ireland on this issue, and support the full implementation of the Commission's recommendations.

Please know that you and the people of the entire island of Ireland have a friend in George W. Bush. America should remain engaged in the Irish peace process, and I will work hard and pray always for a lasting peace in Northern Ireland.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH.