

living. We need help. My colleagues, please respond and bring Ludwig Koons home.

SUPPORT WELFARE REFORM

(Mr. CRANE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the bill of the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) on welfare reform that was introduced yesterday. The bill strongly supports the President's priorities on welfare reform.

Welfare reform has been a tremendous success. The best welfare program for families and children is a good-paying job. Since welfare reform was passed in 1996, more people are off welfare and working, and child poverty is down significantly. But there is still more we can do. This bill will continue building on the successes we have had. It will strengthen families and protect children. It will help most people get off welfare who are in that condition today and back to work. It will encourage States to be innovative so they can help more families.

This is a good bill and I urge my colleagues to support it.

LOOPHOLE EXPLOITATION ACT

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon the House will vote on a piece of legislation that has been named the Taxpayer Protection Act. It would be more properly described as the "Loophole Exploitation Act" because it is designed to undermine the new bipartisan campaign finance law before that law can even take effect.

It will encourage the development of a new form of political committee that will not have to disclose its activity at either the Federal or State level. This will be a type of committee for which Federal officials are encouraged to raise funds, and yet no one will know the full extent of such a committee's activities.

That is why Public Citizen, Common Cause, and the Campaign for America have said "there is only one way to oppose the fatally flawed 527 provisions, which open a gaping loophole in our campaign finance disclosure laws, and that is to vote "no" on H.R. 3391." I hope my colleagues will do that. We must maintain the bipartisan spirit of reform and reject this very unfortunate piece of legislation.

HONORING MAURICIO J. TAMARGO

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on August 30, 1961, a young Cuban boy named Mauricio Tamargo fled the Castro tyranny with his family, in search of freedom and liberty here in the United States. His belief in the American dream gave him the strength to persevere during the harsh winters of Wisconsin, as he stood for hours at the corner selling newspapers to help his parents with his seven brothers and sisters.

Today, Mauricio will be officially sworn in as the chairman of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission.

For over a decade, Mauricio has been my most valuable advisor and confidant. As a result, I hated the thought of his leaving, but when the President nominated him for this distinguished post, I knew for the good of the country he had to go.

Mauricio is not only an excellent jurist, he is someone who embraces and cherishes law as a compass for his life. He is not only intelligent and dedicated to the service of our country, he is a man of integrity and honor. His journey from refugee child to his current post is a testament to our great country and a vivid example that the American dream can indeed become a reality for all of us.

May Mauricio serve as an inspiration to future generations. Godspeed, my friend. Felicidades, Mauricio.

NATIONAL DAY OF SILENCE

(Mr. FARR of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, today across the country, thousands of students on our college campuses are silent. They are silent as a sign of solidarity of persons who, because of their sexual orientation and gender identification, cannot speak for themselves. They are silent as a form of protest against a society that silences persons who are different, persons who do not meet main street's definition of proper.

They are silent, but we in Congress should not be. We should shout and raise our voices and call for an end to discrimination and prejudice against gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons. We should affirm loudly that by this day of silence, America has the capacity and the heart to say to all persons are just that, persons; and all persons are deserving of fair treatment. In closing, I would like to thank two gentlemen from my district, Bruce Carlson and Matt Friday, for their dedication to such causes, and recognize the instrumental role they play in creating a nation free of prejudice.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN BY THE NUMBERS

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to share with you some disturbing numbers regarding the shipping of high-level nuclear waste to Yucca Mountain, Nevada.

First, let me tell you it will take over 96,000 truck and rail shipments for this material to get there. These shipments will go through 44 States, 703 counties, and at least 109 major population cities. More than 7 million people live within one-half mile of the nuclear transportation routes. Close to 50 million people live within 3 miles of these shipping routes. And contrary to what the DOE espouses, nuclear waste currently stored at 77 reactor and storage sites in 39 States, is not just going to magically appear at Yucca Mountain. These shipments will come through your communities for over 38 years.

The cost associated with cleaning up just one accident in your community is over \$13.7 billion taxpayer dollars, not counting the health care costs associated with those affected.

That is the story, Mr. Speaker, by the numbers. The sad truth is these numbers just do not add up to a plan which protects the safety and security of all Americans. I urge my colleagues to oppose the Yucca Mountain bill.

EXPANDING EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as we approach April 15, the deadline for filing income tax, I have introduced a bill, H.R. 3742, legislation to expand the earned income tax credit for childless workers.

This bill would significantly strengthen the credit's ability to reward and encourage work for millions of low-income people.

H.R. 3742 would improve the EITC for childless workers in two important respects. First, it would double the credit percentage to 15.3 percent and extend it to apply to the first \$7,000 in wages that a worker earns. This would provide workers with new relief from the substantial payroll tax burden they currently bear.

While we await enactment, I would also encourage low-income people to make sure they file for their earned income tax credit.

ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE THROUGH WELFARE REFORM

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I have been looking forward to today for quite some time. Today we are introducing the welfare reform bill that will build upon the successes of our historic 1996 reforms.

In the past 6 years I have heard numerous success stories that arose from the 1996 welfare reform legislation that touched millions of lives.

Our great former President, Ronald Reagan, once said, "We should measure welfare's success by how many people leave welfare, not by how many people are added."

In 1996 there were over 14 million welfare cases. Since then, however, that number has been reduced by 9 million. But this debate is more than just about numbers. It is about people.

Statistics cannot explain the smiling faces of success. Before and during recess, Members have been learning firsthand about success stories in each of our districts, which we have been pleased to share with you. These are truly inspirational stories about overcoming adversity to achieve independence. That, Mr. Speaker, is what the American dream is all about.

Let us help make that dream a reality by passing President Bush's welfare reform proposal.

CONGRATULATING U-CONN HUSKIES

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of Connecticut Huskies for capping a perfect 39-0 season with their third NCAA women's basketball championship.

Sports experts around the country are now saying what many of us in Connecticut already knew in our hearts: This is one of the best teams in basketball history.

The Huskies set the standard for perfection. They ranked number one in the Nation for scoring, 3-point shooting percentage, scoring defense, and field goal percent allowed. They set an NCAA record with a season-long average victory margin of 35.4 points, and set a national record with 831 assists.

Throughout the entire season only one opponent lost by less than 10 points, and all five of the Huskies' starters, Asja Jones, Swin Cash, Tamika Williams, Diana Taurasi, and national player of the year Sue Bird, made the Big East All Tournament Team.

Simply by doing what they love, these talented young women have proven themselves to be role models for girls and boys across this Nation. With their absolute determination and a commitment to team work, the U-CONN Huskies have achieved perfection.

I congratulate them on their win and we look forward to more seasons to come. Go Huskies!

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BAN HUMAN CLONING NOW

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, it is written that "I set before you blessings and curses, life and death. Now choose life that you and your children might live."

Today, 40 Nobel laureates will come to Capitol Hill to express their support for human cloning for research. Apparently Professor John Nash, the Nobel laureate portrayed in the movie "A Beautiful Mind," is not the only Nobel winner who is crazy.

Human cloning is morally wrong. It is without a doubt in the overwhelming view of the American people and of our President and of medical ethics for thousands of years that research on human beings for medical advance is wrong. It is a dark path leading to the nightmare of eugenics, and it is a path upon which those in the 20th century embarked too often.

Congress should reject the intellectuals again. We should heed the majority of the American people, listen to our President, choose life and ban human cloning now.

TIME TO THROW OUT THE TAX CODE

(Mr. LINDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, Monday is April 15; and the American people will genuflect before the altar of their government and hand over everything they have earned for the past year and, in so doing, pay out of their pockets just to comply with this code.

Last year, the American people spent \$250 billion just in compliance costs with this complicated code. That is a 15 percent surtax on the tax that we pay. For small business, which creates most of the jobs in this country, they will pay \$724 just to comply with the code, collect and remit \$100 in taxes.

Mr. Speaker, this system is broken and cannot be fixed. To those who think we can have a flat tax on incomes, I say we did that once, 1913, and look what we have got.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to throw out this Tax Code, start over, let people keep what they earn and pay on what they spend and let every American become a voluntary taxpayer once and for all.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND'S MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of Maryland men's basketball team for winning the 2002 NCAA national championship. On the 50th anniversary of my doctorate from the University of Maryland, I would

like to express my appreciation for the job Coach Gary Williams has done in resurrecting the team's proud heritage to make the team a national champion.

I would especially like to mention senior guard, first team All American, Juan Dixon. Juan Dixon overcame his parents' death at an early age, as well as many other obstacles, to become the great player he is now. Dixon and many of his teammates were continually discounted as not having the mettle to win the title and not having much of a chance to succeed individually. They proved every critic wrong by bonding together to win as a team.

It was an amazing run by the Terps this year, and all Maryland is proud of them. The story of the Maryland basketball team this year has been one of great perseverance, and we salute their achievement and pursuit of excellence on and off the court.

CONTINUING WELFARE REFORM SUCCESSES

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Welfare Reform Action Team, I am here today to reopen the discussion on welfare reform. In 1996, after a contentious debate that will not soon be forgotten, Republicans rallied to pass welfare reform.

Another thing that will not be soon forgotten is welfare reform's historic results. Republican-led welfare reform has proven successful in replacing welfare checks with paychecks, fostering independence, boosting personal incomes and improving the well-being of children.

In 1996, Congress fixed a welfare system that was completely broken. The proof is in the numbers. Since 1994, welfare caseloads have been reduced by 9 million. The number of individuals receiving cash assistance has dropped by 56 percent. Nearly 3 million children have been lifted from poverty, and the child poverty rate is at its lowest level since 1978. That is real progress.

Now that the success stories from many and the naysayers are few, it is my sincere hope that this House will support the President in reauthorizing welfare reform in a strong bipartisan fashion. There is still more work to be done. We must continue to strengthen the path toward independence.

WELFARE REFORM REAUTHORIZATION

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, I salute my Committee on Ways and Means colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER), for introducing the reauthorization of