

investigate and question nurses, sent to his wife's home to terrorize her.

Representative Chuck Hopson, his wife left Austin to drive 4 miles to Jacksonville. The law enforcement officer got on her bumper and went with her the entire way.

Police entered the home of Joe Pickett, a State representative. His 17-year-old daughter was there alone, and as he explained it, "They scared the holy hell out of her."

Patrick Rose had his car searched after it had been placed on the TV and everybody in the whole country knew that the Texas legislators were in Oklahoma. A senior staff member, Representative Naishtat, was told it was a felony to withhold information about his whereabouts, a total lie.

In the Corpus Christi newspaper it said this: "The wife of State Representative Jaime Capelo, Democrat, Corpus Christi, looked out her kitchen window Tuesday and noticed a blue four-door vehicle driving past. The driver looked at her home as he passed. The vehicle pulled up next to a white Chevy. 'I asked him why he was watching my house.' The man identified himself as a State trooper and told her that officials in Austin had called his office and told the troopers to follow her."

These abuses and others prompted State Representative Jim Dunnam from Waco to send a letter to Speaker Craddick and say in part: "P.S. as you know, we are at the Holiday Inn in Ardmore, Oklahoma. Please stop having our loved ones followed and staked out by law enforcement." Mr. Speaker, surely, surely Mr. Craddick's family raised him better than that.

Mr. Speaker, using the power and authority of the Federal Government to trample the U.S. Constitution and the freedoms we hold dear is outrageous. Covering it up makes it worse. Coordinating with State enforcement to terrorize innocent families is not only illegal; it is inexcusable. It is time for the Federal Government to come clean and come clean now. Release the tapes, release the transcripts, stop the cover-up. The Constitution is superior to the arrogance of power. Thanks to my State reps, Barry Telford, Mark Homer, Chuck Hopson, they know that. They have learned that lesson. I wish the Republican power brokers in Washington, D.C. do the same thing.

SMALL BUSINESS HEALTH FAIRNESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, last September the U.S. Census Bureau released figures that showed that the number of Americans who do not have health insurance has increased to more than 41 million Americans. Of those, 60 percent are employed by small businesses. We know that a great number

of these small business owners do want to offer their employees health insurance coverage; but with health insurance costs rising 14.7 percent just in 2002 alone, they are struggling to meet this cost.

House Resolution 660, the Small Business Health Fairness Act, opens the door for small business owners, providing the chance to give their employees high-quality health insurance at an affordable price by allowing associations to form large regional or national groups that can purchase fully insured health insurance which would put growing businesses on a level playing field for larger corporations.

Those opposed to AHPs, as they are called, claim that they will allow "cherry picking" or selecting only employees that are young and/or healthy for coverage. In reality, this legislation prohibits an AHP from denying health insurance on the basis of health status. They must follow the same rules on portability, preexisting conditions, and nondiscrimination that large employers must follow.

This legislation also contains solvency provisions that protect employees against the risk of health claims. These health plans must certify through a qualified actuary that an AHP is financially sound.

To conclude, what businesses want is to offer health coverage to their workers. House Resolution 660 gives employers the ability to provide this coverage by allowing small businesses to band together as a trade association to become larger purchasers of health insurance. By saving small businesses, an estimated 15 to 30 percent, compared to the cost of purchasing coverage directly from an insurance company, associated health plans will give more Americans the health benefits they need to provide for themselves and for their families.

JOB-KILLER POLICIES

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I came down here to talk about taxes, but let me first talk about Texas. All Americans must unite in the war against terrorism and we did that. We passed the PATRIOT Act. We provided resources for the Department of Homeland Security. But now we discover that the war on terrorism is a war against Democrats. This will divide America, and that is good for the terrorists. How many Americans may lose their lives because we cannot empower the Department of Homeland Security because it uses that power to pervert American democracy? Only an honest release of the tapes, only an honest approach will save the Department of Homeland Security and save only the Americans that it can save.

Now let us talk about taxes. The Bush recession continues. Republicans

continue to use their political power to adopt job-killer policies which means the Bush recession will continue to continue. The most obvious job-killer policy is the dividend exclusion provision included in the Senate tax bill passed last week. Every major tax provision has both positive and negative effects on our economy, and Republican after Republican has come down here to talk about the rather modest economic benefits of excluding dividends from taxation. Democrats, though, have not used our time to respond and to point out the much larger offsetting negative effects of this provision. The reason for that is that we Democrats have been so incensed at a policy that provides 50 percent of the tax benefits to 1 percent of the population and gives 1 percent of the benefits to 50 percent of the population.

We have been so incensed that the Republicans would launch a class war attack against working families. We have been so incensed that they would come up with a policy designed to allow the richest in America to buy the new \$350,000 Mercedes Benz, the Maybach, and pass the cost on to the sons and daughters of working Americans as they build the deficit. We have been so incensed about that that we forgot to mention, oh, by the way, it is a job killer.

Let us talk about that. We could of course drop currency from helicopters, \$25 billion a year, \$50 billion a year, and that would have some positive economic effects; but it would have a much larger negative economic effect because it would raise interest rates and it would deprive us of the opportunity to help States. They will have to discharge teachers, law enforcement officers, and others; and those folks will lose their jobs. So even helicopters dropping cash has some positive effect, but a larger offsetting effect.

The offsetting and negative effect of this dividend exclusion is worse because at least the people who catch the money from the helicopter will probably go out and spend it on necessities of life, whereas the dividend exclusion is aimed at the folks most likely to buy foreign luxury imports, which does not provide jobs for Americans.

The dividend exclusion was justified on the idea that it was going to build up corporate treasuries because people would invest in stock and then the corporations would go out and buy plants and equipment. This was proven to be a phony ruse because under pressure to bring down the price tag of the dividend exclusion, the White House has now written a version that obviously will not cause any additional corporate investment. What does that provision do? It provides half-tax exclusion for dividends paid in 2003; full exclusion for 2004, 2005, 2006, and then back to a full taxation of dividends starting in 2007 and future years.

What will that mean? First, all the dividends corporations were going to pay out this month and in the next 8