

was the only member of the California Supreme Court to find that a jury should not be allowed to hear expert testimony in a domestic violence case regarding battered women's syndrome. She even said that employers may use racial slurs against their employees.

Her record is clear. She does not protect the rights of women, workers or minorities.

Yesterday I and 14 other women members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Congressional Black Caucus and the Asian Pacific American Caucus sent a letter to Senate leaders stating our strong opposition to the confirmation of Janice Rogers Brown.

Given the serious concerns against Janice Roger Browns' views, I encourage my colleagues in the Senate to vote against her confirmation. Her confirmation would have a detrimental effect on women, minorities and all Americans.

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REPUBLICANS PAVE THE WAY FOR AMERICAN HOMEOWNERS

(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. Madam Speaker, June is American Homeownership Month, recognizing the benefits of achieving the American Dream. As a former real estate attorney for 25 years, I know firsthand the joy of homeownership. By purchasing a home, Americans are investing in their own futures, ensuring stability and promoting long-term financial security for their families. House Republicans are providing important incentives for homeowners and creating jobs and are paving the way for more American families to own their own homes. Today, homeownership is near record levels, with 69.1 percent of American families now owning their homes. According to the National Association of Realtors, sales of existing U.S. homes climbed 4.5 percent in April.

Increased home sales are just another sign of continued economic growth in America. Last week, the Department of Labor also reported that the Nation's unemployment fell to 5.1 percent in May and that over 3.5 million jobs have been created since May 2003 when President Bush signed into law his tax reductions.

Republicans remain dedicated to a successful, positive agenda that will grow the economy and provide more opportunities to American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops and we will never forget September 11.

TOBACCO ESCAPES HUGE PENALTY

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

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. President Bush, your Justice Department legal team is failing you, and failing you miserably. Tobacco companies have bilked the consumer for hundreds of billions of dollars. I am proud to say that State attorneys general recovered \$215 billion for their States. We find out today in *The Washington Post* the Justice Department has given away the ranch. The headline says it all: "Tobacco Escapes Huge Penalty." Even the tobacco attorneys are mystified.

They said, "They've gone down from \$130 billion to \$10 billion with absolutely no explanation. It's clear the government has not thought through what it's doing."

President Bush, there is still time. Call your Attorney General and tell him to put on a real case. Otherwise, you are throwing in the towel to Big Tobacco.

HOMEOWNERSHIP AND JOB NUMBERS

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, June is Homeownership Month and the housing market continues to be a catalyst for a growing economy. Just last quarter, growth figures were revised higher, growing at a 3.5 percent annual rate. For the past 2 years, the U.S. economy has grown faster than the economy of any major industrialized nation. Since May of 2003, over 3.5 million jobs have been created with 24 straight months of job growth. That is 2 years of putting people back to work, 2 years of more people collecting paychecks. What is even more impressive is the fact that the unemployment rate dropped to 5.1 percent, the lowest level since 9/11.

Many things are behind these positive job numbers, but one thing in particular is the strength of our housing market. Homeownership is at near record levels with nearly 70 percent of American families now owning their own homes. Sales of existing U.S. homes climbed 4.5 percent in April. In 2004, home prices posted the biggest gain in 25 years.

Madam Speaker, these steady gains are great news. They show that more people are working, more people are collecting paychecks, more people are owning their own homes, and more people are realizing the American Dream. This direction should be celebrated.

SOCIAL SECURITY: DEMOCRATS RAISE TAXES

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to continue to shine the light on the need for reform of our Social Security. On Monday, an editorial ran in *The Washington Post*

which criticized the Democratic leadership for not having or supporting a plan for Social Security reform. The editorial also hammered the plan offered by Democrat Robert Wexler as a lopsided quick fix, calling the proposal both unbalanced and inadequate. They say the plan would merely raise payroll taxes and would fail to provide long-term relief. Further, the proposal shows little or no benefit for workers under the age of 55.

One solution which could help improve Social Security and provide long-term relief is through personal retirement accounts. Giving Americans the option of putting a portion of their payroll taxes into small personal accounts is a more balanced and better solution to the Social Security problem. Quick fixes, such as the one proposed by Robert Wexler, will only pass the problem of Social Security to younger generations.

Madam Speaker, our children and grandchildren deserve the best, including a Social Security program which provides generational fairness. And clearly Americans are hearing this clarion call. In fact, a recent Fox News poll showed that 84 percent of workers age 18 to 55 would support having the option of personal accounts.

IN SUPPORT OF THE AIR FORCE ACADEMY

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

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, recent reports paint an unfair picture of the United States Air Force Academy. It has been characterized as a place where religious intolerance is the norm. As someone who has spent considerable time with Air Force personnel and cadets, I know that the academy has always been a place that has indeed taught religious tolerance.

After discovering perceptions of religious bias during a survey in 2004, the academy made considerable efforts to address issues of religious intolerance and has implemented a proactive plan to address this very issue. The academy leadership instituted a new training program for all cadets, staff, and faculty to address the diversity of the Air Force and the need for each person to respect others, regardless of their beliefs or faith.

Like any other university, cases of perceived religious intolerance do occur. But any attempt to brand the academy as a place where intolerance is accepted is just plain false. I applaud the United States Air Force for taking the proper steps to investigate and correct any problems regarding allegations of religious intolerance.

ANNOUNCING INTRODUCTION OF THE SHIELD ACT

(Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)