for me, but on the weekends she did have a part-time job at a blue jeans store in Ennis, TX, until it went out of business, trying to make enough money to make ends meet for her family.

Tax limitation is important to Linda Gillespie and Billy Gillespie and Julie Gillespie, because they want to make their own way, and they are finding it more and more difficult to do so because of the tax burden today and the probability, if we do not pass the supermajority requirement for tax increases, of an increase in their tax burden in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that later this evening, when we have this vote, that all Members of the House will vote for the tax limitation supermajority amendment to the Constitution.

VETO ON LATE TERM ABORTIONS CORRECT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOBSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I take the floor to talk a bit about my least favorite subject, but, nevertheless, to say this is a day I really want to thank President Clinton and thank him very sincerely. Because while we as Americans all say that we are all different, but we are all equal, it is always hard to apply that. The President did apply that standard.

President Clinton listened carefully to women who had their pregnancies go off track late in the pregnancy, go terribly wrong, all sorts of awful things happening to them, and President Clinton, hearing them, had the courage to then veto the so-called partial birth abortion bill.

Now, the political thing to do was let it become law without signing it, do all sorts of things. But that would really be saying women are second class citizens. And why?

I think any woman would be horrified to know that this Congress wants to make a law that says that if your doctor considers what he thinks or she thinks is best for your health, they could become a criminal. We do not do that for any other area. We have never done this before.

There are probably people who could get very upset about organ transplants, about all sorts of things. But once we start entering the consultation room, where a doctor is told to take his best medical knowledge and push it aside because if he applies it he then is going to be subject to imprisonment, to fines, and to a felony, we really are entering a brave new world.

There has been so much distortion about this bill. The obstetric and gynecology groups, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, have stood up and firmly said ''This bill should not pass.'' The American Nurses Association has said the same thing. Yet we have got everbody all focused fetally. We have all these drawings that people have criticized and said doctors did not do those drawings, special interest groups did.

We go through all these grizzly things. Everybody knows that under Roe versus Wade, in the final trimester, abortions can be denied anywhere in this country except for the life and health of the mother. So what we will do if we try to override that veto is say we are changing that. Now the health of the mother does not count anymore. If she has one pregnancy and it goes wrong and the doctor says ''This is the only procedure that will save your reproductive organs,'' too bad, she had her shot, she rolled the dice, she lost. She does not get another chance at parenthood, nor does her family, her husband, get another chance at parenthood.

I think if we could just get some calm and reason coming into this body, everyone would agree with the President that this is not where this body belongs, practicing medicine, entering the medical consultation room, saying that doctors cannot think about their patient, the woman, they cannot apply their medical training, they cannot think about what is best, because if they do we will punish them.

It does not say that they can impose their will; the woman, the family, her religious beliefs, anything allows them to say no. Never is this mandated. But to hear the rhetoric that this is going to allow abortion on demand is absolute baloney. This has nothing to do with abortion on demand. This has to do with what can you do, what tools are available, when everything goes wrong.

If we do this, we are going to be criminalizing a tool, a tool. I guess people feel they can play politics with this, because so very few people have ever needed this tool. Fortunately, by the time most pregnancies get to the third trimester, they are OK and they are going to reach the end. But how tragic it is that we are engaging in this very politically charged debate, and how fortunate as an American woman I feel today that I have a President that is protecting my right to my full medical care by my doctor looking at my health without being criminalized. I thank the President.

A PROPOSED SUPERMAJORITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. SHADEGG] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, today on the floor of this House, we will debate and I sincerely hope pass a constitutional amendment to the U.S. Constitution, a provision which will provide a necessary level of discipline to this body.

Ten States in the United States currently have a supermajority requirement for future tax increases. Why? They have this provision because it has turned out to be necessary in order to restrain the ever-growing demands of Government for additional spending.

What has been the effect and what has been the experience of those States? It is quite simple and it is quite straightforward. In the 10 States which have a supermajority requirement to raise taxes yet one more time, things, which we would expect would have indeed happened, spending has gone up less rapidly in those States with such a provision; taxing has gone up less rapidly than in States without such a provision; but, most importantly, Mr. Speaker, in those States which have done what this Congress has a chance today to do, and that is to require a supermajority for future tax increases, economic growth has increased at a faster pace than in those States without this restraint.

Mr. Speaker, what is the issue? The issue is a simple one. If we make it harder, somewhat harder as this constitutional amendment would do, to exact additional tax dollars from the people of this Nation, then this Congress and the Federal Government will spend the money which it has more judiciously.

Now, is that necessary? Indeed, it is. The record of this U.S. Congress in controlling spending and the record of preceding U.S. Congresses is abysmal. In 1950, the year after I was born, the average American family with children paid $1 out of $50 to the Federal Government in income taxes. They earned $1,500, they sent $2 to the Federal Government in income tax.

By 1993, that had become $1 out of $4, and today it is dangerously close to $1 out of $3. Earn $100, do not send $2 to the Federal Government in taxes, but rather send $33 to the Federal Government in taxes.

We will hear from the other side grave reservations, that we are tampering with the U.S. Constitution, that this violates the premise of majority rule. For those people who make those arguments, let me point out that the U.S. Constitution today requires a supermajority in 10 days.

In places where the Founding Fathers thought that restraint was necessary, and they should also be reminded when they harken to this premise of majority rule, that the fundamental purpose of a Constitution is to restrain the access of legislative majority.

Indeed, a legislative majority enabled this Congress in 1993 to enact the largest tax increase in U.S. history. Even in the U.S. Senate with a majority of the Members of the Senate, that tax increase was dead tied, 50-50, for and against, until Vice President AL GORE broke the tie and increased taxes.

For those who believe we ought to be concerned about minority rights, I would point out the experience in which, in the 1990 Omnibus Tax Reconciliation Act, we destroyed a major

U.S. industry by imposing through a majority vote a mere, simple majority vote, an excessive burden on just one industry.

For those who say that tax limitation is a radical idea, let me point out that one-third of all Americans today reside in a State in which there is a constitutional supermajority requirement in their own constitution. The other argument we will hear is that this provision is unworkable. In point of fact, as rewritten by the House, it would allow revenue-neutral tax reform to go forward. What it would not do, however, is allow this Congress to reach into the pockets of Federal taxpayers already overburdened, and take yet one more time from those taxpayers.

The fundamental purpose of a constitutional amendment ought to be to seek to restore to the Constitution the founders' original intent. I would suggest that that is precisely what this amendment does. If we look at the history of this Nation over the past four decades, we will see that the Supreme Court has read the commerce clause so expansively that the Government is vastly more powerful than it was in the past. This measure, this simple idea of saying to raise taxes yet once again we ought to have a supermajority, will provide needed restraint. I urge its adoption.

A PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. SKAGGS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, as past Members who have addressed the House this morning have pointed out, later today we will take up an amendment to this Constitution of the United States. I want to address myself for the moment to the process by which this proposed amendment has been brought to the House.

Passing for the moment the fact that I believe it is a bad idea and bad constitutional law, even worse is how we consider it today under a process that insults the intelligence and responsibility of Members of the House, that contradicts any suggestion that this House is able to operate in a thoughtful and considered manner, and that demands and debases the very process of constitutional amendment itself.

The original proposal brought forward by the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BARTON], House Joint Resolution 159, received a single hearing before the House Committee on the Judiciary on March 6. It was then essentially removed from the committee and scheduled for a vote on the floor today. It was not marked up or approved by the Committee on the Judiciary. That committee, Mr. Speaker, is vested with the responsibility and authority under the rules of the House to give the kind of thoughtful consideration to a constitutional amendment that I believe the people of America think ought to obtain.

House Joint Resolution 159 was then replaced, or will be if the rule before the House later today is enacted, by an entirely new proposal, House Joint Resolution 169.

□ 1200

This version of this constitutional amendment was first introduced in the House on the evening of Thursday, March 28. It was considered by the Committee on Rules the next day. On the morning of March 29, and reported to the House. And then this House went on recess for 2 weeks, the entire intervening time between consideration in the Committee on Rules and today. So very few Members have had an opportunity even to see the text of this amendment, much less to study and understand its implications.

Again, this proposal has had no hearing at all in the Committee of jurisdiction, no markup, no regular deliberative process whatsoever. Let us stop and think about that for a second. Surely second only perhaps to the responsibility that we have in Congress in considering a declaration of war, second only to that, an amendment to the Constitution, an amendment to the Constitution ought to command the most serious and deliberate sort of legislative review, examination and analysis that we are capable of. It deserves better treatment than a rush job to meet a politically sexy vote deadline that the majority admits is a matter of symbolism. Symbolism in amending the fundamental document of this country.

Mr. Speaker, the Constitution should not be used to make political statements.

There are many, many issues that are raised by this proposal, and I will speak about those later on today. One has to do with the fundamental contradiction of the principle of majority rule on which this country is based. In fact, if this were to become part of the Constitution, 34 Senators, representing less than 10 percent of the people of the country, could hold power over this important area of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, it would lock us in, for all practical purposes, to whatever the current tax structure might be at the time of its ratification. It will get in the way of many, many of the necessary things we are going to have to do to get the budget balanced, especially in areas of entitlement reform. It may unintentionally, or intentionally, who knows, actually get in the way of tax cuts because, for instance, those who are the strongest advocates of a capital gains tax reduction argue that that will actually increase revenues, and under this provision, that would require a two-thirds vote. Why? Because it is not whether the tax rate goes up, but whether revenues go up that controls whether a two-thirds vote is to be required.

So, there are many, many issues here that have not been examined because this proposal has been rushed through in derogation of every single rule of procedural regularity that the House is supposed to adhere to. Of course, it is exactly to examine and understand issues such as those I've mentioned that we refer legislation, especially amendments to the Constitution, to committee. However, that was not done in this case.

Mr. Speaker, because of the extraordinary abuse of process involved in bringing this matter to the floor, I want to put my colleagues on notice that I reserve the right to exercise every procedural right to a vote on every procedural matter that may be involved in consideration of this issue.

□ 1300

1993 CLINTON TAX INCREASE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOBSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. SAM JOHNSON] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today is April 15, tax day, and this is the day when Americans send their tax dollars to Washington and when the IRS sends its agents out to audit Americans, and you know this day, believe it or not, on this day, Americans have to work 21 more days to pay all their Federal, State and local taxes. So it is not over today.

We have a chance to offer today some security to every American by making it harder for the Government to raise their taxes. Today we are going to vote on a constitutional amendment to require a two-thirds vote to raise taxes. You know, I thank the gentleman from Texas [Mr. BARTON], my good friend, for this hard work on behalf of the American people.

This amendment should have been adopted back in 1993 because that is when the President and his fellow Democrats passed the largest tax increase in the history of this Nation, and it squarely broke the backs of the American people. This amendment would have allowed Americans to keep more of their money for themselves, for their families, for their savings and for their future. That big Clinton tax increase meant that families and workers pay more every time they drive to work, or take their kids to soccer practice, or their family on a vacation. This is because the President increased the Federal gasoline tax by 4.3 cents. I bet most of my colleagues do not even know what their gasoline tax is. In the State of Texas, it amounts to 38½ cents a gallon. That is one-fourth of your total gasoline tax or gasoline bill and most pumps do not tell you that you that. That big Clinton tax increase meant seniors pay more on their social security benefits because that was raised, as well. So for seniors, the