

President Richard Nixon. He has served, as well, under the leadership of President Lyndon Baines Johnson, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, and certainly, now, William Jefferson Clinton. He has served for 35 years in this Congress as of November 4, 1996.

He has served on the House Committee on Banking and Financial Services from January 1962, and on many of the subcommittees. Since we have the housing bill on the floor of the House, it is certainly important to recognize him as a strong advocate for housing for Americans. It is important to be able to acknowledge that he was a civil rights leader. He was someone who many thought would not make it to the State senate, and certainly would not make it to the U.S. Congress.

Most of all, he is a gentle warrior. He stands tall for the principles he believes in. He is a lover of America, but he is a lover of the least of those in our community. He certainly is a gentle giant on this floor: kind, thoughtful, and respected.

It is my pleasure to wish to him, on behalf of the constituents of the 18th Congressional District, on tomorrow, his birthday, a very, very happy birthday, and to say to him that May 2 is a special day, because that was the day that America had as one of its own born a great American.

So Henry, happy birthday. Happy birthday on behalf of my constituents, and happy birthday on behalf of Texas, and happy birthday on behalf of America. God bless you, HENRY GONZALEZ.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Utah [Mr. HANSEN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. HANSEN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. BERRY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. BERRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

A CLARIFICATION REGARDING THE WORK REQUIREMENT IN THE HOUSING BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WELDON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to talk a little bit about some of the preceding debate that occurred today on the housing bill. Let me just say, though the debate was frequently very heated and sometimes tempers and passions were quite high, I believe personally that a lot of this is very good. We need to openly debate these issues.

I rise this evening, Mr. Speaker, because I feel there were a number of

points being made by the minority which were entirely inaccurate as they pertain to my opinion on this issue of a work requirement in the housing bill, and as they pertain, I believe, to our party, the Republican Party's position on a work requirement in the housing bill.

I have experience living in government housing, living in a dormitory in a State university. It was no bigger than the average walk-in closet. I had to work 24 hours a month for the privilege of having that small dorm room. I believe it is perfectly reasonable to ask somebody who is living in a government-funded apartment to put in 8 hours a month of work time.

Mr. Speaker, in our provision we exempt the elderly, we exempt the disabled, we exempt those people who are going to school, even if it is part-time, even a vocational school, and we exempt people that have full-time jobs and part-time jobs.

The gentleman from Illinois [Mr. JACKSON] had brought forward, I think, a reasonable, well-thought-out amendment to exempt virtually every single mom. Though I feel there was some merit to that, I felt that his amendment was unreasonably broad, but that it would be reasonable to give the housing authorities some flexibility to allow them to exempt some single moms.

Many of the people on our side of the aisle felt that they should be able to eke out somewhere in their week 2 hours a week to devote to community service. Let me just say that I agree with that sentiment. There were sentiments expressed by the minority that this is some sort of mean-spirited attempt to hurt the poor. On the contrary, my motivation in this work requirement is very much one of wanting to help the poor.

I believe by, in exchange for them getting government-funded housing, requiring them to go out and work and thus having them work, we will instill a work ethic in people. We will instill in them a sense of community, and I believe that the children of these people living in public housing will benefit from seeing their parent or parents actually working.

This point was driven home to me so vividly when I met a gentleman when I was campaigning in 1994 who told me about a program that he had taken part in where he went into the housing projects and read to young children, because as many people know, the psychologists have shown that if you read to small children, you can improve their academic performance; that their reading scores will get better when they get older and that they will have just higher academic performance at school.

So he was going in and reading to these little kids, most often children of single moms that did not have a father in the house. I remember him telling something to me one day that just totally broke my heart.

He said that he once asked a group of these kids what they wanted to do when they grew up. I have told this story before on the floor of this House. They did not say "I want to be a fireman, I want to be a doctor, I want to be a teacher." They said, "I want to collect a check." I kid you not, Mr. Speaker. These little 4- and 5- and 6-year-old kids, they knew nothing other than their mom living in the project with them collecting a check, and that is the only thing they knew.

We have what I think is a very reasonable requirement suggested to us by Secretary Cuomo, supported by the administration, to require people who are able-bodied, people who are not disabled, who are not working, who are not going to school, to require them to contribute to the community in the form of community service, in the form of working in the project. I think it is an excellent idea, and it is unfortunate that our intentions are frankly maligned.

Our intention on this side of the aisle, the Republican majority, is to help these people by getting them out into the community and working, whether it is cleaning up, whether it is removing graffiti, whether it is volunteering for child care. I think any of those things is going to help instill a work ethic in people, and it is going to set a good example for their children to be able to see their mom or dad going out and being a part of the local community. I think it will go a long way to helping those communities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce the schedule for the week of May 5.

We will next meet at 2 p.m. on Monday, May 5 for a pro forma session. There will be no legislative business—and no votes—on that day.

On Tuesday, May 6, the House will meet at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Members should note that we will not hold any recorded votes before 5 p.m. on Tuesday.

We will first debate—under suspension of the rules—H.R. 1463, an authorization bill for the Customs Service, U.S. Trade Representative, and ITC.

After consideration of the suspension on Tuesday, the House will resume consideration of amendments to H.R. 2, the Housing Opportunity and Responsibility Act of 1997.

On Wednesday, May 7 and Thursday, May 8, the House will consider the following bills, all of which will be subject to rules: H.R. 478,