

imported Chinese weapons into this country, killing Americans, who is responsible? If we have a major Chinese cigarette manufacturer influencing our policy and contributing to our campaigns and influencing our elections? Let it all hang out.

I am personally offended by what they have tried to do here today to our Chairman who has on every occasion acted in an honorable fashion. I think a disruption of this process is a shame on this House of Representatives.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF RULES COMMITTEE MEETING

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

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules is scheduled to meet in 3 minutes today to consider a rule providing general debate only for H.R. 3616, the Defense Authorization Bill for Fiscal Year 1999.

We will meet at 3 o'clock next Tuesday to make in order other amendments to that legislation. The rule that we will put out today will be for general debate only.

Mr. Speaker, additionally, unfortunately, the minority leadership has decided to personally attack Members of the majority side this morning on the House floor. Also, there has been a decision by the minority to oppose on two occasions immunity for four witnesses which the Department of Justice approved before a House investigative committee.

Due to these unfortunate circumstances which the minority has brought to the House floor, the Committee on Rules will add to its afternoon agenda the following measures: H.Res. 432, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives concerning the President's assertion of executive privilege; and H.Res. 433, by myself, calling upon the President of the United States to urge full cooperation by his former political appointees and friends and their associates with congressional investigations.

Mr. Speaker, these measures will be considered on the House floor next week under an appropriate rule. Since the Democratic leadership has regrettably decided to embroil the floor in this kind of partisan and personal attacks, the House will consider resolutions next week which will bring some perspective to the current discussion of ethics in Washington, D.C.

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TOBACCO FARMING IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McKEON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, there has been much discussion about to-

bacco settlements. If Congress is serious about passing tobacco settlement legislation this session, we need to act in a measured and collaborative way.

Let me say, though, that I do not smoke and I do not encourage others to smoke, and indeed, I support the efforts to discourage our teenagers from smoking. However, the decision to smoke is one best left to mature adults, and even then, after careful consideration. Children should not smoke, nor should they be enticed to smoke, and therefore, a public policy discouraging them from smoking and having enforcement to make sure that tobacco companies do not entice them is indeed appropriate.

With regard to the pending tobacco settlement, no matter how you feel about tobacco, one must view it for what it is; it is a legal commodity, grown by many American farmers.

These North Carolina farmers, our tobacco farmers, want the same thing as other Americans: a good quality of life overall for them and their families, for their children to have a good education, for them to have sufficient resources with which to provide their families with food, shelter and other amenities of life, saving for their retirement, a secure environment in which to live and to work, and most importantly, hope for the future.

These farmers, our tobacco farmers, care about their children as well as about other children in their community, instilling in them the values of honesty, hard work and a sense of community.

Mr. Speaker, like other American farmers, like those in your home State, these North Carolina farmers prepare their land, till it carefully, plant their crops, tend their fields, harvest their yields and market their products, much like commodities such as corn and wheat.

Tobacco is one of the main reasons that many small farmers are still able to stay in business, because no other crop yields as much income per acre. Most of these farmers are unable to find an alternative crop, although several of them are seeking them. To find an alternative crop with a comparative income indeed has eluded many. It would take almost eight times more acres of cotton, 15 times more acres of corn, 20 times more acres of soybeans, and 30 times more acres of wheat to equal the income from a single acre of tobacco.

The money earned by farmers and those employed in tobacco-related businesses flows into their communities, spreading these profits around. It has been estimated that the agricultural dollar turns over an average of 10 times in the farming local community. Do the math: \$7.7 billion, which is estimated as the income to our State, equals \$77 billion. \$77 billion flows from those citizens who sell the seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, farm machines, groceries, clothing, as well as other important goods and services.

These monies make life possible, bearable, and sometimes even determine the quality of life in rural communities. That revenue also streams into the county, State and Federal tax coffers, supporting education and health care.

The total income impact is also felt in terms of jobs. Over 108,650 North Carolinians are tobacco farmers or are employed in tobacco-related jobs. Therefore, it is absolutely critical, as we continue the process from which a settlement will emerge, and it should go forward, that those who are in the House as well as those in the Senate should permit these hard-working farmers to continue to earn an honest living doing what they do best, farming, and sometimes, growing tobacco.

The public policy to restrain young people from smoking is an appropriate one. Equally as important, as we seek this public policy, we should not have a public policy that brings great devastation on large numbers of unintended victims; and I submit to you, the rural communities and farmers are unintended victims.

Mr. Speaker, these small farmers are essential to the continuation of agriculture in North Carolina and the vitality of our rural areas.

ORIGINAL COSPONSORSHIP OF H.R. 3868, THE BIPARTISAN NO TOBACCO FOR KIDS ACT OF 1998

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California, Mr. BILBRAY, is recognized five minutes.

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for H.R. 3868, the Bipartisan No Tobacco for Kids Act of 1998. This legislation, which was authored by my colleagues, Representatives JAMES HANSEN and MARTY MEEHAN, is aimed exclusively at preventing kids from smoking and reducing the adverse health effects of tobacco on children.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), 3,000 kids each day become regular cigarette smokers. In light of recent statistics that shows youth smoking on the rise, I believe it is imperative that we act assertively here in Congress to crack down on youth smoking and access to tobacco.

Before I came to Washington, D.C., I served on the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and was responsible for passing one of the most stringent anti-smoking ordinances in the country. Because of my prior commitment to and involvement with this issue at the local level, and the startling statistics that show youth smoking on the rise, I am only too glad to support H.R. 3868 as an original cosponsor. H.R. 3868 is the only anti-tobacco bill in Congress (including the Senate) which has received the endorsement of former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop and former Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner David Kessler. In fact, Koop and Kessler stated that other bills in both the House and Senate do not go far enough to reduce and prevent youth smoking.

This legislation establishes strong financial disincentives for tobacco companies that do