

INTRODUCTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ANTI-BRIBERY AND FAIR COMPETITION ACT OF 1998

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 30, 1998

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, since the introduction of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act in 1977, the U.S. has been firmly committed in its battle against international bribery and corruption. Unfortunately, our policies have left U.S. companies at a competitive disadvantage in the international environment, where they frequently lose commercial contracts to foreign firms willing to participate in bribery or other corruption. This situation has cost American companies billions of dollars in lost opportunities over the years.

Now, through the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions, signed in December 1997 by 33 countries including the United States, we have the opportunity to ensure that other signatory countries commit themselves to outlawing the use of bribery to influence officials or gain business abroad. The convention obligates signatory countries to enact domestic laws to combat foreign bribery.

Because the U.S. already has strong federal anti-bribery laws in place, the implementing legislation submitted by the administration seeks to close loopholes in the statute and otherwise strengthen the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Building upon the legislation submitted to Congress, Commerce Committee Chairman BLILEY and I today introduce the International Anti-Bribery and Fair Competition Act of 1998. I intend to hold hearings in the Subcommittee on Finance and Hazardous Materials, which I am honored to chair, when the Congress reconvenes in September.

The proposal requires several definitional adjustments to the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, including coverage of individuals as well as businesses, and officials of international organizations as well as other foreign officials. The bill expands the scope of proscribed activities to include payments to secure "any improper advantage." It also expands the jurisdiction of the law to cover the acts of U.S. citizens taking place wholly outside the United States.

While the amendments to U.S. law required by the convention are relatively modest, the changes required of other signatories will mean, in many cases, a radical departure from past practices. Such a change in attitudes towards corruption will be of enormous benefit to American firms seeking to do business abroad.

With the introduction of the International Anti-Bribery and Fair Competition Act, we have the opportunity to redress an imbalance and level the playing field for U.S. companies, giving them the chance to compete in a fair and corruption-free environment. These refinements are necessary to emphasize and reinforce America's view that bribery is not only morally reprehensible but that it ultimately creates a destabilized international trading climate.

If the U.S. is to continue to demonstrate its firm commitment to fair trading opportunities,

we need to take the lead and act as a model. Enactment of this legislation will represent and reflect America's determination to foster economic development and trade liberalization, as well as the promotion of democracy and democratic institutions.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. DEBBIE STABENOW

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 1998

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4194) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes:

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment by my esteemed colleague TIM ROEMER, which would terminate the International Space Station. I am especially pleased to say that my support for the International Space Station is shared by my constituents as evidenced by letters I have received from them, and from the 2,000+ space enthusiasts that attended the Great Space Adventure events that I sponsored this past Spring.

The prospect of a permanent laboratory for researchers and scientists has students of all ages inspired—inspiration that will lead to more students pursuing math, science, engineering and medical careers. The International Space station also provides hope to the medical community and to patients afflicted with a variety of health conditions. Hope that research conducted in this permanent laboratory will yield new insights into human health and disease prevention and treatment, especially in the area of heart, lung, and kidney functions, cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, hormonal disorders and immune system functions.

Already we have benefitted from the federal investments in the U.S. space program—and our investment in the International Space Station is no exception. For example: NASA developed a "cool suit" which is now helping to improve the quality of life of multiple sclerosis patients. NASA technology has produced a pacemaker that can be programmed from outside the body. NASA developed instruments to measure bone loss and bone density without penetrating the skin, which is now being used by hospitals.

NASA research has led to an implant for delivering insulin to diabetics that is only 3 inches across, providing more precise control of blood sugar levels and frees diabetics from the burden of daily insulin injections. NASA technology has led to the development of medical devices which are used to revitalize purposeful movement to muscles crippled by spinal cord injuries. As a result, paraplegics and quadriplegics can get a full cardiovascular workout equivalent to jogging three miles three times per week.

Technology from NASA also led to the development of an anti-shock garment for paramedic use which essentially reverses the effect of shock on the body's blood distribution and returns blood to the vital organs. This anti-shock garment has demonstrated effectiveness in treating shock from trauma induced by natural disasters or military actions, complications of pregnancy, ruptured internal organs, severe allergic reactions, brain injury and pediatric emergencies.

Even, telemedicine has benefitted from NASA expertise since adoption during the previous decades was slowed by high costs and technological shortcomings. Today, the technique is burgeoning under the impetus of snowballing advances in computer, video-conferencing and digital imaging technologies that offer greater health access to rural Americans along with greater efficiency in data transmission and display.

Mr. Chairman, these are but a few of the medical and health benefits that have come from our investments in the U.S. Space program, and I can not emphasize enough what value they have brought to the quality of life that so many of us have come to expect. It is because of this well documented success that I believe in the potential of the International Space Station. Joining me in recognizing the research potential of the Space Station are: the American Medical Association; the National Academy of Sciences; the National Research Council; the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology; the American Medical Women's Association; the Planetary Society; the National Foundation for Brain Research; and the Shering-Plough Research Institute.

Let me also share with you what Dr. Michael DeBakey, Chancellor and Chairman of the Department of Surgery at the Baylor College of Medicine says about the need for a permanent laboratory in space:

The Space Station is not a luxury any more than a medical research center at Baylor College of Medicine is a luxury . . . Present technology on the shuttle allows for stays in space of only about two weeks. We do not limit medical researchers to only a few hours in the laboratory and expect cures for cancer. We need much longer missions in space—in months to years—to obtain research results that may lead to the development of new knowledge and breakthroughs.

I agree with Dr. DeBakey's view; and because I believe the International Space Station has the potential to help my constituents with their health and quality of life in the long term, I urge my colleagues to oppose the Roemer amendment and to support the International Space Station.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 1998

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 4194) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes:

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, for the past five years I have struggled with the Department of Housing and Urban Development to help the citizens of Houston. Houston is the fourth largest city—yet for a long time, they have lacked a full service HUD office. Out of the ten largest metropolitan areas, Houston was the only one without a fully serviceable HUD office.

Over the past five years I have worked with HUD and have received various verbal commitments and assurances that Houston would receive the necessary HUD staff and programs to be an effective agency to help the citizens of Houston. We've made some progress, but we still have a ways to go.

In past years, I have considered offering an amendment to this bill to require better HUD service for Houston residents. This year I will again try to work with the agency to ensure proper services for the city. This would include establishing an Office of Community Planning and Development, which would provide technical assistance and monitoring of state and local entities receiving federal funding to assist with elderly and disabled housing loans, CDBG, and funds for Houston's Enhanced Enterprise Community. This service is particularly important because of the city's growing population. Unfortunately, because there is no full service HUD office in the city, quality housing opportunities have not keep pace with the growth.

When I go back to my district and I talk with seniors, families and local officials, one of their greatest concerns is housing for the elderly. No one wants to see our elderly without shelter. An Office of Community Planning and Development would aid the citizens of Houston to gain access and administer funds to renovate, locate, and build elderly housing. This office also oversees funding and provides technical assistance to our Enhanced Enterprise Community.

HUD came up with a good idea to provide funds to local governments to help their economically disadvantaged areas through Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities.

Through tax breaks to businesses and access to federal funds and a plan drawn up by local communities, HUD hoped to revitalize disadvantaged areas. Houston has an Enhanced Enterprise Community, and we have access to two hundred million dollars to help revitalize parts of Houston. It would be a shame to see that money go to waste without proper support and assistance by HUD.

The nearest HUD office that offers this service is in Ft. Worth Texas, which is over two hundred miles away. My constituents have had to call to Ft. Worth to get someone from CPD to come down to Houston to check out a faulty foundation. Most of the time the response from Ft. Worth is that they don't have the money in their budget for travel or they have to wait for years for a response.

The citizens of Houston deserve better than having to call HUD in Ft. Worth, which is over 200 miles away, to get an inspector who can not travel because of budgetary constraints.

I still do not understand why the fourth largest city in the nation does not have all the HUD programs to serve its citizens.

When we first started looking into upgrading the Houston HUD field office, we received assurances from former Secretary Cisneros and now Secretary Cuomo that the Houston office would receive all available programs.

Without these offices who is going to monitor these programs, who is going to check for fraud, waste, and abuse. Who is going to help the citizens of Houston provide for their housing needs. If this critical change isn't made soon, I am concerned that more residents will be denied services they are entitled to.

While I am not offering an amendment this year, I am looking forward to working with the committee and administration to see that this issue can finally be resolved.

IN TRIBUTE

SPEECH OF

HON. JESSE L. JACKSON, JR.

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 28, 1998

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, with a heavy heart I come before you today. On Friday, July 24, we lost two members of our congressional family: Capitol Police Officer Jacob J. Chestnut and Special Agent John Gibson.

Although tragic, these men died in service to their nation, in service to us. In the Gospel of John, Jesus says, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

With faith and trust in God and the help of family and friends the Chestnut and Gibson families will endure this seemingly unbearable time. I hope that the families of these two men—genuine American heroes—take comfort in knowing that their husbands, their fathers, their brothers, their sons, did not die in vain. By laying down their lives, these two men upheld our most cherished principles of liberty and democracy. I speak for all Americans when I say I am grateful for and honored by their courage, service and sacrifice.

While we mourn their death, we also celebrate the lives of Officer Chestnut and Special Agent Gibson. All Americans can rest assured that their freedom and the future of this great land remain intact because Officers Chestnut and Gibson died preserving liberty so that we may survive in freedom. We all are forever indebted to them.

On behalf of the people of the Second District of Illinois, I thank Officers Chestnut and Gibson for giving the ultimate sacrifice so that all Americans can sleep tonight under a security blanket of freedom. Their earthly lives may have drawn to a close, but their lives with God are eternal. Psalm 30 reminds us that "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning."

YEAR 2000 PROBLEM

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 30, 1998

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the year 2000 will herald the start of a new millennium. How-

ever, if our country doesn't address the Year 2000 or Y2K technology problem, the millennium may begin with numerous disruptions. Meeting the challenges presented by the Year 2000 conversion will require the commitment of significant resources from both the public and private sectors. The federal government, in particular, must take a leadership role. The federal government is fixing its own systems and must facilitate private sector conversion.

Today Mr. HORN and Mrs. MORELLA have introduced the "Year 2000 Information Disclosure Act". I am cosponsoring this bipartisan legislation which will serve to encourage businesses to share information on solving the Y2K bug. This legislation protects from liability claims those who in good faith share information on solving the Y2K problem.

Without timely sharing of data on the Y2K fix, many small-to-medium size companies may not meet the deadline of Jan. 1, 2000. This could have serious repercussions for the economy. Small to medium size businesses who face disruptions from the Y2K bug may simply not make it because they may not be able to continue business. Many business sectors are dependent on each other. They exchange information electronically every day. For this reason, it's crucial to limit liability for sharing information on Y2K solutions.

Currently, the President's Council on Year 2000 Conversion has determined that concern over liability is impeding the transfer of information on the Y2K bug between companies. The "Year 2000 Information Disclosure Act" is of national importance. I encourage this body to act on this legislation as soon as possible.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 1998

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Ms. MCCARTHY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to commend my colleagues for joining me in passing significant changes to the H.R. 4194, The Veterans Administration (VA)—Housing and Urban Development (HUD)—Independent Agencies Appropriations bill to remove restrictive language regarding the Brownfields initiative. Continued federal support and funding for this initiative is critical to the revitalization of our nation's urban core. In my district, Kansas City, Missouri, and our friends across the state line in Kansas City, Kansas, have joined to form a unique and innovative Brownfields partnership. This bi-state junction has not only received an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields grant in 1996, but recently was designated one of only 16 cities in the nation to become a Showcase Community.