with statues that clearly prohibit such operations, and it was illegal prior to enactment of the 1992 Johnson Act amendment.

In the meantime, casino ''cruises to nowhere'' have started operating out of Florida, Georgia, New York, Massachusetts, and South Carolina. Most recently, ''cruises to nowhere'' are planning to dock in Virginia and begin operations out of Virginia Beach. Unless Congress acts soon, almost all other states bordering the Atlantic Ocean, Pacific Ocean, or Gulf of Mexico could expect gambling ships to be docking very soon.

The legislation I am introducing today would make it clear that no preexisting state gambling law is weakened, preempted, or superseded by the 1992 Johnson Act amendment. My legislation will restore state sovereignty with regard to ''cruises to nowhere.'' (It will give states the right to debate, vote and ultimately decide for themselves if they want this type of gambling). If states do choose to permit ''cruises to nowhere,'' they can enact appropriate legislation, but will not be forced to by the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in this fundamental issues of restoring states' rights. In particular, I urge members from coastal states to take a look at this issue and join me as a cosponsor.

H.R. —

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Cruises-to-Nowhere Act of 1999''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds and declares the following:

(1) Gambling cruises-to-nowhere are voyages in which a vessel departs a State, sails 3 miles into international waters for the primary purpose of offering gambling beyond the jurisdication of Federal and State laws prohibiting that activity, and returns to the same State.

(2) Legal authorities have ruled that existing State laws cannot stop the operation of gambling cruises-to-nowhere, on the basis that the Congress preempted such State laws by the enactment of an obscure amendment buried in a 1992 law entitled ''An Act to provide for the designation of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary'' (Public Law 102–251).

(3) Gambling cruises-to-nowhere offer high-stakes, untaxed, unpoliced, and unregulated casino gambling.

(4) Accordingly, it is necessary to make absolutely clear that gambling cruises-to-nowhere enjoy no special exception from the operation of existing or future State laws and that relevant Federal law is not intended to preempt, supersede, or weaken the authority of States to apply their own laws to gambling cruises-to-nowhere.

SEC. 3. STATE AUTHORITY OVER CRUISES-TO-NOWHERE.

Section 5 of the Act of January 2, 1951, entitled ''An Act to prohibit transportation of gambling devices in interstate and foreign commerce'' (15 U.S.C. 1175; popularly known as the Johnson Act), is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)(A), by striking ''enacted''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(d) NO PREEMPTION OF STATE LAWS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to preempt the law of any State or possession of the United States.''.

THE STAND-BY-YOUR-AD ACT

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the 1998 campaign season marked a new low in political advertising or not. it is difficult to measure degrees of the bottom of the barrel or the volume of mud spread across the air. I know for a fact that the 1998 campaign season was more of the mess that results when intelligent discourse gives way to attack and counterattack.

Last year, the House of Representatives took an arduous and promising step toward cleaning up our Nation's political campaigns. We passed the Shays-Meehan campaign reform bill, which had been amended to include a version of the Stand-by-Your-Ad proposal that Representative STEPHEN HORN and I introduced in 1997. Unfortunately, the leadership of the Senate lacked the political will to see campaign reform through to a conclusion. I hope that 1999 will prove a more fruitful year for campaign reform.

In that light, Representative HORN and I are once again introducing the Stand-by-Your-Ad proposal. Our legislation would require candidates to appear full-screen in television ads and thus take responsibility for them. Candidates would be required to provide comparable disclosure, boldly and clearly, in both radio and print ads. These enhanced disclosure requirements would also apply to party an independent committees.

It is too easy for candidates to attack one another on television without the voter knowing who is behind the dirt. Candidates can obscure their identities with postage stamp size disclaimers. We need to make effective the requirement that candidates say who they are and take responsibility for their ads' content. This is an important step toward strengthening the accountability of candidates and campaigns. Campaign reform is not just about money; it is also about improving the quality and responsibility of debate. The bipartisan bill Mr. HORN and I recommend to the House would start us down that path, not by regulating the content of ads but by requiring candidates to assume responsibility for them.

Our Stand-by-Your-Ad legislation has its origins in the North Carolina General Assembly where it has been championed by Lt. Governor Dennis Wicker and was approved last session by the Senate but not the House.

Stand by Your Ad is compatible with and complementary to the full range of campaign reform proposals that will be considered by the 106th Congress, from Shays-Meehan to the disclosure-only bills. By approving this proposal, the Congress can strengthen disclosure so as to make sponsorship more clear and to require an assumption of personal responsibility in a way likely to discourage the most irresponsible and distorted attacks. We invite our colleagues to join us as cosponsors of this legislation.

PREVENTING GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWNS

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced the Government Shutdown Prevention Act, legislation designed to maintain government operations that would otherwise be halted due to an impasse in budget negotiations between Congress and the President. I first introduced this legislation in 1989, and since then the need for it has become even more apparent. Joining me as original cosponsors are Representatives ROHRABACHER, WYNN, COX, ISTOOK, PITTS, EHLERS, DAVIS (VA), and HAYWORTH.

Since I entered Congress, there have been 8 government shutdowns, costing American taxpayer millions of dollars and diminishing his confidence in elected officials. The estimated cost of the 21-day shutdown of the 104th Congress was $44 million per day! During the first shutdown in the 104th Congress, 800,000 federal employees were ''furloughed''. Budget negotiations between Congress and the President should be about the American people, not a battleground for public relations.

This bill accomplishes a very simple function: to keep funding at levels allowing appropriators to complete their work while keeping the government operating. This bill essentially works as an automatic continuing resolution, providing for funding at the previous year's levels so the government can continue to operate, even through an impasse in budget negotiations. The legislation protects Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security by guaranteeing that they remain at their current funding levels.

As Members of Congress, we are duty-bound by the Constitution to forge a budget for the American people. At times our ideological disagreements have led to heartaches for our constituents. I propose, through this legislation, that we provide an environment whereupon we can work together and negotiate in good faith, and strive to reach a compromise that will be good for the people we serve.

We need to restore the public's faith in its leaders by showing that we have learned from our mistakes. Enactment of this legislation will send a clear message to the American people that we will no longer allow them to be pawns in budget disputes.

INTRODUCTION OF THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 1999

HON. NANCY L. JOHNSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to increase the cap on state authority to allocate Low Income Housing Tax Credits to $1.75 per capita and index the cap to inflation. The current cap of $1.25 per capita has not been adjusted since the program was created in 1986. Since that time, population growth has totaled about 5 percent.

Although building costs rise each year, as does the affordable housing needs of the nation, the federal government's most important