

He is an active member of Rotary International and served as president of the Washington, D.C., Rotary Club. He is presently president of the Rotary Foundation Board that provides financial support for 48 charitable organizations in Washington, D.C.

His wife LaVon and their two children, Colin French, an attorney in Dallas, Texas, and Dr. Kelsey French, a clinical psychologist, Washington, D.C., are all graduates of Graceland College.

PASS THE PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

(Ms. KILPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, one of the most important things that this Congress can do is to pass an effective health plan for American citizens. That is why I am happy that 168 Democrats signed a discharge petition yesterday to bring our Patients' Bill of Rights to the House floor. Let us debate it, debate it now.

Yesterday, the Nation's doctors passed a resolution to unionize. They want to be able to practice medicine, to decide which care their patients should have, to decide what medicines, the length of stay their patients need.

Let us have meaningful debate on the Patients' Bill of Rights today. It is important, Americans want it, and Democrats want to get the job done.

SUPPORT H.R. 2280, VETERANS BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1999

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Committee on Veterans' Affairs marked up H.R. 2280, the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 1999. I would like to take this opportunity to inform my colleagues of a very important provision of this much-needed bipartisan legislation for our Nation's veterans. That provision is the expansion of the fund-raising authority of the American Battle Monuments Commission to expedite the establishment of the World War II memorial in our Nation's Capital. This memorial, to one of this Nation's greatest generations, is long overdue.

Mr. Speaker, of the 16 million Americans that answered their Nation's call to duty and sacrificed to protect humanity against tyranny and aggression, fewer than 7 million are alive today. We are losing them at the rate of 1,000 of these courageous veterans each and every day. We cannot wait if we are to honor these great men and women while they are still with us.

I encourage all Americans to donate what they can to the World War II memorial and my colleagues to support

this important legislation. It is truly time to say thank you and to provide a permanent tribute and inspiration so future generations of Americans will be reminded of the sacrifices that were necessary to preserve the freedoms and opportunities that we enjoy today.

SUPREME COURT IS OUT OF TOUCH

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, the first amendment says there is freedom of speech, and that freedom of peaceable assembly shall not be abridged. The Supreme Court ruled that this language permits dissidents to burn our flag. Beam me up. I believe the Founding Fathers are rolling over in their graves. From school prayer to flag burning, the Supreme Court is out of touch. They are wrong, and Congress must reverse that wrong. In America, the people govern, not the Supreme Court, and Congress should pass a law to protect our flag. A Nation that does not protect and honor their flag is a Nation that will not survive.

I yield back any common sense left in this Congress.

SUPPORT H.R. 1218, CHILD CUSTODY PROTECTION ACT

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, at my alma mater, Southwest High School in Miami, a student with a headache did not receive an over-the-counter aspirin to relieve her pain because the school nurse did not have a signed parental medical waiver; a teenager who wanted to pierce her ears was not able to because she did not have a parental consent form; and a school field trip accompanied by teachers and chaperones left behind a student because he failed to get a parent's signature. How ironic is it that friends and peers of these same teenagers are undergoing dangerous life-altering and potentially fatal medical procedures without parental consent or even notification.

Yesterday, the Committee on the Judiciary approved my bill, H.R. 1218, the Child Custody Protection Act, which will prevent nonparental adults who deliberately circumvent State parental consent or notification laws so that someone else's daughter or perhaps the teenager whom they have raped could obtain an abortion.

Young girls face complications and perhaps even death from botched abortions that their parents may never know about. This bill will put an end to the exploitation of young, immature, vulnerable girls. I hope the House will soon favorably vote on the Child Custody Protection Act.

ON GUN SAFETY AND MANGED CARE REFORM LEGISLATION

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I think the question this morning is what is our legislative agenda? Last week this House missed an enormous opportunity to pass real gun safety legislation. The only thing we did was prolong the time that criminals can get guns in their hands, and 13 of our children die every day by gun violence. As a mother, I will never give up on passing real gun safety legislation in this House, and we are going to do it.

Mr. Speaker, I will also not stop the fight for a Patients' Bill of Rights that responds to the needs of seniors and families and children that need real health care in America.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is what is our legislative agenda? Are we here for the American people? Or are we just here for special interests?

RECOGNIZING HASKELL SLOUGH SALMON HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT

(Mr. METCALF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, recently I attended a demonstration of the Haskell Slough Salmon Rehabilitation Project in my district. Private landowners working cooperatively with government agencies and volunteer groups have been able to restore approximately 3½ miles of old riverbed into prime salmon habitat by excavating 6,000 feet of stream channel, thus connecting 11 existing ponds.

The efforts of private citizens donating their time to projects like this one are absolutely vital as we work to rehabilitate salmon runs. Everyone involved with the undertaking should be proud of what they are doing and what they have already accomplished. All around the State, we are mustering community support for projects like the one at Haskell Slough. These voluntary community efforts are paying big dividends in the salmon rehabilitation effort.

MANAGED CARE REFORM DISCHARGE PETITION

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we began signing a discharge petition to bring the HMO reform bill to the floor of the House, simply because of the refusal to bring up the Patients' Bill of Rights for debate on this floor. The American people have been very clear about their desire for meaningful HMO reform. It is estimated

that 122 million Americans who have insurance do not have these same patient protections.

In my home State of Texas, we passed health care legislation similar to the Patients' Bill of Rights, which has proven to be very successful. However, we still have 8 million insured people in Texas who fall under ERISA, which preempts Texas law, who do not have these basic patient protections.

This is not about politics, it is about fairness, protection and accountability. The American people deserve a Patients' Bill of Rights that eliminates gag clauses, open access to specialists, external and timely appeals, coverage for emergency room care for families to go to the closest emergency room, and accountability for medical decisions.

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Mr. Speaker, the American people cannot afford any more delays. We need to support the Patients' Bill of Rights. Let us sign that discharge petition today.

U.S. MILITARY FORCES FALLING UNDER SEVERE STRAIN

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

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, we Republicans are the first to urge government to do more with less. However there are limits, and the United States military has reached them. More and more experts are becoming alarmed at the level of funding available to meet our defense needs. U.S. military forces are being called to perform more and more missions, but they are being given fewer and fewer resources to accomplish them.

Mr. Speaker, while precious resources are being diverted to the Balkans, our critical missions in both Iraq and Korea are falling under severe strain. Our forces are short on ammunition, and our force levels have been reduced to dangerously low levels. Since 1989, the Army and Air Force have been cut by almost 50 percent, the Navy by 36 percent, and the Marine Corps by 12 percent. All while our commitments overseas have increased some 300 percent.

This mismatch must not continue, Mr. Speaker.

WE NEED A PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the Patients' Bill of Rights.

As my colleagues know, health care in America works real well until we get sick or until we grow old. Then HMOs begin to tell us, "Well, your concerns

don't meet our criteria." or "We're not going to refer you to the specialist that you need to see." or "The person who is reviewing your case is not in; he's on vacation." Then our system breaks down critically.

People are concerned about access to specialists. Sixty-two percent of the American population say they have a problem with HMOs because they cannot get access to needed specialists. "Your specialist is not in our network." That is what we often hear.

We need a Patients' Bill of Rights. We need to guarantee access to specialists. We need to guarantee redress in the courts when HMOs make decisions that hurt our health. We need to have a deterrent which says if they deny people access to specialists, if they deny people access to care, then they can be brought to a court of law, and they can be made to pay for it. That not only gives the victim a remedy, it gives the HMOs a strong incentive to provide high quality care.

SUPREME COURT SHIFTS POWER FROM FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BACK TO THE STATES

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this morning we hear the hue and cry of big government liberals everywhere, and what are they languishing over today? Not once, not twice, but three times yesterday the Supreme Court struck down overreaching Federal laws and uplifted the concept of State federalism. This was like a punch in the nose to those who relish more and more federal laws. They are now staggering under the blow.

Mr. Speaker, what is their nose bent out of shape about? The Supreme Court shifted power from the Federal Government back to the States. More importantly, it said that the Federal Government has no business in usurping State sovereignty by placing layers and layers of Federal statutes on them.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Supreme Court rightly halted decades of presumption and arrogance by the Federal Government, and they are right moving the powers back to where it belongs, outside the Beltway and back to the people.

Three cheers for the checks and balances.

UNIONS IN AMERICA

(Ms. SANCHEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the unions of America.

Unless someone is a member of a union or unless they grew up in a union household they may not understand the advantages in the workplace that have been made because of unions for the American worker.

Like many Americans, I know how hard it is to earn a paycheck. I worked my way through college as a clerk at a Sav-on Drug store in Anaheim, and I was a member of the Retail Clerks Union in Orange County.

If someone is a worker in America and they have a pension, they should thank the unions. They understand about dignity and retirement. Thank the unions for their efforts to secure the 8-hour workday, the 40-hour work week, overtime pay and compensatory time off. Unions have been instrumental in obtaining health benefits for workers. We all know how expensive health care is, and without the unions' efforts think of how many workers and families would be without health insurance.

Quality of life; unions understand this.

Today I thank the unions for all they have done to make our country better.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO GET LIBERALS OUTRAGED?

(Mr. SCHAFFER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, what would it take to get Congress outraged over high taxes, a tax code that looks like it was designed by Saddam Hussein and an IRS less accountable than the weather man? Is there anything at all that would provoke liberal Democrats to denounce the greedy hand of government, the insatiable force of government and the government's sponsored erosion of our liberties?

If they knew that Taxpayer Freedom Day, the day when Americans are finally finished paying Uncle Sam was May 12, would that outrage them? If the White House knew that average middle class families pay somewhere around half of their income to the government, would that outrage them?

If they knew that most Americans pay more in payroll taxes than they do in Federal income taxes, would that outrage them? If they knew that the tax code was so complicated that even Members of Congress on the House Committee on Ways and Means have to hire professional help to figure out their tax forms, would that get anyone's attention around here?

If they knew that the IRS is simply incapable of reforming itself, would that spark their outrage?

Mr. Speaker, just what does it take?

REPUBLICANS PREVENTING DEBATE ON HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a watershed day. I never thought I would pick up the Washington Post and have it read: AMA Votes to Unionize Doctors.

Now I graduated from medical school in 1963, and the thought of being in a