

SMALLER SCHOOLS, STRONGER COMMUNITIES ACT WILL STRENGTHEN SENSE OF COMMUNITY IN SCHOOLS

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

Mr. HILL of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the recent violence we have seen in our schools has made all of us take a serious look at our children, our schools, and ourselves. Too many of our children wake up every day and go to schools that make them feel disconnected and detached from their teachers, their parents, and their communities.

I am introducing a bill tomorrow called the Smaller Schools, Stronger Communities Act which I hope will make our schools smaller and strengthen the sense of community and safety that many of our schools today are lacking.

A principal of a successful small high school recently wrote that small schools "offer what metal detectors and guards cannot, the safety and security of being where you are well-known by people who care for you."

I hope this bill will encourage local school districts to find new ways to help their students feel connected to their schools, their communities, and their parents.

DAY 132 OF SOCIAL SECURITY LOCKBOX BEING HELD HOSTAGE

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

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, this is day 132 of the Social Security lockbox held hostage in the Senate. Today's seniors and the seniors of tomorrow demand that we act as responsible stewards of the hard-earned money that they pay into Social Security.

Now there are two things we need to do to protect Social Security: first, we must act responsibly this year and pass spending bills without dipping into Social Security, and we are; second, we must work to see that institutional protections like the lockbox become law.

This House passed the lockbox bill by a vote of 416 to 12 on May 26. For 132 days, the other body has held this bill hostage.

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I hope President Clinton and all who say they are concerned about protecting Social Security call on the Senate for action on the Social Security lockbox bill.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONILLA). The Chair will remind Members to avoid urging action of the other body, the Senate, in their remarks.

AMERICA WANTS HMO REFORM THAT PUTS PATIENTS AHEAD OF PROFITS

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, the American public has consistently called for HMO reforms that put patients ahead of profits. Just as we are about to debate the bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights, the Republican leadership and the insurance industry have set traps to weaken and kill sensible patient protections.

Earlier this week, the Republican leadership held a fund-raiser with insurance industry lobbyists, the most rabid opponents of HMO reform, and filled their pockets with campaign donations. Their motives are transparent: set traps for HMO reform and collect checks from the insurance industry. The Republican leadership is displaying upside-down values that put campaign favors ahead of HMO reform.

Mr. Speaker, I say to the Republican leadership that in this body rank-and-file Democrats and Republicans have come together around a bipartisan piece of legislation that is a good piece of health care reform legislation. The Republican leadership in this House is attempting to thwart the will of the Democrats and the Republicans here, and thwart the will of the American people that wants access to emergency rooms and specialty care, that wants to have prescription drugs, and that allows them to sue an HMO if they have proceeded irresponsibly.

AMERICA NEEDS PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS, NOT LAWYERS' RIGHT TO BILL

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the outlook of my colleague from Connecticut, and it is unique in her interpretation of what transpires.

For example, the silence is deafening from my friends on the left when it comes to Communist Chinese contributions to their political party and the President of the United States. Very interesting that they do not have a word to say about that. Oh, they do talk about campaign finance reform. But that is akin to Bonnie and Clyde, at the height of their crime spree, calling for a press conference for tougher penalties against bank robbery.

Make no mistake, my friends on the left love trial lawyers, and what they want instead of a true patients' bill of rights is a lawyers' right to bill. The Wall Street Journal opined yesterday that the left has been held hostage by the trial lawyers' lobby.

I know they will get up and be very clever today, but remember the facts:

We need a true patients' bill of rights, not a lawyers' right to bill.

APPROVE BIPARTISAN PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, of course the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) is right. I think all America recognizes it is just a matter of coincidence that the Republican Party here in the House sucked out every dollar it could from the managed care and insurance companies on the eve of the consideration of a meaningful patients' bill of rights.

What I prefer to focus on is not their failure but our success, a success in the Lone Star State. This is experience that this Congress should follow to protect health care consumers across this country. We began in Texas with bipartisan participation in crafting meaningful guarantees for every person in managed health care.

Texas recognized that we have to reject the same sham insurance company talk that is being advanced here today, and the same misinformation that clutters the television airwaves. The result has been what Governor Bush's own insurance commissioner calls one of the most effective consumer laws in the country.

Unfortunately, a Federal law is interfering with the ability of Texas and other States to assure patients full guarantees. Let us approve the bipartisan patients' bill of rights, empower the States, and empower the patients.

REPUBLICANS ARE FIGHTING TO PROTECT SOCIAL SECURITY SURPLUS

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, the previous gentleman from Texas spoke very well, as a trial lawyer would. But I want to talk about the throes of a great struggle we are in to restore the integrity of the Social Security Trust Fund.

If the Republicans in the House are successful, not one penny of the Social Security surplus will be spent on wasteful Washington spending. Last night, the Republicans passed a foreign operations bill that cuts the amount of foreign aid Americans send overseas. Why is that good? It reflects disciplined spending, it cuts growth in the Federal Government, and it protects the Social Security surplus.

The President now has threatened to veto the bill. Why? Because he wants to spend \$2 billion more on foreign aid. Now, that alone troubles most Americans. But what brings us to despair is that this \$2 billion more the President wants to spend will come right out of