

our President and our leadership in this institution as we choose the times and the days ahead for war.

WE NEED A TAX POLICY WHICH WILL HELP THE ECONOMY RECOVER QUICKER

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

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, in my Seventh Congressional District of Michigan unemployment is going up. Some of the companies are closing. Several are moving to Mexico and other countries.

In the past, the United States has been so advanced in our productivity and our efficiency that we could put heavy taxes on business and industry, and we could impose restrictive regulations, and still be competitive in the world market. That is no longer true, Mr. Speaker. The international community is now vying for our markets, our ways of producing, trying to be more productive and take away our business.

That means that we have got to take another look at how we put our companies at a competitive disadvantage, the way we tax our business and industry more than what other countries are taxing theirs. We now have a situation where Democrats are suggesting that if we have any tax changes to have a faster economic recovery, they are going to use it politically, suggesting taxation to give benefits for just the rich. We need to look at the kind of taxes that will protect workers savings and are going to help this economy recover quicker.

AMERICA'S BANKRUPTCY LAWS NEED TO BE FIXED

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, America's bankruptcy laws need to be fixed. The system is broken, and we need to act. In fact, we have acted. The House of Representatives has passed an excellent bill to do the job. Unfortunately, the other body has injected one of the most controversial issues of our time, abortion, into this legislation. Now many of us simply can no longer vote for it.

The issue of abortion does not belong in this bill. Mr. Speaker, as it is written now, the bankruptcy bill singles out peaceful, nonviolent, pro-life protesters for unusually harsh punishment if they pray or protest or hand out leaflets in front of an abortion clinic. I ask my colleagues, why is it okay to have civil rights protests, why is it okay to have animal rights protests or peace protests, and why is it not okay to protest in defense of unborn babies?

This Congress should stand for equal treatment under the law. We should

not have one set of rules for liberals, another for conservatives; one set of rules for pro-choice people, another for pro-life people. It is not right, and that is why we want to see the bankruptcy bill fixed before we vote on it.

REGARDING THE JOINT MEETING OF CONGRESS IN NEW YORK CITY

(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, I look forward tomorrow to joining approximately 250 of my colleagues at the Joint Meeting of Congress in New York City, where we will honor the victims and celebrate the heroes of September 11, 2001.

We will be returning to the city which terrorists targeted for devastation almost 1 year ago, and yet the terrorists did not succeed in destroying this Nation or the American spirit. Instead, our Nation is strong, our people are its strength. The people of New York are the beacon to the strength of the American spirit. Tomorrow we will see firsthand that strength, and how New York City has survived in spite of the horrible tragedy of September 11.

Our message to those terrorists is that no one in this Nation will retreat, and we will not be intimidated. Terrorism against the United States, our freedom, and our people will never be tolerated.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the people of New York for welcoming Congress to their city. May this visit symbolize not only the unity of Congress, but that of the entire country to rebuild our Nation and defend our freedom.

DAM SAFETY AND SECURITY ACT OF 2002

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GIBBONS). Pursuant to the order of the House of Wednesday, September 4, 2002, and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4727.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4727) to reauthorize the national dam safety program, and for other purposes, with Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of Wednesday, September 4, 2002, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 4727, the Dam Safety and Security Act of 2002, introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER), reauthorizes and updates the national dam safety program, which was originally passed as part of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996.

This program was created to improve public safety around dams by providing grants to State dam safety agencies to assist them in improving their regulatory programs, funding research to enhance technical expertise as dams are built and rehabilitated, establishing training programs for dam safety inspectors, and creating a national inventory of dams.

Since its passage in 1996, the program has worked to provide assistance grants, training, research, and expertise in each of the 48 States that has a dam safety program.

Dams serve a number of important functions in today's society. They provide water for recreation, electricity, human and livestock consumption, crop irrigation, and flood control.

According to the Army Corps of Engineers, which maintains the national inventory, there are more than 80,000 dams in the United States. Of these, 10,000 have been classified as high risk, meaning that their failure poses a risk of either loss of life or severe loss of property.

While it is widely believed that the Federal Government owns most of America's dams, the reality is far from that. In fact, the Federal Government owns just over 5 percent of the dams in the United States, with the vast majority, some 58 percent, being owned by private individuals.

This fact highlights the need for coordinated and adequately funded inspection programs at the State level. This bipartisan legislation will reauthorize this important public works safety program for an additional 4 years, require the creation of a strategic plan, give the Interagency Board greater flexibility to provide assistance to States, allow for the inclusion of State dam safety officials on the Interagency Board, increase the amount of money available for grants and research, and require that the Board consider security when assessing the safety of dams.

Mr. Chairman, I support this very important piece of legislation. I want to commend the ranking member of our subcommittee, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO), for his diligence and willingness to continue to work with us in a bipartisan manner to produce good legislation, and also the chairman of the full committee, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), and the ranking member of the full committee, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR).

I want to pay special note at this time and give thanks to the author of