

Nicaragua makes a mere \$710 a year. The average person in Costa Rica does a bit better, but still only makes \$4,070 a year.

Rather than handouts or loans, the United States can quickly improve the well-being of millions of our neighbors by providing the DR-CAFTA countries improved access to our vast markets. New business opportunities create new jobs, not handouts. In turn, a virtuous circle can be created as wealth and income rises along with the demands for United States products and services.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on CAFTA. It is good for America's business.

HEALTH CARE ACCESS FOR LATINOS

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the Republican leadership's failure to bring up legislation that actually addresses the health care problems of American families.

Currently, 45 million Americans are uninsured. Uninsured numbers are even worse for the Latino communities which have the highest uninsured rate of any racial and ethnic group; 13 million Latinos are uninsured. That is more than one-third of the Nation's Latino population.

Latinos make up 14 percent of the U.S. population, nearly 42 million people. Yet the administration's leadership continues to ignore the significant population. This week's legislation on association health plans and medical malpractice demonstrates the Republican leadership's inability to acknowledge the devastating impact these proposals will have on my community.

These proposals will facilitate rampant fraud, raise premiums, and reduce benefits to Latino families. If the current Republican leadership really wants to reduce the number of uninsured and reduce health care costs, then it needs to bring up legislation to the floor that addresses health care problems for all American families, including the 9.1 million Latino families in the U.S.

CAFTA GOOD FOR WORKERS AND CONSUMERS

(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, this week we will debate CAFTA. All of the Nation's major newspaper editorial boards support CAFTA. Listen to these quotes.

The Washington Post cites a study that shows U.S. income would increase by \$17 billion under CAFTA. The Wall Street Journal says CAFTA would expand the market for U.S. goods with the 44 million consumers of six Central

American countries. The Journal goes on to say that American farmers would be among the biggest winners under CAFTA.

USA Today says CAFTA would slash tariffs on agriculture products coming from the U.S. The L.A. Times says the benefits of free trade are evenly spread across society, citing rapid growth and higher income of free trading nations.

Even the New York Times claims that this free trade agreement "deserves to approved."

In addition to these editorial boards, Central American workers and leaders overwhelmingly support this agreement. Mr. Speaker, they cannot all be wrong. I, therefore, urge my colleagues to vote in favor of CAFTA. More trade means more jobs.

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE RELIEF HURTS THE COUNTRY

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

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, we are going to be back here this week and try to convince the American people that we are trying to help them with their health care costs by passing yet again a medical malpractice insurance relief act.

The really sad thing about this is it does not help the cost of health care in this country. It does improve the bottom line considerably for the insurance companies. But the most egregious parts of this is the way it protects the irresponsible drug companies. We are going to provide tort protection. We are going to provide protection from lawsuits to Merck who knowingly put a product on the market that caused 139,000 Americans to have hearts attacks unnecessarily. And they knew it would do that when they put it on the market.

We are going to provide protection to an industry that cares nothing about the health of the people. It cares nothing about anything but making a few million more dollars.

I urge this House to defeat that measure.

INSPIRING DISABLED VETERANS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, after returning to the United States, many disabled veterans devote themselves to their community with the same dedication they displayed on the battlefields and bases around the world. Specifically, thousands of veterans put their skills and talents to use by operating successful small businesses.

Today, I am proud to announce an event that will pay special attention and tribute to service-disabled business owners. On August 19, Mr. Bernard

Smith will host a charity golf tournament at Andrews Air Force Base to raise money for three disabled veterans groups. Twelve disabled veterans who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom have enthusiastically volunteered to participate in the golf tournament. These servicemembers are determined to lead full and successful lives and are an inspiration to all Americans.

Mr. Smith's leadership on this event is truly honorable. As a service-disabled business owner, he understands the importance of supporting those who have already given so much to our country.

In conclusion, God bless our troops; and we will never forget September 11 and the attacks on Egypt.

PRIVATIZING SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, when are Washington Republicans going to listen to the American people?

At the beginning of this year, President Bush unveiled a general plan that would lead to the privatization of Social Security. When his plan was met with a lukewarm response, President Bush decided that he would travel around the Nation for 60 days trying to sell the American people on the concept of privatizing Social Security.

□ 1030

The American people listened, and they gave President Bush a resounding no. Our constituents paid into Social Security, and they want it paid back to them when they retire. Cutting Social Security benefits that Americans have earned should always be a last resort.

And yet recently there was legislation introduced by the Republicans that would divert payroll contributions from Americans to create private accounts. By taking money away from Social Security, the Republican plan would explode the deficit or force deep cuts in guaranteed benefits our Nation's citizens have already been promised.

It is time to listen to our constituents and realize Americans are not going to back Social Security privatization. Let us strengthen Social Security rather than destroy it.

IN SUPPORT OF FREE TRADE AND CAFTA

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, this week Congress will consider the Central American Free Trade Agreement, the largest free trade agreement in over a decade. I am very proud to support this agreement that will create opportunities for the unemployed, increase wages and improve the standard of living for American workers.

According to a study of only 12 States by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, CAFTA would create over 25,000 new jobs in these States in the first year alone. According to the American Farm Bureau, CAFTA will provide a substantial competitive advantage to U.S. farmers and ranchers, boosting agricultural exports by \$1.5 billion annually.

Mr. Speaker, this historic agreement will also help consumers by delivering a greater choice of goods at lower prices. Through more trade, American families will be able to buy more, using less of their paychecks. We have over 200 years of history to prove it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to reject protectionism and instead support jobs, support U.S. farmers, support consumers, and support freedom by supporting CAFTA.

WHY ARE REPUBLICANS NOT INVESTIGATING PLAME OUTING BY WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS?

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, today, a grand jury continues to investigate into the leaking of an undercover agent's identity. Thank goodness a grand jury is taking this case seriously, since it does not appear that either the White House or House Republicans are interested in finding out who is responsible for leaking Valerie Plame's identity.

Back in the 1990s, House Republicans loved "Roving" around in the White House's business. House Republicans took 140 hours of testimony to investigate whether the Clinton White House misused its holiday card database. They also once asked President Clinton to explain how the White House responded to letters sent to the President's cat, Socks.

But now that we have an issue that is clearly begging for congressional oversight, House Republicans have been silent. They have not sent a single letter to the White House demanding answers. They have not held congressional hearings to investigate the impact such a leak could have on our ability to gather intelligence.

The leaking of a CIA agent's identity is a serious breach of our national security, and something must be done about it.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC-CENTRAL AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

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

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of DR-CAFTA. It is not often I agree with the editorial page of *The Washington Post*, but I want to commend the editorial

staff for its outstanding piece today entitled "The Stakes in CAFTA."

The stakes in CAFTA are indeed high and go far beyond issues of tariffs and trade barriers. As the *Post* put it, "While the U.S. has been focusing on terrorism, a new challenge has been brewing in its own hemisphere. House Members should consider this challenge before voting to slam the door on Central America's pro-American leaders."

The *Post* concludes that CAFTA will help the poor of Latin America, creating 300,000 new jobs and a new mechanism for enforcing labor rights. I quote, "The defeat of CAFTA would help not antipoverty movements but anti-American demagogues, starting with Mr. Chavez of Venezuela. For them, the retreat of the U.S. from partnership with Central America would be a major victory."

Mr. Speaker, I would urge support of DR-CAFTA.

SOCIAL SECURITY

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues have been saying all along that the recently introduced Social Security GROW Act does not address the future solvency of Social Security, that it will cut guaranteed Social Security benefits, and that it continues the raid on the Social Security Trust Fund, despite what its sponsors say.

Well, you do not have to take our word for it. Even my friends on the other side of the aisle have begun to publicly question their party's plan. The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE) said in *USA Today* that "you must eat your spinach before having dessert, and this plan only offers dessert: the personal retirement accounts." Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY of Iowa said in the *L.A. Times* that he was "disappointed that the new House Republican bill did not address Social Security's impending insolvency." And the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS) said to *Bloomberg News*, "I do not support legislation that takes tax dollars and diverts them to private accounts."

This legislation is not the way to preserve Social Security. As we prepare to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Social Security, we should be straightening it rather than jeopardizing our citizens' hard-earned retirement savings.

H.R. 2049, FEDERAL CONTRACTORS SECURITY ACT

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, the *Washington Post* carries an editorial

this morning on illegal immigration, and it talks about the Senate beginning to take up that issue today. I look forward to our discussion and continued work on that issue here in the House. It is an issue that is of tremendous importance to my home State of Tennessee.

I would like to call the body's attention to a bill that I filed that deals with immigration reform, H.R. 2049, the Federal Contractors Security Act. What this does is to require those companies contracting with the Federal Government to use the basic worker verification program to ensure us, the taxpayers, that the individuals working for them are in the country legally and that they are who they claim to be.

Mr. Speaker, this is a national security issue, it is a homeland security issue, it is an issue of tremendous importance. I encourage the body to look at H.R. 2049, and I encourage our leadership to take aggressive action to fight illegal immigration.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GINGREY). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later in the day.

UNITED STATES TRADE RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT ACT

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3283) to enhance resources to enforce United States trade rights, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3283

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 "United States Trade Rights Enforcement Act".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) United States producers that believe they are injured by subsidized imports from nonmarket economy countries have not been able to obtain relief through countervailing duty actions because the Department of Commerce has declined to make countervailing duty determinations for nonmarket economy countries in part because it lacks explicit legal authority to do so;

(2) explicitly making the countervailing duty law under subtitle A of title VII of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1671 et seq.) applicable to actions by nonmarket economy countries would give United States producers access to import relief measures that directly target government subsidies;

(3) the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection of the Department of Homeland Security has encountered particular problems in collecting countervailing and anti-dumping duties from new shippers who default on their bonding obligations;