

BACHUS for his perception, his perspective, and his judgment with regard to the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time except for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve 5 minutes of my time, and I yield back the balance of my time, also.

□ 2115

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2 of House Resolution 269, further proceedings on the bill will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1132, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

GRASSROOTS LOBBYING AND FREEDOM OF SPEECH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, as part of the Constitutional Caucus, we try every week to raise issues that are of concern to us, because dealing with the Constitution, observing the Constitution and honoring the Constitution is very, very important to us. It is the basis of everything that we do here in the Congress and should be the basis of every lawmaking body in our country. So tonight I want to talk a little bit about the first amendment and a concern that I have about an assault that has been made on the first amendment by a previous Congress.

The first amendment clearly states that "Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech." Our Founding Fathers understood the vital role that free speech played in the health and functioning of our democracy. They lived under the restrictions

of colonial England, and were very intent on creating a new system of government that respected the right to speech and political expression.

One of the strongest proponents of the Constitution's Bill of Rights, Patrick Henry, said: "Guard with jealous attention the public liberty. Suspect everyone who approaches that jewel."

Today, as Mr. Henry advised 200 years ago, I look with suspicion at some of the legislation that has emerged from this body. I am suspicious that we have at times not given adequate attention to the "public liberty" that Patrick Henry so strongly urged us to guard.

Congress must take great care when attempting to control political expression. But, unfortunately, this has not always been the case. In the past, Congress has created laws which restrict organizations' rights to participate in the electoral process.

The First Amendment Restoration Act, H.R. 71, would restore America's first amendment rights by repealing the "electioneering communication" provision in the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, known as BCRA.

This provision stifles the speech rights of corporations, nonprofits and labor unions. They are prohibited from sponsoring no-PAC funded radio and TV advertisements that include any references to Federal candidates during the 30 days before primary elections and 60 days before general elections. This is a severe infringement on these organizations' constitutional rights to free speech. It communicates to them that they have no right to voice their views during elections.

It is a clear violation of the first amendment to restrict the speech of organizations and limit what people can say about a candidate and when they may say it. The Supreme Court, unfortunately, upheld the constitutionality of these restrictions on groups in the days leading up to an election. But the Supreme Court has erred in the past.

This bill offers a much-needed correction to the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act. The 30/60 day BCRA provision was an attack on the primary purpose of the first amendment's free speech clause, which is the protection of political speech. This bill fully restores those rights which were hampered by BCRA.

We must be vigilant and heed the words of America's founders. They knew firsthand the democracy-choking effect of restrictions placed on political speech. But the minute we begin to craft laws that hamper expression, we demonstrate we have forgotten the priceless lessons of liberty that have been fought for by the patriots who have gone before us.

I urge my colleagues to support the First Amendment Restoration Act, H.R. 71.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order tonight.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKER MONTH AND WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a former social worker serving in the United States Congress, and I rise to honor the work of professional social workers across the country and throughout the world.

I would like to join my colleagues in the National Association of Social Workers in recognizing March as National Professional Social Work Month and today as World Social Work Day. Today we have the opportunity to acknowledge the important contributions that social workers make in our community and throughout this country.

Today the House overwhelmingly passed H. Res. 266 to recognize the goals and ideals of National Professional Social Work Month and World Social Work Day. This legislation offered the Congress a valuable occasion to support professionals who have helped individuals, families, and communities resolve complicated issues and make significant choices.

My experience as a social worker had a profound influence on my decision to enter public life. I could see that many of the challenges facing my clients and those that I worked with had stemmed from the decisions being made at the public policy level. Serving in Congress allows me to be able to continue to help my clients in a broader capacity.

Social work as a profession is a commitment to not only addressing the individual needs of clients, but also in creating a just system. As a Member of Congress, I work every day to create a just system for the American people.

This year, the theme of National Professional Social Work Month is "Hope and Health." This theme allows us to highlight the considerable involvement of social workers in the health profession.

Social workers often work cooperatively with doctors, nurses and other medical professionals to ensure that their clients receive the highest quality care. Care and attention provided by social workers begins when the client enters the health care profession and does not end until he or she has recovered.

When dealing with health care, social workers will most often act as counselors and therapists. In that capacity, they must help the client and his or her family understand the diagnosis, the illnesses, and the emotions involved. In addition, social workers provide much-needed advice and support