

phone when you visit with your family, you will likely see a hero or two whose personal sacrifice is the reason for your success and for the success of our country.

Tonight, in the next few minutes, we are going to hear from the Republican freshman Members from across this country, led by our President, who is going to talk about the changes and improvements we are going to bring to the quality of life of America's families. It is important because America's families are the foundation for America, and we can, with their help, we can meet every challenge America faces today.

Mr. HULSHOF. I thank the gentleman, and I especially welcome him to our group, and I appreciate very much the leadership that he has taken on this particular issue. I think his points are well taken. We have begun that road. We have got a great distance to travel, and we look forward to working with the gentleman during this 105th Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. PAUL], another Texan, and I do not know necessarily that Texans have a corner on family virtue, but I am happy to yield to my friend.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. I am delighted the gentleman has called this special order tonight, and I am pleased I can participate in it.

Earlier today we had a vote on the Working Families Flexibility Act. This came out of the committee I had been working on, and I was a strong supporter of this. We did promote this as a family-oriented piece of legislation.

As we all know, this piece of legislation allows more choices for the family in the way they can spend their overtime or their time off. Obviously, this is a benefit to the families. In one way I was a little disappointed that we had to go through it, because if we live in a free society it is assumed that you can make these agreements with your employer, but under the circumstances it was not available to many of our families unless we passed this piece of legislation, so I was delighted we were able to do that.

During that debate I mentioned that one of my favorite bumper stickers says simply "Legalize Freedom." Any time we do that in this Congress, I am very pleased.

The other thing I would like to suggest, along with our nice title there, "Strong Families for a Better America," I would like to put a subtitle there and say, "Freedom is Family-Friendly." I think the more freedom we have, the stronger our families are.

We have seen a tremendous effort, sincere efforts, over the past 30 or 40 years with the promotion of the welfare state. It is always done in the name of helping people and families, but quite frankly, there is very little evidence to show that the \$5 trillion spent on the welfare system has

strengthened our families. As a matter of fact, I think it has done quite the opposite.

In the same sense, these many funds were spent to strengthen education, and if we look at our educational system, it has not helped. If we have an educational system that is not working hardly, are we doing much benefit to our families?

So, I think the opposite of the statement, freedom is family friendly, I think big government is not. I do not believe that if power and responsibility and authority and responsibility gravitates here to Washington that it is beneficial to the family. The more freedom we have, the more local options we have, the more choice we have for our families, I think the better off we are.

Obviously, families would have a lot more choices if they had a lot less taxes, so we have emphasized that as well. I think our reducing taxes on families and giving tax credits for children would certainly be a great benefit.

I would like to bring up very briefly one subject that is dear to my heart, because it involves families. It is generally believed by many in this country that the women's movement was the main reason why women went out to work. Quite frankly, I think there are a lot of women who were forced to work in order to take care of their families in the best way they can see fit. This to me was so often a reflection of inflation because of the cost of living. I believe that eventually we have to address this subject and deal with it to make sure our families have the greatest opportunity possible that we can provide for them.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman's points are well taken, particularly as far as the workplace is concerned. I think that of course when you have two-parent families and both parents are having to work to pay the tax bill, I think what we have done today, again, is a step in that direction as far as helping provide some balance in the workplace with more flexibility for employees, and again, this is just a step, I think, in the right direction.

I know that the dean of our Republican delegation, the gentleman from Missouri, JIM TALENT, who is the chair of the Committee on Small Business, also has measures that he will be addressing, like home-based businesses and really promoting ways that home-based businesses can help balance the job as well as family responsibilities.

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Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I think it is interesting to note that the workers in the public sector have already had this right. I think it was only fair that we give this to the individual workers throughout the country.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman is correct. I think that the misnomer, perhaps some of the misinformation about the flexibility act is that somehow it abolishes the 40 hour work week which of course it does not.

I see the gentleman from Alabama is in the well of the House. I yield to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. RILEY).

Mr. RILEY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding to me.

As most of my colleagues in the freshman class probably realize, probably more than I thought possible, how important my family is to me and how important it has been to me. One of the primary reasons I ran for this office was to protect my family. Primarily, my first granddaughter.

When she was born 2 years ago, she was \$187,000 in debt. Today she is \$200,000 in debt. We must come together on both sides of the aisle and produce a balanced budget this year, because we cannot continue to make our children and our grandchildren pay for the debts of our generation. We must allow them the opportunity to begin life with the same opportunities that we have.

Unfortunately, today working families across this country gather around kitchen tables each week and wonder why they cannot make ends meet. They wonder why they work longer, why they have to take second jobs. And they feel like they are literally running in place. Many families have given up the American dream that their children will achieve a higher standard of living than their parents or grandparents. In my opinion, the best way we in Congress can help the American family is to once and for all balance the Federal budget.

What will a balanced budget mean to you and your family? A balanced budget will result in no less than a 2 percent drop in interest rates. To put this in perspective, the cost of a \$75,000 mortgage would be reduced by as much as \$37,000 over 30 years. A family would save \$2000 on \$11,000 in student loans. The real beneficiary of a balanced budget, Mr. Speaker, would be the American family.

I guess that is one of the reasons that today I cosponsored the Working Families Flexibility Act, and I want to commend all of those who helped pass this legislation today. This will give the private sector employees the same opportunity as public sector employees to spend time with their families. By taking comptime from work instead of overtime pay should they choose to do so in this fast paced day and age where two-income families continue to rise, families will be able to increase this valuable time together because of the Working Families Flexibility Act.

My commitment to families is also why I cosponsored H.R. 902, the Family Heritage Preservation Act, which will repeal the estate tax. Most of the families in this country work hard all of their lives for two reasons: They want to provide a better standard of living for their own families, and they want to leave the fruits of their labor to their children and to their grandchildren. However, today many families are forced to sell off the family farm or the family business just to pay the Government's estate tax.