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NEWS

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CRIME

**GOP COMBINES HIGHLIGHTS OF SENATE & HOUSE PASSED BILLS;
WITH CRIME EPIDEMIC IN CONGRESS' BACKYARD,
TIME FOR OUTRAGE OVER CAPITAL OFFENSES, NOT CAPITAL GAINS**

FOR TOO LONG, CONGRESS HAS TREATED CRIME AS A POLITICAL ISSUE. BUT LET'S FACE IT -- CRIME KNOWS NO POLITICAL BOUNDARIES. IT'S AN ISSUE OF EVERY DAY SURVIVAL, IN EVERY STATE IN AMERICA, AND THAT INCLUDES THE STREETS IN THE VERY NEIGHBORHOOD WE WORK IN.

THIS WEEK, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES' CHIEF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER WAS ROBBED AT GUN POINT AND SHOT IN THE FACE. IN JANUARY, A SENATE STAFFER ON HIS WAY TO BUY A CUP OF COFFEE WAS MURDERED IN COLD BLOOD. THREE MONTHS AGO, A SENATOR'S WIFE WAS ABDUCTED AT GUNPOINT BY A CONVICTED RAPIST ON PAROLE.

CRIME SHOULDN'T HAVE TO HIT THAT CLOSE TO HOME TO GET CONGRESS MOVING ON THIS URGENT NATIONAL PRIORITY. AS LAWMAKERS, WE'RE NOT USED TO LIVING IN TERROR -- BUT FOR MILLIONS OF AMERICANS, IT'S A FACT OF LIFE.

LET'S GET PRIORITIES STRAIGHT

LET'S FACE IT, CONGRESS HAS SPENT FAR TOO MUCH TIME WAGING A PHONY CLASS WARFARE BATTLE, ALL AT THE EXPENSE OF A REAL WAR -- THE WAR IN AMERICA'S STREETS. IT'S TIME TO GET OUR PRIORITIES STRAIGHT -- IT'S TIME FOR CONGRESS TO DEMONSTRATE THE SAME OUTRAGE OVER CAPITAL OFFENSES AS IT SHOWS OVER CAPITAL GAINS.

NO MATTER HOW HARD PRESIDENT BUSH PRESSED FOR A TOUGH ANTI-CRIME BILL...NO MATTER HOW MANY LAW ENFORCEMENT ORGANIZATIONS ASKED FOR HELP...NO MATTER HOW MANY LAW ABIDING MEN AND WOMEN SAID "PLEASE MAKE OUR HOMES, STREETS, AND SCHOOLS SAFE," -- NO MATTER HOW MANY MILLIONS OF AMERICANS VOTED FOR PRESIDENT BUSH BECAUSE THEY WANTED HIS APPROACH TO THE ISSUE -- CONGRESS'S ATTITUDE ABOUT THE WAR ON CRIME HAS BEEN ONE OF "WAKE ME WHEN IT'S OVER."

REPUBLICANS SOUND WAKE-UP CALL WITH TOUGHEST BILL EVER

TODAY, WE ARE ISSUING A WAKE-UP CALL. IT'S TIME TO STOP TREATING CRIME LEGISLATION LIKE IT'S SOME ESOTERIC TAX ISSUE, OR PARTISAN LITMUS TEST. THAT'S WHY TODAY WE ARE INTRODUCING WHAT I BELIEVE IS THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE AND TOUGHEST ANTI-CRIME LEGISLATION EVER INTRODUCED -- LEGISLATION, WHICH, IF PASSED, WOULD BE SIGNED BY THE PRESIDENT IMMEDIATELY, AND ON THE BOOKS THIS YEAR.

WHAT REPUBLICANS HAVE DONE, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF SENATOR THURMOND, IS TO TAKE THE TOUGHEST PARTS OF THE BILL PASSED BY THE SENATE LAST YEAR, AND THE TOUGHEST PARTS OF THE BILL PASSED BY THE HOUSE AND JOINED THEM TOGETHER.

(MORE)

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THIS BILL AND THE BILL REPORTED OUT OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ARE MANY AND DRAMATIC.

DEATH PENALTY, HABEAS CORPUS REFORMS, GOOD FAITH EVIDENCE

POLLS CONTINUE TO REFLECT THAT AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF AMERICANS STRONGLY SUPPORT THE DEATH PENALTY. AND OUR BILL PROVIDES EFFECTIVE STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES FOR IMPOSING A FEDERAL DEATH PENALTY FOR THE MOST HEINOUS FEDERAL CRIMES. THE CONFERENCE BILL OFFERS ONLY FLAWED AND INEFFECTIVE PROVISIONS.

AMERICANS ARE SICK OF A JUDICIAL SYSTEM THAT ALLOWS MURDERERS TO ESCAPE PUNISHMENT AND WASTE MILLIONS IN TAX DOLLARS BY DREAMING UP NEW GROUNDS FOR APPEALS, LONG AFTER THEIR GUILT HAS BEEN DETERMINED. OUR BILL INCLUDES EFFECTIVE HABEAS CORPUS REFORMS TO STOP THIS PERVERSION OF OUR JUDICIAL SYSTEM. THE CONFERENCE BILL, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS ACTUALLY WEAKER THAN EXISTING LAW.

THROUGH CREATION OF A "GOOD FAITH" EXCEPTION TO THE EXCLUSIONARY RULE, OUR BILL WILL ALSO STOP OBVIOUSLY GUILTY CRIMINALS FROM GOING FREE ON TECHNICALITIES OR MINOR POLICE ERRORS. AGAIN, THE CONFERENCE BILL IS WEAKER THAN EXISTING LAW, AND WILL PUNISH LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS FOR MINOR TECHNICAL ERRORS MADE BY THE POLICE.

DON'T IGNORE DRUG DEALERS, VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

OUR BILL INCREASES PENALTIES FOR THOSE WHO PEDDLE DRUGS TO MINORS, OR WHO USE MINORS IN DRUG TRAFFICKING. THE CONFERENCE BILL DOES NOT.

OUR BILL ALSO COMES OUT VERY STRONGLY AGAINST THOSE WHO PERPETRATE CRIMES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN -- AN EPIDEMIC WHICH THE CONFERENCE BILL IGNORES.

PEOPLE DEMANDING ACTION -- NOW

IT IS THE INTENTION OF THE SENATE REPUBLICANS TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO SEE THAT THIS BILL BECOMES LAW.

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ALLOWING THE USE OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT FOR CONVICTED MURDERERS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, NONE OF THESE PROVISIONS ARE NEW TO THIS BODY. WE'VE DEBATED THEM BEFORE. WE'VE PASSED MANY OF THEM BEFORE. IT'S TIME TO STAND UP AND BE COUNTED -- ONCE AND FOR ALL. THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE DEMANDING ACTION -- WE OWE THEM, AND OURSELVES, NOTHING LESS.

LET'S PASS THIS BILL -- NOT IN 100 DAYS...NOT IN 50 DAYS. LOOK AT THE HEADLINES AROUND CAPITOL HILL, AND ASK YOURSELF, WHY DO WE NEED TO WAIT ONE MORE DAY? LET'S PASS IT NOW.

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