

to join forces to stop this looming tragedy among our youth. Among their recommendations were that information about the dangers of excessive and underage drinking be included on labels as is now done for cigarettes. They also recommend that the nutritional content of alcohol products including calories appear on the labels. Mr. Califano and the surgeons general further recommend that Federal and State governments mount a public health campaign to curb alcohol abuse, particularly among children, teens, and college students.

Mr. Speaker, we need to do everything we can to stop the illegal spending of \$22.5 billion on illegal alcohol in this country, and we will continue to work together with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. WAMP) and others to make sure that we address the serious crisis.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk to my colleagues about an important subject that has a significant impact on our national public health and our children: underage drinking. My interest in this topic began as a member of the Appropriations subcommittee with jurisdiction over ONDCO—the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

During my first year on the committee, I was surprised to discover that although Congress had appropriated \$2 billion to conduct a media campaign directed at the illegal use of drugs by children, ONDCP had inexplicably left out their illegal use of alcohol. I was surprised by this because while drinking under the age of 21 is illegal in all 50 states, over 10 million kids in the United States consume alcohol illegally starting, on average, at 13 years of age.

The research on the damage caused by underage drinking is dramatic. Let me cite just two examples. The first is based on research by the National Institutes of Health that found that young people who begin drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to become alcoholics than those who begin drinking after the age 21. The second, and perhaps the most compelling finding, is the one with a direct relationship to illegal drug use based on a study by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University—CASA. This study found that underage drinkers are 22 times more likely to use marijuana and 50 times more likely to try cocaine than kids who do not drink.

In 1999, Congressman FRANK WOLF and I attempted to add underage alcohol use to the ONDCP'S youth anti-drug media campaign. The Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the Center for Science in the Public Interest, the National Crime Prevention Council, and a number of other organizations long associated with these issues, supported our efforts. Unfortunately, very powerful interests in the alcohol industry lobbied against the amendment to include warnings to parents and kids about the dangers of underage drinking, and our amendment was defeated by the Appropriations Committee.

Since that time, Congressman FRANK WOLF, Congressman ZACK WAMP and I have introduced legislation to establish a separate national media campaign to reduce and prevent underage drinking. Over 80 of our colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats, have spon-

sored our bill. Unfortunately, we have not been successful in passing the bill to date, but we will continue to make this important fight.

The importance of this fight was against highlighted, last week, when the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University—CASA—reported extremely troubling findings newsworthy enough to have appeared in the media across the Nation. CASA at Columbia University reported that teenagers account for nearly 20 percent of the alcohol consumed in the United States every year. Adding to this troubling finding is the fact that Dr. Susan Foster, who led the CASA study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, said that she believed the new estimates were very conservative.

The President of CASA, Joseph Califano, a former secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and co-author of the CASA study reported that approximately 5 million high school students admitted that at least once a month they consume 5 drinks on one occasion. This is extremely alarming since research suggests that alcohol, especially in large amounts, can harm the still-developing teenage brain, not to mention that huge toll alcohol abuse has on the Nation due to car accidents, injuries, high-risk sexual behavior and alcohol poisoning.

To address this looming crisis, Mr. Califano and three former U.S. surgeons-general—Dr. Julius Richmond, who served under President Jimmy Carter, Dr. David Satcher, who served under President Bill Clinton, and Dr. Antonia Novello, who served under President George W. Bush—issued a national call to action, asking parents, the public health community, and the alcohol industry to join forces to stop this looming tragedy among our youth. Among their recommendations were that information about the dangers of excessive and underage drinking be included on labels, as is now done for cigarettes. They also recommend that the nutritional content of alcohol products, including calories, appear on the labels. Mr. Califano and the surgeons-general further recommend that Federal and State governments mount a public health campaign to curb alcohol abuse, particularly among children, teens and college students.

In order to create a barrier to the purchase of alcohol, particularly among teens, who illegally spend \$22.5 billion a year on alcohol, the former surgeons-general recommend increasing state and federal taxes on alcohol, so kids can't afford to spend a lot of money on illegal drinking. I believe these are common-sense recommendations that will help to curtail the severe problem in which 20 percent of our Nation's alcohol is consumed illegally by our children. Morally and practically we cannot afford to continue losing our children to alcohol abuse. Working together, buttressed by the best scientific evidence, I believe we can identify effective methods to protect our kids. I, with Congressman FRANK WOLF and Congressman ZACK WAMP, and the many other colleagues who have joined us will continue to work on this issue until we successfully address this public health crisis in our Nation.

I thank my colleagues for their interest in this important matter affecting our Nation's children and our Nation's future.

#### TRIBUTE TO COLONEL ILAN RAMON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 30th day since the Shuttle *Columbia* disaster, and thus the end of what is for Jews around the world a traditional 30-day mourning period for the untimely death of Israeli astronaut Colonel Ilan Ramon. It is my privilege to rise here on the blue carpet of the House of Representatives as friends and family and leadership gather at this very hour in Jerusalem with the bereaved and with the family and children of Colonel Ramon to remember a life of extraordinary accomplishment.

Colonel Ramon's journey into space occurred in the midst of continued suffering in his homeland, a horrendous period of violence, and his bravery helped lift the spirits of his countrymen. No one understood the significance of his expedition more than Colonel Ramon himself. Before launching from the Kennedy Space Center on January 16, 2003, Ramon remarked "Being the first Israeli astronaut, I feel I am representing all Jews and all Israelis. I'm the son of a Holocaust survivor. I carry on the suffering of the Holocaust generation, and I'm kind of proof that despite all the horror they went through, we are going forward."

Mr. Speaker, Colonel Ramon rose from the lowest depths to the highest heights and brought his country, his people, and the entire world with him. He graduated as a fighter pilot from the Israel Air Force flight school and commanded a squadron of pilots in the raid on the Iraqi nuclear reactor at Osirak in 1981, saving Israel and the world from the threat of a nuclear Iraq led by Saddam Hussein.

Colonel Ramon died together with Christians from America and with a Muslim from Pakistan. He died living out the prophetic dream of unity in one purpose that is shared by all those who embrace the Abrahamic tradition of faith. His life is a testimony to the great idea that one man can truly change the world, that a child from any background, any faith, any social status can indeed turn out to be an Ilan Ramon.

Mr. Speaker, Colonel Ilan Ramon did more than die a hero as part of *Columbia* seven. He lived as a hero. May his memory be blessed and his family comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem and America this day.

#### CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY TAX GAP ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, an old maxim "the more you know, the better