ADMINISTRATION NEEDS TO GET SERIOUS ABOUT HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

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

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, no one talks a better game than the Department of Homeland Security. But beyond the bluster, there is reason to feel deeply insecure about this administration's efforts to protect America.

Although we hear a great deal about the war on terror, no competent general in any war would leave his home defenses with so many holes. Every line of critical homeland defense is underfunded and unprepared for an attack on American soil, and we are going in the wrong direction.

Unbelievably, the administration essentially froze homeland security spending in 2003. The President's budget cut port security grant funding by 63 percent, cut first responder funding within the Department of Homeland Security by 15 percent, and provided no dedicated funding whatsoever for rail security or protecting chemical plants and nuclear power plants.

My question is, when is this administration going to get serious about funding homeland security.

HOUSE KILLS OPTIONS RULE SHIFT

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House voted to block a rule that would require companies to count stock options against their profits. Now, Federal Reserve Chairman Greenspan, a proponent of mandatory expensing and the Financial Accounting Standards Board proposal, told a Senate hearing yesterday that he would be most concerned if Congress intervened. Of the rule-making board, he said, I think they do a good job. It is a tough job. But the House yesterday intervened.

Advocates of mandatory expensing include Securities and Exchange Commissioner and Chairman William Donaldson, the billionaire investor, Warren Buffett and all four big accounting firms. The FASB proposal answered the call for accurate financial statements that came from a string of corporate scandals starting with Enron.

Mr. Speaker, who could be against that? Just allow stock options to be expensed. We could allow exceptions for start-up companies, especially in the high-tech area, but instead Congress, here in the House yesterday, blocked a rule to count stock options.

I hope the Senate will not pass this legislation.

ATTACK THE DEFICIT

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

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, Republican leadership still does not grasp the importance of reducing our Nation's deficits. Instead, they continue to focus on misplaced priorities.

Our Nation faces record deficits, and we ought to tackle the real problems that deficits pose. Deficits put a strain on the economy. They threaten Social Security and force families to bear the burden of our Nation's debt.

Over the next 6 years, Nevada families will pay on average more than $20,000 out of their own pockets to help cover the cost of the national debt. Instead of dealing with this, the Republican leaders have chosen this week to focus on legislation that would erode the separation of powers by removing Federal court jurisdictions to review challenges to the Defense of Marriage Act.

It is incomprehensible to me that Republican leaders have deemed this the pressing issue when millions of Americans have no health insurance, we still have not passed a transportation bill, and our deficits are skyrocketing out of control.

Let us focus on what is really important to American families, attack rising deficits with sensible approaches and let us let all of this extraneous nonsense go by the wayside where it belongs.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG CARD HELPING SENIORS

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to sing the praises of the Medicare-approved prescription drug card. Seniors are now saving up to 20 percent off brand-name prescriptions, 40 percent off generics and 60 percent off mail order prescriptions.

In addition, America's poorest seniors can sign up to receive an additional $1,200 credit for their prescriptions over the next year and a half. For those lower-income seniors, savings can be as high as 86 percent off what they are paying before the card.

Now that seniors are receiving these savings, Democrats have realized they cannot claim that the cards do not help. America's poorest seniors are getting cash subsidies for their medications, so now the Democrats have taken a new approach to their mediscare tactics.

Since they know the cards are beneficial, they are now saying that they are too confusing. Well, if seniors will call the 1–800–MEDICARE number and have their prescription bottles handy, give them your ZIP code, what prescriptions you are currently taking, the name of each drug, the dose, how often you take the drug, and the cost of the drug, you will be able to receive information that will immediately be of assistance.

RICH GET RICHER, POOR GET POORER

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, two headlines speak volumes about the economic conditions of the middle class in America today: Sunday's New York Times headline, ''Hourly Pay is Not Keeping Pace With Price Rises''; yesterday's Wall Street Journal, ''So Far, Economic Recovery Tilts to the Highest Income Americans.'' And for the middle class we have a wage and benefit recession.

These headlines show that there is two-track economy, one for the very wealthy who are doing well, and one for the middle class who are struggling to keep pace with their middle-class dreams and providing for their children.

What we have today is a $500 billion deficit all financed because we are trying to wage three wars with three tax cuts and showing it cannot be done.

Republicans have chosen to put off addressing America's health care crisis, rising tuition costs, stagnant wages, and the ever-elusive retirement security.

As corporate profits boom in America by 16 percent, America's middle class are feeling squeezed by stagnant wages and rising health care costs. While sales of BMWs and at Neiman-Marcus are rising, same store sales at Target and Wal-Mart are stagnant.

With a record like this, only this administration would wave the banner, ''Mission Accomplished'' above the economy. It is time to put that banner back where it came from.

NO HONEST MISTAKE

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely amazing that since the revelations about Sandy Berger, who was National Security Adviser for President Clinton and has been the Kerry Campaign's senior policy adviser, since these revelations that Sandy Berger had removed classified documents at the National Archives, that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have been so dismissive of this gross violation of our national security.

I can only imagine the howls from the other side of the aisle if allegations were made against Condoleezza Rice, that she had stuffed documents, classified documents in her socks and removed them from the Archives and that some of the documents were still missing.

I am sure we would hear accusations of a cover-up, a vast conspiracy.