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House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ISRAEL).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 1, 2008.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVE ISRAEL to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

UNITED STATES-COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The strongest argument that can be made for the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement is not that it is good for Colombia but that it is good for us. The U.S. has few barriers to trade, so currently most of Colombia's exports enter the U.S. with few or no restrictions. But Colombia has many barriers to our goods. This is what opponents of the agreement can't seem to grasp: The Free Trade Agreement will remove Colombia's barriers to U.S. goods. Of course Colombia will benefit economically but we will benefit more.

The second strongest argument is that our friends and enemies in this hemisphere are watching how we treat a loyal ally that is being threatened from many sides. If we do not pass this agreement, Mr. Speaker, and it is clearly in our interest to do so, the only possible conclusion that these countries can come to is that we made a deliberate choice to back away from an ally at this most crucial and critical time.

Mr. Speaker, this debate should be more about how this agreement will impact in a positive way our U.S. economy. An honest debate can have only one outcome—strong support for passage of the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement and as soon as possible.

The capital of Colombia is only 3 hours away from my district in Miami, Florida. The strong ties that have developed between our communities are symbolic of the enduring friendship that our Nation shares with Colombia. As Florida's seventh largest global trading partner, passage of the FTA has the potential to boost Florida's exports to Colombia by $161 million in just the first year. Also significant is the agreement's ability to support the creation of nearly 5,000 new jobs throughout the State within the first 3 years of its passage. The positive impact that this FTA could have for the prosperity and security of our two nations, and indeed the hemisphere as a whole, cannot be denied. Serving as the steadfast bulwark against radical, anti-American regimes throughout the region, Colombia has proven time and time again its commitment to respecting human rights and democracy.

Now it is time for us to step up, Mr. Speaker, and not only support Colombia's efforts but provide Americans here at home the opportunity to benefit from our trade relationship as well. We hope that this trade agreement will be before us as rapidly as possible.

HONORING CESAR CHAVEZ'S BIRTHDAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SIRES) for 2 minutes.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, today I join my colleagues in celebrating the life of Cesar Chavez. Eighty-one years ago, Cesar Chavez began his life on March 31 and he continues to serve as an inspiration to thousands.

Cesar Chavez was a pioneer for civil rights and labor rights. He was a man that understood that in order to achieve change, sacrifices are necessary. Due to his hard work and dedication to his community, he successfully founded the United Farm Workers Union, the largest union protecting the rights of our country's many farm laborers. Currently, 10 States officially honor the memory of Cesar Chavez by celebrating a holiday in his name. My colleague, Congressman BACA, has introduced legislation, H. Res. 76, to establish a national Cesar Chavez Day to honor this important man through volunteer projects, educational activities, and cultural celebrations, among other events. I thank Congressman BACA for introducing this legislation and for helping to bring Cesar's life and legacy to the Members of Congress and to our constituents throughout the country. He truly is a national hero.

UNITED STATES-COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I join my colleague, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida, in

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urging the Speaker of the House to bring to this floor the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement, an agreement that's good for Illinois farmers, good for Illinois workers, and good for Illinois manufacturers.

Let me begin by asking some important questions. What nation in Latin America is the most longstanding democracy? The Republic of Colombia. What nation in Latin America is the United States' most reliable and dependable partner against narcotics and against terrorism? The Republic of Colombia. What nation today has the most popular elected official year after year after year in their own country? That is President Uribe of Colombia. The U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement is a good agreement for my State of Illinois. We are a big winner, as is the United States.

In 2006, Illinois exported $214 million in exports to Colombia, but that's just the beginning. Why? Because Illinois exports, U.S. exports to Colombia are taxed by tariffs. But their exports to the United States are not taxed by tariffs. So right now trade is a one-way street. We want to make it a two-way street.

As a result of this trade agreement, 80 percent of U.S. exports that are currently taxed will be duty-free immediately. And as we know, our exports to other countries grow 50 percent faster with countries we have trade agreements with. So it's a win-win-win for American workers, American farmers, and American manufacturers. We want to be competitive with Asia.

We know Colombia is a reliable partner, our most important ally. We know Colombia is a longstanding democracy. We also know that President Uribe is popular. He was elected to stem the violence in Colombia. He was elected to push the FARC, the leftist narcotrafficking terrorist organization, out of the country. And he's made tremendous progress. And today because of his success in expanding government presence throughout the country, bringing stability and order and safety and security to Colombia, his approval rating in his own country year after year has been over 80 percent. Compare that to this Congress which has a 15 percent approval rating.

Now there are those who oppose this trade agreement and they are the same people who have opposed every trade agreement. They say not enough is done for labor. When the Peru and Colombia trade agreements were finalized, my Democratic friends said we needed to do more regarding labor rights. Both Peru and Colombia complied. And, of course, Peru has been ratified, but Colombia has not. Now they say that there's too much labor violence in Colombia. Well, let's look at the facts. Seventy-one percent of Colombians say they are more secure under President Uribe. Seventy-three percent of Colombians say Uribe respects human rights. Homicides are down 40 percent. Kidnappings are down 76 percent. In fact, the murder rate in Colombia today is lower than Washington, D.C., lower than Baltimore.

Here are the facts on labor violence: The last 2 years, President Uribe has hired 418 new prosecutors; 545 new investigators; created over 2,166 new posts overall in the Prosecutor General's office; and increased funding for prosecution of those who commit violent acts by 75 percent.

Carlos Rodriguez, president of the United Workers Confederation, said about these new posts: ''Never in the history of Colombia have we achieved something so important.'' Now when it comes particularly to labor leaders, President Uribe has allocated almost $39 million to providing bodyguards for protection for labor union leaders. One thousand five hundred union leaders and activists provided protection, the second largest protected group in the nation of Colombia. And it's been successful. In fact, no labor leader under this protection has lost his life or experienced violence.

As the Washington Post noted yesterday, the murder rate for labor activists is lower than the national rate for the rest of the country. So President Uribe has made tremendous progress in reducing violence. For those who point to labor activists being the subject of labor violence, he's made even greater success in reducing violence.

I would also note that the International Labor Organization has removed Colombia from its labor watch list and Colombia has agreed to permanent International Labor Organization presence in Colombia. Perhaps most telling, 14 Colombian labor union leaders have personally given their support to the Trade Promotion Agreement and they represent 79,000 organized workers. We continue to hear opposition with no explanation.

The bottom line is this is a good trade agreement. Colombia is our best ally. If you care about the future of Latin America, if you care about democracy, if you care about security, we need to bring the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement to this floor for a vote.

MARKING CESAR CHAVEZ'S BIRTHDAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) for 2 minutes.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and colleagues.

Today I rise to honor a hardworking labor leader, Cesar Chavez, who founded the United Farm Workers Union and dedicated his life to promote nonviolence through boycotts and strikes that would protect farm workers from the dangers of pesticides, low wages, and the denial of fair and free elections.

I met Cesar Chavez in the 1970s when he came to organize farm workers in Texas. I was a young Texas State Representative and was inspired by his leadership then and as he inspires people today in this century.

Cesar Estrada Chavez was born on March 31, 1927, in Yuma, Arizona. It was 10 years later in 1937 that like many other migrant families, his parents lost their farm and their home. This was a hardship that led them to join thousands of other migrant farmer workers to toil in the California fields.

In 1944 Cesar Chavez enlisted in the U.S. Navy where he served and fought for the United States in the Pacific during World War II. He later married Helen Fabela and fathered eight children. Although Cesar Chavez was not able to complete high school because his family required his helping hands in the California fields, he not only endured the hardships of migrant working conditions but experienced the injustices that he later made into a personal crusade for the migrant farm workers.

His personal struggles as a migrant farm worker led him to find a nonviolent way to help Hispanic farm workers. In the 1950s, Cesar quietly began to study and work for the better working conditions of migrant workers. His persistent struggle to help Hispanics led him to organize the National Farm Worker group in Fresno, California. Cesar Chavez was one of the first Hispanic activists that begun what was a series of boycotts and strikes against California grape growers. Most notably, he called a boycott against Schenley Industries, a major California grape producer. His series of boycotts and strikes caused a national awareness that provoked the late Senate Robert F. Kennedy to criticize local officials after uncovering strikebreaking practices against farm workers. The National Farm Workers Union later reached a groundbreaking settlement with Schenley Industries that marked the first contract ever signed for farm workers in the United States.

This was a monumental achievement that the United Farm Workers would not have been able to accomplish without the hard work and determination of this courageous individual.

As the struggle to protect farm workers continued, Cesar Chavez even sacrificed his health several times by fasting. He saw his fight as a personal fight to end the terrible suffering of the farm workers and their children.

Cesar Chavez worked tirelessly to improve the lives of America's farm workers by securing their rights to organize and bargain collectively for fair working conditions. Chavez showed us that together we can make a safe and prosperous America with a strong and vibrant economy—an America with good jobs and good pay. Fifteen years after his passing, his life's work and legacy continues to inspire millions.

CESAR CHAVEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of honoring Cesar Chavez,

an American hero, a role model, and an inspiration to many Americans. In this Congress I have reintroduced H. Res. 76, a resolution urging the establishment of a national holiday for Cesar Chavez. This resolution was introduced and supported by the United Farm Workers of America, Cesar E. Chavez Foundation, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and many other of my fellow colleagues. We are urging for a holiday to honor Cesar's memory and educate our youth and community about this remarkable yet humble leader who paved the way for many of us.

Cesar Chavez is a true American hero. He carried the torch for justice and freedom. He was a beacon of light for many of us Latinos in the community. His legacy will live on in our hearts and hopes and in our dreams. To quote him, si se puede, yes, it can be done.

This is the same cry we hear today, a cry of justice and equality and opportunity for all to have the American Dream here in the United States. Cesar represents the true essence of hope for many of us. From humble beginnings, Cesar was born near Yuma, Arizona, grew up in a migrant labor camp, and fought against the exploitation of workers at an early age.

In 1944, Cesar joined the United States Navy and honorably served his country as a veteran. With great courage and passion, he fought to preserve the principles of freedom and equality. He used this same courage and passion to stop the exploitation of workers.

Cesar was a trailblazer. In the early 1960s, he founded the United Farm Workers to gain nationwide attention of the exploitation of grape farmers, a too often forgotten labor force. He led his organization to increase protection for workers; to increase health and safety standards; to ban child labor from the field; to win fair wage guarantees; to fight against employment discrimination and the sexual harassment of female workers.

Cesar's dedication to social justice meant great sacrifices. This year marks the 40th anniversary of his famous public 25-day hunger strike calling for nonviolence. Cesar organized the farm workers to stand together and in one loud voice say, ''From this day, we demand to be treated like men and we should be respected as human beings. We are not slaves. We are not animals. We are not alone.''

I was lucky enough to be part of his funeral, attended by over 50,000 people. I also had the pleasure of meeting with Cesar Chavez on many occasions in the Inland Empire.

In his memory, the State of California in September of 1994 enacted a law designating March 31, Cesar's birthday, as a State holiday. However, Cesar's light reaches beyond California and across ethnic barriers and across income levels across our Nation. Ten States officially celebrate Cesar's birthday as a holiday. This month his legacy will be remembered publicly all across the Nation in over 25 States and over 35 cities. These nationwide actions are about respect, respeto.

For this reason, I continue to call for the respect of a great man, a trailblazer who changed the world by using nonviolence. Cesar taught us that all workers deserve respect and dignity. Cesar, a common man with uncommon vision; a humble leader that forged together national coalitions of students, middle-class consumers, religious groups, minorities and others.

The significance and impact of Cesar's life transcends any one cause or struggle. In 1994 he was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in America. And yet we should have a holiday for him.

His slogan, si se puede, yes, it can be done, still rings in the hearts of many Latinos and non-Latinos that it can be done and never give up because you can achieve whatever you want.

Yes, I say si se puede, one day Cesar Chavez will be honored, respected and remembered throughout this Nation with a holiday. This is only the beginning. Nationwide we are raising awareness of a great man who has honored our Nation, who has served our country and sacrificed himself for the betterment of others. We will keep his legacy alive.

CESAR CHAVEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) for 2 minutes.

Ms. SOLIS. I thank the Speaker and I am very privileged this morning to pay special tribute and honor to the legacy of Cesar Estrada Chavez. Chavez dedicated his life to championing the rights of farm laborers and all working people and he did it through nonviolence. Recently I returned from a trip with the Speaker to India where I visited a memorial to Mahatma Gandhi and I recall that moment thinking about the nonviolence that was also expressed by Cesar Chavez in his movement to fight for dignity and respect for poor people, for people that were being oppressed.

Like Gandhi, Chavez believed that nonviolence is one of the most powerful tools to achieve change, including social and economic justice. Chavez was a follower also of Martin Luther King, Jr. believing in the power of prayer and spirituality. I have been inspired by the works of Cesar Chavez and also by the cofounder of the United Farm Workers, Dolores Huerta, and with that had introduced a resolution in this House to pay tribute to Dolores Huerta, one of the highest ranking members of the UFW. Yet until this day, we have not been able to bring that resolution up and I wonder why. And I ask the question—why can't this House also pay tribute to a strong leader, a female, who represents the workers? Also with that in mind, I introduced legislation, the Cesar Estrada Chavez Study Act, H.R. 359, that did pass out of this House, that would for the first time authorize the Department of Interior to study public lands important to the life and history of Cesar Chavez through the National Park Service. Right now that bill has made its way out of the House and is over at the Senate. I would ask that the Senate Members there take action on the bill as soon as possible.

We should be grateful and never forget the accomplishments and achievements of Cesar Chavez to improve civil rights for every single American and those individuals who work and toil in the fields. Let us not forget the fruits and vegetables that we receive on our table come from those very farm workers here who may not even today have the same protections that Cesar Chavez worked so hard for.

CESAR CHAVEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) for 2 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I rise with my colleagues today to remember a great American on his birthday. Cesar Chavez was born 83 years ago and would have been 83 years old yesterday. He devoted his entire life to the betterment of this Nation and to its people. He gave voice to the voiceless. In working with the farm workers, in organizing their union, in fighting for their dignity, respect and equal treatment on the job, he worked for farm workers who were not considered equals in any sense. He gave voice to the voiceless.

And in these times when we see these disturbing trends going on in our Nation, where even on the floor of this great people's hall we hear disturbing trends where people are marginalized, demonized, dehumanized because of who they are and the circumstances of their life, these disturbing trends should remind us of Cesar's legacy. His legacy was not about creating a situation where people are treated less than but creating a society where people were treated as equals, with respect and with dignity. Cesar insisted on the best for us and on the best in us. He insisted on a sense of faith about the future and our families and our Nation. He insisted on tolerance, that we as human beings should understand and respect each other and with that respect comes understanding and with that respect comes a better nation.

He insisted on equality, that all humans are created equal under our Constitution, all people are created equal under our Constitution, and he fought his entire life to make that value a reality for all of us.

So when we celebrate his birthday and we celebrate his legacy, let us not forget that Cesar's legacy is a living legacy, a legacy that calls upon us day

after day to continue his work, to forward his vision and to make this Nation the best it can be and to make ourselves the best we can be.

CESAR CHAVEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) for 2 minutes.

Mr. SALAZAR. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support legislation honoring a great American on his 81st birthday, Cesar Chavez. Cesar Estrada Chavez is best known as a farm worker, labor leader and civil rights activist.

Born in Yuma, Arizona, of Mexican descent, Chavez became a champion for his fellow farm workers. Among his many achievements, Cesar Chavez was cofounder of the United Farm Workers Association with fellow activist Dolores Huerta. This association provided farm workers with a voice that they so desperately needed. Mr. Speaker, as a lifetime farmer, I can appreciate the sacrifices made by Chavez and his supporters. My oldest brother, Leandro Salazar, the oldest of our family, marched with Cesar Chavez in California for nearly 2 years.

We believe that forcing workers to endure this labor under dangerous working conditions and without fair pay is absurd. The most horrific sight that you can ever see is farm workers working out in the field and an aerial applicator coming down upon them and spraying pesticides on them. He worked to make sure that those things did not happen again.

We cannot stand by when a laborer is forced to work even as pesticides are being sprayed on the field he or she is working in. His dedication to the cause of worker rights and equality addressed the needs of blue collar men and women across this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, his example inspires us to work together to improve the quality of life for all Americans.

CESAR CHAVEZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 2 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise this morning in strong support, first of all, of H. Res. 76, a resolution to create a national holiday in honor of a great human being, Cesar Chavez.

Mr. Speaker, already nine States celebrate his life. I am proud that California was the first. The legacy that he left on the history of this Nation must be recognized. He made a difference, not only for Latinos, not only for migrant workers but for the poor and the working poor, and he also built a coalition of conscience across racial and economic boundaries, just as his cofounder, a great woman and a good friend, Dolores Huerta, has.

I am reminded today of the political support that Cesar provided me during my first California campaign for the California legislature. He truly helped me make and win my first election and for that I am deeply grateful.

I had the privilege to attend his funeral with Congressman BACA in Delano, California. As I marched behind his humble wooden casket, I was reminded of the fact that one person who stood for nonviolence can and could and did make a difference.

The Martin Luther King Freedom Center in Oakland, California, studies the lives of great freedom fighters such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and also Cesar Chavez. The young people of our country and especially in my district are getting to know this human being who really did live a life committed to justice and freedom for all. I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this growing movement for a national holiday in honor and in memory of this great civil and human rights leader. He is such an important historical figure in our Nation.

Si se puede, yes, we can create a country of liberty and justice for all. Cesar Chavez showed us how to do it. He showed us with his gentle and kind spirit. He showed us with his tough love. He showed us how to march. He showed us how to care about those, the least of these, who had no voice. And for that this country owes him a debt of gratitude and I can think of no other way than to honor him by passing H. Res. 76.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 59 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. JONES of Ohio) at noon.

PRAYER

Jeri B. Greenwell, National Chaplain, American Legion Auxiliary, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, we praise You for Your goodness to our Nation. Instill in these Members of the House virtues of integrity, character, and courage; always responsive to Your direction, aware of Your grace, and guided by what is right.

Illuminate their path with the light of Your companionship. Open their eyes that they will see goodness in that which they hope to achieve; their ears so they will hear the will of the people; and their hearts that their actions will show compassion toward all.

Continue to bless America and the members of our military, whose sacrifices allow us to enjoy our many freedoms. Unify us not as conservatives, moderates or liberals; but as one Nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

In You, O God, we forever place our trust.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

> I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING GUEST CHAPLAIN JERI B. GREENWELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Maine is recognized for one minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. MICHAUD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to welcome and recognize Ms. Jeri Brooks Greenwell as today's guest chaplain. Ms. Greenwell is from Bethel, Maine, and is a member of the West Paris Congregational Church. She's also the National Chaplain of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Ms. Greenwell has dedicated much of her adult life in community service. She has been an active member of the Legion Auxiliary since 1974, holding numerous positions. Her service extends deep into her community. Ms. Greenwell is a life member of the Bethel Historical Society, a former Literacy Volunteer, a member of the Maine's Children Alliance, a member of the Maine Handicapped Skiing Veterans Program, and a National spokesperson for the National Meningitis Association.

Ms. Greenwell is joined by other members of the American Legion. I would like to welcome them as well. I am proud that Ms. Greenwell is my constituent, and it is an honor to have her deliver today's prayer.

PASS FISA FIX

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, it's been over 40 days since the Protect America Act expired and our Nation's ability to defend itself

was jeopardized. Before Congress left for a 2-week recess, the majority leadership brought a bogus bill to the floor that narrowly passed the House of Representatives, that probably will never see the light of day in the Senate, and most assuredly would be vetoed by the President. They knew this. And yet they chose a flawed piece of legislation over a bipartisan fix to the FISA loophole.

There is a bill that has been supported by a bipartisan majority of Senators, including the chairman of the Select Senate Committee on Intelligence, the Department of Justice, the White House, our Intelligence Community, and publicly by Democrats in the House. Rather than take the necessary steps to protect American families by holding a vote on this legislation, the majority leadership has chosen to try and discredit the entire issue and claim that all is well. The American people know better and deserve better.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th.

OUR TROOPS IN IRAQ

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Members of the House, this country has given the best of its young men and women in the battle in the war in Iraq and much of its treasure on the theory that we were fighting terrorists in Iraq so that we would be safer at home, on the theory that we were fighting terrorists in Iraq to eradicate them. We have lost over 4,000 young men and women in that battle, and tens of thousands of more seriously wounded, and almost $1 trillion of our treasure. Yet, this last week we saw our troops were not called upon to go against insurgents, to go against al Qaeda. They were called upon to enforce one side of an election battle of Shias against another band of Shias.

Our troops were put into battle over this last week because there was a fear by the Maliki government that the Supreme Council of Iraq would lose an election in Bosra. So they declared a battle against Muqtada al-Sadr's supporters in Bosra. They were unable to do it. They were unable to effectively carry it out. And they didn't force American troops into that battle.

Our troops should not be engaged in trying to square the field for the election advantage of one group of Iraqis over another. That is what elections are about, that is what democracy is about. But it should not be with the lives of our troops and the treasure of this country.

EASTER IN IRAQ

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, after returning from Iraq over the Easter weekend, I want to report my observations. The military situation is progressing positively with the Iraqi Security Forces, the National Police, and the new-found group of citizen soldiers called the Sons of Iraq doing ever improving job of securing their own nation.

The Iraqis and the U.S. troops are working better together as both nations use their troops in combined patrols. U.S. Commander and Four Star General Petraeus understands not only the military situation, but the complex political situation as well. The Iraqi government is showing signs of more stability than it has in previous months.

My observations of the U.S. troops: they have very high morale, a strong sense of purpose, and are well trained and ready to meet U.S. objectives in Iraq. The most notable concern I saw was the ever increasing interference and influence of Iran. The Iranians are funding insurgents and supplying weapons from small arms to rockets to any group that will cause chaos. It appears Iran wants instability in Iraq to further its own political and military objectives.

The U.S. presence in Iraq is necessary to prevent the circling Iranian vulture from preying on the peoples of Iraq.

And that's just the way it is.

ROCKY MOUNT SOLDIERS KILLED IN IRAQ

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, three members of the Army National Guard's 1132nd Military Police Company based in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, were recently killed in support of our Operation Iraqi Freedom after an improvised explosive device detonated near their vehicle.

Twenty-seven-year old Sergeant David B. ''Blake'' Williams, of Tarboro, North Carolina, was from my district. He was serving a second tour of duty in Iraq, and was recently awarded a second Army Commendation Medal for his exceptional service during combat duty.

A few moments ago, Madam Speaker, I spoke to Susan Legett Williams, the mother, and Mary Beth Williams, the sister, to express not only sympathy from the Congress of the United States of America but to express appreciation from a grateful Nation.

May God bless the entire Williams family during this difficult time in their lives.

THE COOPER-WOLF SAFE COMMISSION ACT: A PROPOSAL WITH TEETH

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

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, last Tuesday the annual Social Security Medicare Trustees Report was issued, and not surprisingly, drawing the same dismal conclusions it did last year. We have all heard the statistics about the demographic challenge retirement of the Baby Boomers generation presents. But what are we doing about it?

I am disappointed that this Congress and this administration continue to turn a blind eye toward the country's unsustainable financial path. The American people cannot afford to have this issue languish in partisan gridlock. Americans should know the longer we wait to get our fiscal house in order, the harder and more abrupt the changes will be for America's younger generation.

I am challenging all of us to be part of the solution so we can tell our children and our grandchildren that while serving in Congress, we did everything in our power to protect their futures. Please cosponsor the Cooper-Wolf SAFE Commission Act, which will put everything, entitlement spending, tax policy, and all other Federal programs on the table, and require action on controlling the long-term spending.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE

(Mr. CARSON of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, on Sunday I held a children's health care rally at the Martin Luther King Community Center in Indianapolis, Indiana, and met with parents like Brandy Briscoe. Brandy goes to school full time and is raising her 2-year-old son, Elijah. When he was born, he had no health insurance. Today, thanks to the State Children's Health Insurance Program, Elijah and 130,000 other children in Indiana have the health care they need and deserve.

We know that Elijah and Brandy are two of the lucky ones. In Indiana, tens of thousands of children don't have health care. Their parents wonder what they will do if their child gets sick and needs a doctor. These parents and their children are counting on us to act.

So, on Sunday, I pledged to my constituents that I would be a voice for children and families and will continue to fight to cover more children through the Children's Health Insurance Program. I make this pledge with the knowledge that this House has worked long and hard on children's health care in the past. But we cannot let these difficulties dissuade us from doing right by our children.

I am proud today to cosponsor the Children's Health First Act, and I look forward to working with Democrats and Republicans to craft the kind of compromise that moves us forward into the future.

COLOMBIA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, now that we are back in Washington, I am looking forward to passing a trade accord with Colombia. The agreement should be brought up before the House as soon as possible. Over 90 percent of U.S. imports from Colombia now enter our country duty-free. The agreement will provide U.S. companies and ag producers with duty-free access to the Colombian market.

Colombia's market grew by 7 percent last year, and is already a top global export market for U.S. crops such as corn and cotton. With the trade accord in place, U.S. exports are projected to rise by more than $1 billion per year. The time is right. Opening new markets and strengthening existing ones is tremendously important to Nebraska's Third Congressional District and our Nation as a whole. It is my priority to help Nebraska's producers and industries continue to compete and succeed in the global market. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

BUSH ADMINISTRATION WILLING TO BAIL OUT BEAR STEARNS BUT NOT STRUGGLING FAMILIES

(Mr. ALTMIRE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, last month the Bush administration approved the Federal bailout of an investment giant, Bear Stearns. You would have thought that the crisis on Wall Street would have opened the administration's eyes as to what is happening on Main Street. Reminiscent of Herbert Hoover, President Bush continues to oppose any efforts by this Congress to address the extreme hardships of Americans struggling in today's economy. House Democrats have crafted a foreclosure prevention package that would help stabilize the housing market, and Senate Democrats have similarly been working on legislation to help struggling families keep their homes. But rather than support such efforts, President Bush has threatened to veto the bill, and Senate Republicans voted to block it from even coming to the floor for a vote.

Madam Speaker, it's time President Bush and Republicans recognize that the crisis affects Main Street as well as Wall Street, and they should join us in our efforts to help families hard hit by this economy.

□ 1215

SUPPORT THE U.S.-COLOMBIA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT

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

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise to urge the majority leadership to bring to the floor the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Authority Agreement. It is a good agreement. The question is, who is Colombia? It is the longest-standing democracy in Latin America, it is the United States' most reliable and best partner in counterterrorism and counter-narcotics, and, frankly, it is an important ally of the United States.

This trade agreement is good for the U.S., it is good for Colombia. Right now, Colombian products come into the United States, and they come in basically duty-free without any taxes. Our products going to Colombia suffer taxes. Under this trade promotion agreement, 80 percent of those duties and taxes are eliminated immediately. It is good for Illinois workers, Illinois manufacturers and Illinois farmers.

There are those who oppose this agreement. The Washington Post probably said it best yesterday in their editorial when they stated their support for the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement. They noted, ''The agreement is currently being held hostage by Members of the House who argue that Colombia, despite a dramatic drop in its overall murder rate, doesn't deserve this.''

The bottom line is, President Uribe has greatly reduced violence. The murder rate is lower than in Baltimore or Washington.

BUSH ADMINISTRATION WILLING TO BAIL OUT BEAR STEARNS BUT NOT STRUGGLING FAMILIES

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, while the Bush administration has had no problem bailing out Wall Street firms at taxpayers' expense, it has opposed efforts to help ordinary homeowners. As many as 2.8 million Americans could lose their homes in the next 5 years due to the subprime mortgage crisis. Housing prices have dropped so much that homeowners' debt on their houses exceeds equity for the first time since 1945, and now more than 10 percent of homeowners have mortgage loans that are larger than the value of their homes.

These troubling signs have been before the administration for many months, but they have refused to bring forth a proposal to address them until yesterday, and that mainly addresses only regulatory issues.

Fortunately, this Congress did not follow the White House's lead. This House has already passed legislation this year that would expand affordable mortgage loan opportunities for families at risk of foreclosures.

Madam Speaker, this is only the beginning. We can't do this alone. The President must finally recognize there is a problem and be willing to sign these bills into law when they get to his desk.

PASS THE U.S.-COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, if there was ever an equivalent of what we call a no-brainer in Congress, it is the Colombian Free Trade Agreement. Congress needs to bring this to the floor and pass this agreement. Why? Colombia already has free access to the U.S. market, but we don't have access to their market. Let me say that again. They already have free access to United States markets. We ought to be able to get the same fair trade in their market.

Number two, Colombia is our ally in fighting the drug trade. It is a democracy that is in a tough neighborhood that is helping us defeat the narcoterrorists, helping us cut off the drugs.

I had the pleasure of going to Colombia 3 weeks ago to see the progress, to see the democracy, to see the things they are doing to help individuals, to demilitarize the narcoterrorists and the paramilitary organizations. Colombia is lifting up their people from poverty. They are helping us in a difficult neighborhood.

More important, for our Wisconsin soybean growers, corn growers, dairy producers and manufacturers, it will create more jobs in Wisconsin because we will be able to sell more of our products to Colombia if they treat us like we are treating them. That is why we should pass the free trade agreement with Colombia.

BUSH ADMINISTRATION PROPOSAL ON CREDIT CRISIS NOT NEARLY ENOUGH

(Ms. CASTOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, in these challenging economic times, Americans everywhere are feeling the negative impact of President Bush's economic policies. More Americans are looking for work, millions have lost their homes or they are at risk, gas prices are at an all-time high, and in Florida property insurance is out of sight.

Now, the House has already taken action to address these issues, the housing crisis, credit, gas prices, but the Bush administration has been silent, or they have been actively opposed. That is until yesterday, when Treasury Secretary Paulson finally offered a proposal. But one bank analyst back home cautioned that the proposal is a political ploy. The Bush administration is just trying to reassure consumers that it has the financial crisis under control. ''All he's doing is moving the deck chairs,'' he said.

Well, I am very concerned as well that the announcement falls short in one key area. It does not address the immediate needs of American homeowners facing imminent foreclosure and the impact on our neighborhoods and communities.

We are going to work over the next few months for real action, as opposed to President Bush's hands-off approach.

CAUTIOUS SUPPORT FOR THE UNITED STATES GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AGAINST HIV/AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS, MALARIA REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

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

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, HIV/AIDS is a pandemic that has affected more than 60 million people worldwide. Today, 70 percent of the people in the world who are afflicted with HIV/AIDS reside in Africa. Thanks to the leadership of President George W. Bush and bipartisan leadership here in Congress, tomorrow we will consider the Lantos-Hyde United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS bill.

The Bible tells us to whom much is given, much is expected. I believe we have a moral obligation to rise to this global crisis. Because the United States can render timely assistance, I believe that we must. But it is imperative that we not only send our resources, but we also send them in a manner that is consistent with our values.

It is my hope, Madam Speaker, that when the bill comes tomorrow, it will preserve the careful balance between American resources and American values that we forged in the Foreign Affairs Committee. We cannot permit PEPFAR to become a mega-funding pool for organizations that are anathema to millions of Americans.

I urge the Speaker and the Rules Committee today, preserve the careful bipartisan balance in PEPFAR and bring that compromise to the floor.

DEMOCRATIC BUDGET PRIORITIZES THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN OUR ECONOMY

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

Mr. ARCURI. Madam Speaker, at a time of serious economic uncertainty, Democrats have passed a 2009 Democratic budget last month that invests in Federal programs that will boost our economy.

In February, our economy shed 63,000 jobs in fields across-the-board. In order to compete in the new economy, we need to invest in innovation, energy, education and infrastructure, and that is exactly what this Democratic budget does.

Our budget provides crucial funding for the Democratic innovation agenda and the America Competes Act to enhance our competitive edge by increasing funding for important math and science education research. We also increase funding for efficient and renewable energy programs so we can create the green collar jobs of the future. Our budget also invests $7.1 billion more than the President for essential education and job training programs that are so important at a time when Americans are losing their jobs.

Madam Speaker, the Democratic budget strives to build a better economy without raising a penny in additional taxes.

CONGRESS SHOULD APPROVE THE U.S. TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT

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

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement means growth and more jobs for the largest exporter and manufacturing nation in the world, the United States. Colombia already gets free access to our market. The agreement levels the playing field while bolstering the economy of our strongest South American ally.

Colombia's government has a strong track record of reducing all violence, including attacks against union members. As the Washington Post editorialized on Monday, a vote for Colombia ''would show Latin America that a staunch U.S. ally will be rewarded for improving its human rights record and resisting the anti-American populism of Venezuela's Hugo Chavez.''

Madam Speaker, this agreement merits approval by the Congress soon.

IRAQ WAR AND THE IMPACT ON OUR TROOPS 5 YEARS LATER

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

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, we have now entered the sixth year of the war in Iraq, a war the Bush administration assured us would be short and easy. One Bush official famously remarked that the victory in Iraq would be a ''cakewalk.'' Sadly, it has been the opposite for our troops, who continue to face lengthy and multiple deployments in the war.

Last week, as we mourned the marking of a grim milestone, the death of 4,000 American troops in Iraq, we were reminded of the human costs of this ill-advised war.

Military leaders warned that the war is putting enormous stress on our troops. We have seen a dramatic increase in suicides and depression. Lieutenant General William Caldwell, the Commanding General of the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, said the Army is experiencing a shortage of majors and captains, because many who have had one, two and three combat tours have made the decision to go back into civilian life.

With 4,000 American lives lost and thousands of young men and women suffering serious injuries, we should be looking at a way to end the war in Iraq. Instead, the Bush administration continues to support the status quo. ''100 years'' is one presidential candidate's latest statement.

We must end the war.

ENCOURAGING SUPPORT FOR THE COLOMBIA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT

(Mr. BRADY of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, what is this Congress thinking? Why would we turn our back on Colombia, and then turn our back on America's own farmers and manufacturers and small businesses?

Colombia is one of our strongest allies in our neighborhood, in our neighborhood, fighting terrorism, reducing kidnappings, turning down violence in a very tough neighborhood. They need and want the support of the United States of America, and we are rejecting that support. Yet, today, Colombia is able to sell its products and goods into America. When we try to do the same for our farmers or our manufacturers or our small businesses, we are not allowed to.

The U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement changes that. It makes sure we send the signal to the world that we stand with our allies who stand for democracy and rule of law. We are also saying we want two-way trade. We want the ability to sell our products overseas.

This Congress needs to not turn its back on Colombia, and give us an up-or-down vote on that trade agreement this year.

HONORING MAYOR DOROTHY GEEBEN OF OCEAN BREEZE PARK, FLORIDA

(Mr. MAHONEY of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a very special American, Mayor Dorothy Geeben, for her incredible service to her community and to wish her a very happy 100th birthday.

Ms. Geeben moved to the town of Ocean Breeze Park, a small community on the Indian River, in 1952, and has been a cornerstone of that community ever since. In 1960 she joined the Ocean Breeze Town Council, serving as its president for 31 years, and in 2001 she became the mayor of the town and its 1,000 residents.

Today, as Mayor Geeben celebrates her 100th birthday, she is also recognized as the oldest mayor in America.

As mayor, her duties include presiding over town council meetings and signing documents. But to the residents of her village, she is known as a friend to everyone and as the woman who always has a smile on her face. Mayor Geeben has seen her small community through a lot in the last 40 years, including two major hurricanes.

I am proud to recognize such a vibrant and dedicated woman. On behalf of Florida's 16th Congressional District, I would like to express my gratitude to Mayor Geeben for her many years of service to our community, and to wish her another happy 100 years.

CONGRESS MUST BALANCE THE BUDGET

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

Mr. CULBERSON. Madam Speaker, in our personal lives, when we have our credit cards topped out, when we have a second mortgage on the home, we quit spending money. We balance our own personal budget and we focus on the essentials. And this Congress needs to do the same thing. But, unfortunately, the Obama-Clinton-Pelosi Democratic leadership of the Congress is driving America's economy right over the cliff, like Thelma and Louise, spending money and raising taxes.

The Comptroller of the United States has certified that we are in a $54 trillion hole; that in order to pay that off, every American would have to write a check for $175,000. This is outrageous. It is unsupportable.

We need to adopt FRANK WOLF's legislation with Mr. COOPER, making sure that Social Security is solvent, that we balance the Federal budget as rapidly as possible. Above all, this Congress has got to quit spending money on unnecessary things, focus on the bare essentials and quit raising taxes on the American people. Above all, let's not shift all of that liability that is now apparent on Wall Street, this $1 trillion writeoff that the banks are attempting to shift on to the United States Treasury. We cannot do it. We have got to quit spending money and balance the budget.

□ 1230

ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS IN HOUSING AND SUBPRIME MORTGAGE CRISIS TOO LITTLE AND TOO LATE

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, last Friday President Bush traveled to my home county in New Jersey to encourage residents to seek free credit counseling if they faced the threat of losing their homes. And while the credit counseling is good advice, the President's actions were simply too little and too late.

For months, the President has known that the housing and subprime mortgage crisis could force more than 2 million people to lose their homes over the next 5 years. Until yesterday, the President was unwilling to address this crisis in any way. And that is nothing new. For 7 years now, the Bush administration has taken a hands-off approach to Wall Street, allowing the corporations responsible for much of this mortgage crisis to work under the radar without any government oversight or regulation. Finally, the administration recognized yesterday that the President's credit counseling advice was not going to be enough. Treasury Secretary Paulson announced a proposal that finally calls for the regulation of these financial institutes. But, again, this is too little and too late.

Madam Speaker, this House has already acted and will continue to pass legislation that will help homeowners today, and I would hope the President would support our efforts.

FISA

(Mr. GOHMERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, some of our Democratic leaders say they just cannot agree to give immunity to the telecommunication companies for helping after 9/11. Perhaps the reluctance comes from massive contributions from law firms suing these patriotic companies.

Back in the days immediately after 9/11, we didn't know who all was involved in the most violent attack on U.S. soil. We didn't know if another attack was coming the next day or where or who would strike next. In that context, the telecommunications companies were asked to help their country, and they responded. Just as we had men and women respond all over this country to the Nation's call to help fight the forces of evil, these companies responded by helping, and now many in the majority are letting them be shot by friendly fire. These companies heard the cry for help from our Nation and responded, yet some in this body want to hang them out to dry on a firing line as targets for some of their biggest contributors. Let's pass FISA, with immunity from friendly fire.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

GEORGIA AND UKRAINE NATO MEMBERSHIP

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 997) expressing the strong support of the House of Representatives for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to enter into a Membership Action Plan with Georgia and Ukraine, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 997

Whereas the sustained commitment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to mutual defense has made possible the democratic transformation of Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia;

Whereas NATO members can and should play a critical role in addressing the security challenges of the post-Cold War era in creating the stable environment needed for emerging democracies in Europe and Eurasia;

Whereas lasting stability and security in Europe and Eurasia require the military, economic, and political integration of emerging democracies into existing European structures;

Whereas, in an era of threats from terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, NATO is increasingly contributing to security in the face of global security challenges for the protection and interests of its member States;

Whereas the Government of Georgia and the Government of Ukraine have each expressed a desire to join the Euro-Atlantic community, and Georgia and Ukraine are working closely with NATO and its members to meet criteria for eventual NATO membership;

Whereas, at the NATO-Ukraine Commission Foreign Ministerial meeting in Vilnius in April 2005, NATO and Ukraine launched an Intensified Dialogue on membership between the Alliance and Ukraine;

Whereas, following a meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers in New York on September 21, 2006, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer announced the launching of an Intensified Dialogue on membership between NATO and Georgia;

Whereas the Riga Summit Declaration, issued by the heads of state and government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in November 2006, reaffirms that NATO's door remains open to new members and that NATO will continue to review the process for new membership, stating "We reaffirm that the Alliance will continue with Georgia and Ukraine its Intensified Dialogues which cover the full range of political, military, financial, and security issues relating to those countries' aspirations to membership, without prejudice to any eventual Alliance decision. We reaffirm the importance of the NATO-Ukraine Distinctive Partnership, which has its 10th anniversary next year and welcome the progress that has been made in the framework of our Intensified Dialogue. We appreciate Ukraine's substantial contributions to our common security, including through participation in NATO-led operations and efforts to promote regional cooperation. We encourage Ukraine to continue to contribute to regional security. We are determined to continue to assist, through practical cooperation, in the implementation of far-reaching reform efforts, notably in the fields of national security, defense, reform of the defense-industrial sector and fighting corruption. We welcome the commencement of an Intensified

Dialogue with Georgia as well as Georgia's contribution to international peacekeeping and security operations. We will continue to engage actively with Georgia in support of its reform process. We encourage Georgia to continue progress on political, economic and military reforms, including strengthening judicial reform, as well as the peaceful resolution of outstanding conflicts on its territory. We reaffirm that it is of great importance that all parties in the region should engage constructively to promote regional peace and stability.'';

Whereas, in January 2008, Ukraine forwarded to NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer a letter, signed by President Victor Yushchenko, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, and Verkhovna Rada Speaker Arseniy Yatsenyuk, requesting that NATO integrate Ukraine into the Membership Action Plan;

Whereas, in January 2008, Georgia held a referendum on NATO and 76.22 percent of the votes supported membership;

Whereas in February 2008, Georgia forwarded a letter signed by President Mikhail Saakashvili to NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer requesting that NATO integrate Georgia into the Membership Action Plan;

Whereas participation in a Membership Action Plan does not guarantee future membership in the NATO Alliance;

Whereas United States support for the approval of Membership Action Plans for Georgia and Ukraine demonstrates support for the development of democratic institutions in those countries, the process of defense reform and respect for human rights, and does not represent a hostile attempt to expand the Alliance at the expense of the security of any country; and

Whereas NATO membership requires significant national and international commitments and sacrifices and is not possible without the support of the populations of the NATO member states: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the House of Representatives—

(A) reaffirms its previous expressions of support for continued enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to include qualified candidates; and

(B) supports the commitment to further enlargement of NATO to include democratic governments that are able and willing to meet the responsibilities of membership;

(2) the expansion of NATO contributes to NATO's continued effectiveness and relevance;

(3) Georgia and Ukraine are strong allies that have made important progress in the areas of defense, democratic, and human rights reform;

(4) a stronger, deeper relationship among the Government of Georgia, the Government of Ukraine, and NATO will be mutually beneficial to those countries and to NATO member states; and

(5) the United States should take the lead in supporting the awarding of a Membership Action Plan to Georgia and Ukraine as soon as possible.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to support this resolution that expresses the House's backing for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to enter into a Membership Action Plan with Ukraine and Georgia at the NATO summit later this week. This resolution was originally introduced as Senate Resolution 439 by Senators BIDEN and LUGAR, and was passed unanimously on February 14.

I am grateful to my distinguished colleagues on the European Subcommittee, Chairman WEXLER and Ranking Member GALLEGLY, for enabling the House to add its voice to the growing consensus in favor of extending MAP to two of our key allies, and particularly to Congressman WEXLER, who, without his prodding, this resolution might not have appeared on the floor at this particular time.

From April 2 to April 4, heads of state or governments from the 26 member countries of NATO will gather in Bucharest for the largest summit ever. Indeed, NATO has more than doubled in size since its founding by 12 states in 1949. The seven post-Communist countries that became members 3 years ago are now making significant contributions to the work of the Alliance.

In addition to the crucial discussions about the future of NATO operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan, the Bucharest summit will address further enlargement of the Alliance. Decisions on full membership will be made about three Adriatic countries, Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia. Judgments will also be made about the extension of Membership Action Plans to Ukraine and Georgia. This resolution reaffirms that this is the right decision at the right time.

It is important to note that Ukraine and Georgia both have taken the initiative of formally asking the NATO Secretary General for integration into the Membership Action Plan. Both countries have made considerable political, economic, legal, and defense reforms in the two decades since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Ukraine and Georgia have also been active participants in international efforts to preserve peace and stability, contributing to numerous peacekeeping missions around the world. Their continued democratic development and military initiative should be supported.

While it is true that Ukraine and Georgia experienced domestic political crisis last year that raised some doubts about their readiness for MAP, it is equally true that both countries firmly maintained their commitment to pursuing a democratic path and strengthening their political institutions. We must continue to encourage them in this vitally important journey.

Secondly, it is important to recognize that MAP does not confer NATO membership. Rather, it provides a structured reform program that offers support in a broad range of political and technical areas in order to prepare applicant countries for the responsibilities of membership.

It is clear that both countries must complete significant reforms before they can be considered for membership. They, like all countries who have joined the Alliance before them, must be judged to have met all necessary criteria. Even then, all member countries must unanimously support their accession.

In closing, I would like to briefly address the concern about the potential reaction of Russia to the extension of MAP to Georgia and Ukraine. While NATO was originally established as a military alliance to counter potential aggression by the Soviet Union, it now deals with a variety of security threats in Kosovo, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. The Alliance is clearly no longer aimed at Russia. In 1997, NATO and Russia agreed to work together to build a stable, secure, and undivided continent. This partnership was strengthened in 2002, with the creation of the NATO-Russia Council as a vehicle to facilitate joint action. Indeed, President Putin is expected to participate in this week's summit.

While the Alliance is right to be cognizant of the geopolitical impact of its actions, it should focus its assessment about the extension of MAP on the merits of the countries concerned. The U.S. and our allies should continue to nurture and strengthen their relationships with Russia. No one, President Putin nor anyone in Russia, should have a veto power over potential NATO applicants.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of House Resolution 997, which expresses the strong support of the House of Representatives for the NATO Alliance decision to enter into a Membership Action Plan, or MAP, with the countries of Georgia and Ukraine.

NATO has expanded its membership and its partnerships across Europe in recent years, making the Alliance not just stronger but an instrument for spreading democratic values.

The MAP process was created in 1999 to help those countries aspiring to join NATO to prepare to become members by providing guidance and practical support. The decision to admit a country into the MAP process is a serious one, exceeded only by the decision to admit a country into the Alliance. Countries need to demonstrate that they are sincerely consolidating their democracy, that they are willing to take on the requirements of the MAP process, and that they are willing to participate in missions that go beyond their own borders and direct interests.

Looking at Georgia and Ukraine, Madam Speaker, we recognize that these two countries have made important progress in introducing the systems and the institutions that support democracy. Democratic changes in these two countries have certainly not been easy, and at times the progress of democracy has been confused and uncertain.

Under very difficult circumstances and in the midst of wrenching changing times since they gained their independence, both Ukraine and Georgia have moved ahead with their political reforms, with their democratic institutions of governance, and the conduct of elections. The steps taken by these two countries compare favorably with trends in several nearby states, such as Russia, where true democracy is being steadily and comprehensively suppressed.

Both Georgia and Ukraine have also made great strides in the reform of their defense forces and in the commitment of their forces to peacekeeping and multilateral missions in other regions. Georgia is currently participating in NATO's Partnership For Peace program, and has successfully graduated from the Georgia Train and Equip program in 2004, after achieving its goals of enhancing its military capabilities and implementing military reforms. Georgia currently has 2,000 troops in Iraq, making it the third largest contributor after the United States and Britain. Furthermore, Georgia has troops in Kosovo, and has signed a transit agreement with NATO which allows the Alliance, as well as other nations participating in the International Security Assistance Force, to send supplies to their forces in Afghanistan through Georgian territory. Moreover, yesterday a Georgian defense ministry source said that Georgia is offering to send 500 troops to join NATO operations in Afghanistan.

Ukraine is also a member of the Partnership for Peace program, and currently has troops in Kosovo. Additionally, Ukraine has significantly contributed to multiple U.N. peacekeeping operations, including those in Liberia and Sierra Leone, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina.

A stronger relationship with NATO should enable Ukraine and Georgia to move forward with their military reforms, prepare to commit to future peacekeeping and stability operations, and, more importantly, Madam Speaker, to consolidate the democracy that they are both seeking.

We understand that access to NATO's Membership Access Plan is not NATO's membership. If Ukraine and Georgia become part of MAP and seek NATO membership in the future, their candidacy will have to be carefully evaluated to make sure that they fully meet NATO's standards and will benefit the Alliance should they become full members. NATO membership for these two countries is not an immediate prospect and is a question that will wait for future consideration.

I note with regret, however, the recent predictable statements by officials of the Russian government alleging that NATO is seeking to surround Russia. They have rattled the nuclear saber to some degree, hoping, I suspect, to intimidate Ukraine in the process. I can only contrast such attitudes and statements with the very laudable step that Ukraine took in 1994, when it relinquished the powerful nuclear arsenal it had inherited from the Soviet Union for the sake of stability in Europe.

The steps taken by Georgia to support the U.S. and NATO, again in the face of terrific and unwarranted pressure from Russia, also deserve our commendation and our gratitude. The resolution before us, Madam Speaker, makes it clear that the United States should take a leading role in supporting these two countries' interests in the Membership Action Plan.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to the chairman of the European Subcommittee, one of the two key authors of the resolution, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER).

Mr. WEXLER. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 997, urging NATO to provide a Membership Action Plan to Ukraine and Georgia at the NATO summit in Bucharest which begins tomorrow. I want to especially thank Chairman BERMAN for his extraordinary leadership in moving this resolution forward, as well as his very thoughtful remarks in announcing his support for this resolution. I also want to thank my colleague and ranking member on the Europe Subcommittee, Congressman GALLEGLY, as well as Congresswoman SCHWARTZ, who joined us in introducing H. Res. 997.

□ 1245

Madam Speaker, it is clear that NATO is at a crossroads given that important decisions are being made about further enlargement, Kosovo and renewed Balkans instability, and mounting difficulties in Afghanistan.

While tomorrow's summit will undoubtedly focus on these pressing issues, it is also a golden opportunity for the alliance to take steps forward to bolster transatlantic security and further entrench democracy, freedom, and the rule of law throughout Europe.

I believe it is in both America's and Europe's interest to further integrate Georgia and Ukraine into the West. Tblisi and Kiev have demonstrated their commitment to joining the United States and our allies in addressing security challenges from the Balkans to Iraq and to rebuilding Afghanistan.

As we debate this resolution, it is important to remember that the goal of NATO enlargement since the mid-1990s has been to achieve a broader, more secure Europe. Providing a membership action plan for Ukraine and Georgia would further consolidate democracy and stability in eastern Europe and the Caucuses region; and, is essential to fulfilling NATO's 1997 ''open door'' policy that ensures that any European nation that meets alliance standards and can contribute to Euro-Atlantic security be considered for membership.

Georgia and Ukraine have much to accomplish before they can be offered NATO membership. Since the MAP process will further require democratic and security reforms in Kiev and Tblisi, it is crucial for the Ukrainian and Georgian governments to know that their efforts and aspirations are supported by this Congress as well as all NATO members.

Madam Speaker, I was in Kiev just last month, and there was an extraordinary development in Kiev with the president, prime minister and speaker of their parliament all formally asking for the NATO membership action plan. It is an extraordinary statement of unity, and it is incredibly important that this House go on record in support of those pro-democratic politicians and officeholders in Kiev as well as in Georgia.

To that end, I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 997, and send a strong message to our NATO allies on the eve of the Bucharest Summit. And I thank Chairman BERMAN for his extraordinary leadership in this regard.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. GALLEGLY), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Europe and an original cosponsor of the resolution before us.

(Mr. GALLEGLY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GALLEGLY. Madam Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank Chairman WEXLER and Chairman BERMAN for their kind words in their opening statements. I stand here today to rise in strong support of House Resolution 997 which reaffirms the support of the House of Representatives for NATO enlargement.

The resolution also specifically calls on the United States to take the lead in supporting closer integration between Ukraine, Georgia and NATO. I would like to commend Representative WEXLER, as I mentioned earlier, the chairman of the Europe Subcommittee, for introducing this measure and for being a strong, consistent advocate for strengthening our bilateral ties with Ukraine and Georgia.

Both of these allies have demonstrated the military capabilities and political reforms required to provide concrete benefits to the alliance. In the past several years, Ukrainian forces have participated with NATO troops in peacekeeping operations in the Balkans and Afghanistan. They have also made important contributions to coalition forces in Iraq in 2004 and 2005.

Georgia has also shown they are ready to take the next step toward NATO membership. Georgia has undertaken a top-to-bottom reform of their

military forces, often working closely with U.S. forces in this effort.

As previously mentioned by Representative ROS-LEHTINEN, with over 2000 troops in Iraq, Georgia today has the third largest troop contingent in that country after the U.S. and Britain.

Madam Speaker, both Ukraine and Georgia are ready, willing and able to integrate more fully with NATO. Again, I would like to recognize Representative WEXLER for his hard work on H. Res. 997 on behalf of a stronger NATO, and I urge passage of this resolution.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCHWARTZ).

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise as co-chair of the Congressional Georgia Caucus, and I rise in favor of House Resolution 997 which expresses support for extending NATO membership action plan status to Georgia and Ukraine.

I do thank Chairman BERMAN and Congressman WEXLER for their leadership in this bipartisan effort to support Georgia and Ukraine in their entrance into NATO.

As leading democratic reformers in Eastern Europe, Ukraine and Georgia are both worthy of advancing their participation in NATO from ''intensified dialogue'' to membership action plan, MAP, status during the Bucharest Summit. This is an important and timely next step toward the goal of becoming full members of NATO.

Both of these nations are keenly interested in joining NATO and working closely with Western allies. They have already demonstrated this by actively participating in both U.S. and NATO forces. More than 2,000 Georgian soldiers currently serve alongside U.S. military personnel in Iraq, making it the third largest coalition partner. And Ukraine is the only nonmember state taking an active role in all of NATO's peacekeeping and anti-terrorist operations.

As a member of the House Democracy Assistance Commission, I had the great pleasure and opportunity to meet both Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili and Ukrainian President Yushchenko in their home capitals. Their commitment to democratization in their respective nations is impressive, and is an important example for other emerging democracies around the world.

Certainly both nations have work to do to stabilize and ensure development of permanent democratic institutions. Yet, as recently established democracies changing a history of totalitarian rule, they are making enormous strides. They are ready to be granted MAP and be given the opportunity to work toward full NATO membership.

In a world with real threats against us, it is critically important that we strengthen relationships with those nations that choose to be our allies. Georgia and Ukraine are key allies in an important region of the world. We should stand with our friends. We should stand with Georgia and Ukraine, and we should pass this resolution today.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my wholehearted support of Ukraine's desire to be admitted as a member of NATO.

When Ukraine declared her independence in 1990 from the Soviet Union, she stated her desire to be a member of the community of free nations.

As this young democracy matures, it is incumbent upon the nation members of NATO to not only support their development, but ally with them to ensure the commitment to freedom.

The United States has enjoyed a strong relationship with the Ukraine and it is my hope that this relationship grows even stronger with time as both of our countries work to improve stability around the world.

It is regrettable that the objections seem to come from the very country that once held the Ukraine under their absolute control. In my opinion the objections of Russia are not sufficient to deny NATO membership for Ukraine.

As someone who represents a great many citizens of Ukrainian descent I understand well the desire of the Ukrainian people for freedom.

America has always answered the call to support and defend those who yearn to be free and it is time to answer the call of Ukraine.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this resolution calling for the further expansion of NATO to the borders of Russia. NATO is an organization whose purpose ended with the end of its Warsaw Pact adversary. When NATO struggled to define its future after the cold war, it settled on attacking a sovereign state, Yugoslavia, which had neither invaded nor threatened any NATO member state.

This current round of NATO expansion is a political reward to governments in Georgia and Ukraine that came to power as a result of U.S.-supported revolutions, the so-called Orange Revolution and Rose Revolution. The governments that arose from these street protests were eager to please their U.S. sponsor and the U.S., in turn, turned a blind eye to the numerous political and human rights abuses that took place under the new regimes. Thus the U.S. policy of ''exporting democracy'' has only succeeded in exporting more misery to the countries it has targeted.

NATO expansion only benefits the U.S. military industrial complex, which stands to profit from expanded arms sales to new NATO members. The ''modernization'' of former Soviet militaries in Ukraine and Georgia will mean tens of millions in sales to U.S. and European military contractors. The U.S. taxpayer will be left holding the bill, as the U.S. Government will subsidize most of the transactions. Providing U.S. military guarantees to Ukraine and Georgia can only further strain our military. This NATO expansion may well involve the U.S. military in conflicts as unrelated to our national interest as the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia. The idea that American troops might be forced to fight and die to prevent a small section of Georgia from seceding is absurd and disturbing.

Madam Speaker, NATO should be disbanded, not expanded.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 997, which expresses our support for bids by Ukraine and Georgia to attain Membership Action Plans for joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this resolution.

Ukraine and Georgia are both perched on the fulcrum of democracy, with their future on balance. On one side of the balance lies a future marked by integration with NATO and Europe, continuing progress toward the establishment of stable democracy, security, and prosperity.

Each nation faces its own challenges on the other side of the balance. Ukraine confronts persistent threats to its fragile democracy, a rancorous division between its eastern and western regions, and difficult economic challenges. Georgia's democracy is also threatened, both by separatist movements in Abkhazia and Ossetia and by the lack of effective opposition in government. Its economy is undermined by severe unemployment.

This week's NATO summit in Bucharest will determine, at least in the near-term, in which direction the balance will tilt. NATO membership will bring with it economic, political, and military integration with Europe, helping to solidify democratic institutions, expand each nation's economy, and strengthen security. A Membership Action Plan is not equivalent to NATO membership and should not be conflated with NATO membership, but it is certainly a crucial step toward this goal. To reject the bids by Ukraine and Georgia for Membership Action Plans would be to deal democracy a significant setback.

As NATO nations gather to pass judgment on these bids, hovering over the summit is a specter in the form of an increasingly antagonistic Russia. Fear of further deterioration in relations with Russia no doubt shapes the hesitation of some of our European allies in proceeding with these Membership Action Plans.

Russia must understand that NATO membership does not cast a choice between Europe and Russia. Rather, the choice is between political and economic integration and isolation. Russia must also realize that seeking NATO membership is not a path foisted upon nations by NATO itself, but rather one sought freely and enthusiastically by prospective member nations. Finally, our European allies must persevere in the principle that decisions must be made in the best interests of our alliance, never allowing any nation to hold a veto on our collective security and shared values.

As many of my other colleagues have stated, both Ukraine and Georgia have already demonstrated their worth to NATO with contributions to NATO efforts in Afghanistan, Kosovo, and elsewhere. There is no doubt that the alliance would benefit from their inclusion in this multilateral security architecture that will be essential for confronting numerous major security challenges in the 2151 century. Setting Ukraine and Georgia on a path toward NATO membership is not only vital to their future, it is vital to ours as well.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I'd like to express reservations about H. Res. 997.

NATO expansion is not a casual affair. We're talking about adding countries whose

security we're committing American lives and treasure to defend. While this resolution only endorses the beginning of a membership process, it sets the stage for expanding vital American security concerns. At a time when some Americans are questioning our growing security commitments around the globe, should we be moving to ensure Ukraine and Georgia's security?

We must be realistic about the state of NATO. The organization is not well. In Afghanistan, most NATO member states haven't answered the call, choosing not to provide troops or to provide troops only for very limited missions. One observer noted that, "The inability or unwillingness of certain nations to shoulder the burden of NATO's obligation in Afghanistan is ripping the heart out of the alliance . . ." I'm not convinced that adding new members, each with diverse interests, aids in rebuilding NATO's consensus. Expansion doesn't always mean strengthening.

Sure, these countries have committed troops in dangerous areas, for which they should be commended. But a hard headed analysis must ask whether those commitments would be maintained once NATO membership was achieved?

Expansion is divisive among some of the longest-standing NATO members. This week in Bucharest, Germany has objected to the process this resolution endorses, effectively stopping it. Chancellor Merkel's government cited concerns over political unrest in Georgia, and the lack of support for joining NATO among Ukrainians. Others ask, rightly, "What's the rush?"

First and foremost, we should ask "What's in our national security interest?" Secondarily, we should ask "What's in the best interest of NATO?" I am not convinced that expanding NATO to these two countries advances those causes. That's why I reluctantly oppose this resolution backed by my colleagues and friends.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 997, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING CREATION OF REFUGEE POPULATIONS

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 185) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the creation of refugee populations in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf region as a result of human rights violations, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 185

Whereas armed conflicts in the Middle East have created refugee populations numbering in the millions and comprised of peoples from many ethnic, religious, and national backgrounds;

Whereas Jews have lived mostly as a minority in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf region for more than 2,500 years;

Whereas the United States has long voiced its concern about the mistreatment of minorities and the violation of human rights in the Middle East and elsewhere;

Whereas the United States continues to play a pivotal role in seeking an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East and to promoting a peace that will benefit all the peoples of the region;

Whereas United States administrations historically have called for a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem;

Whereas the Palestinian refugee issue has received considerable attention from countries of the world while the issue of Jewish refugees from the Arab and Muslim worlds has received very little attention;

Whereas a comprehensive peace in the region will require the resolution of all outstanding issues through bilateral and multilateral negotiations involving all concerned parties;

Whereas approximately 850,000 Jews have been displaced from Arab countries since the declaration of the State of Israel in 1948;

Whereas the United States has demonstrated interest and concern about the mistreatment, violation of rights, forced expulsion, and expropriation of assets of minority populations in general, and in particular, former Jewish refugees displaced from Arab countries as evidenced, inter alia, by—

(1) the Memorandum of Understanding signed by President Jimmy Carter and Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan on October 4, 1977, which states that "[a] solution of the problem of Arab refugees and Jewish refugees will be discussed in accordance with rules which should be agreed";

(2) after negotiating the Camp David Accords, the Framework for Peace in the Middle East, the statement by President Jimmy Carter in a press conference on October 27, 1977, that "Palestinians have rights . . . obviously there are Jewish refugees . . . they have the same rights as others do"; and

(3) in an interview after Camp David II in July 2000, at which the issue of Jewish refugees displaced from Arab lands was discussed, the statement by President Clinton that "There will have to be some sort of international fund set up for the refugees. There is, I think, some interest, interestingly enough, on both sides, in also having a fund which compensates the Israelis who were made refugees by the war, which occurred after the birth of the State of Israel. Israel is full of people, Jewish people, who lived in predominantly Arab countries who came to Israel because they were made refugees in their own land.";

Whereas the international definition of a refugee clearly applies to Jews who fled the persecution of Arab regimes, where a refugee is a person who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country" (the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees);

Whereas on January 29, 1957, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), determined that Jews fleeing from Arab countries were refugees that fell within the mandate of the UNHCR;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, calls for a "just settlement of the refugee problem" without distinction between Palestinian and Jewish refugees, and this is evidenced by—

(1) the Soviet Union's United Nations delegation attempt to restrict the "just settlement" mentioned in Resolution 242 solely to Palestinian refugees (S/8236, discussed by the Security Council at its 1382nd meeting of November 22, 1967, notably at paragraph 117, in the words of Ambassador Kouznetsov of the Soviet Union), but this attempt failed, signifying the international community's intention of having the resolution address the rights of all Middle East refugees; and

(2) a statement by Justice Arthur Goldberg, the United States' Chief Delegate to the United Nations at that time, who was instrumental in drafting the unanimously adopted Resolution 242, where he has pointed out that "The resolution addresses the objective of 'achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem'. This language presumably refers both to Arab and Jewish refugees, for about an equal number of each abandoned their homes as a result of the several wars.";

Whereas in his opening remarks before the January 28, 1992, organizational meeting for multilateral negotiations on the Middle East in Moscow, United States Secretary of State James Baker made no distinction between Palestinian refugees and Jewish refugees in articulating the mission of the Refugee Working Group, stating that "[t]he refugee group will consider practical ways of improving the lot of people throughout the region who have been displaced from their homes";

Whereas the Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, which refers in Phase III to an "agreed, just, fair, and realistic solution to the refugee issue," uses language that is equally applicable to all persons displaced as a result of the conflict in the Middle East;

Whereas Israel's agreements with Egypt, Jordan, and the Palestinians have affirmed that a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict will require a just solution to the plight of all "refugees";

Whereas the initiative to secure rights and redress for Jews who were forced to flee Arab countries does not conflict with the right of Palestinian refugees to claim redress;

Whereas all countries should be aware of the plight of Jews and other minority groups displaced from countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf;

Whereas an international campaign is proceeding in some 40 countries to record the history and legacy of Jewish refugees from Arab countries;

Whereas a just, comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace cannot be reached without addressing the uprooting of centuries-old Jewish communities in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf; and

Whereas it would be inappropriate and unjust for the United States to recognize rights for Palestinian refugees without recognizing equal rights for Jewish refugees from Arab countries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) for any comprehensive Middle East peace agreement to be credible and enduring, the agreement must address and resolve all outstanding issues relating to the legitimate rights of all refugees, including Jews, Christians, and other populations, displaced from countries in the Middle East; and

(2) the President should instruct the United States Representative to the United Nations and all United States representatives in bilateral and multilateral fora to—

(A) use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States to ensure that any resolutions relating to the issue of Middle East refugees, and which include a reference to the required resolution of the Palestinian refugee issue, must also include a similarly explicit reference to the resolution of the issue of Jewish refugees from Arab countries; and

(B) make clear that the United States Government supports the position that, as an integral part of any comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace, the issue of refugees from the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf must be resolved in a manner that includes recognition of the legitimate rights of and losses incurred by all refugees displaced from Arab countries, including Jews, Christians, and other groups.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I would first like to commend my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), for introducing this important resolution.

When the state of Israel was founded in 1948, more than 150,000 Jews lived in Iraq. Iraq was truly a cradle of Jewish civilization, a site of Jewish learning from which one of Judaism's holiest books, the Talmud, emerged. For more than two millennia, as history books will attest, Jews also made vital contributions to wider Iraqi society.

Indeed, like Jews throughout the Arab world, Iraqi Jews for most of that long era enjoyed a quality of life far better than that of most Jewish communities in Europe.

That all changed for good in 1948, and in the years immediately preceding 1948, when the state of Israel declared its independence. Throughout the Arab world, Jews then became the objects of official scorn and often were fired from their jobs en masse. In many places, violence ensued against Jewish communities. Continuing to use Iraq as an example, that 150,000-strong community by 1952 had shrunk to a mere 30,000. The rest, the other 120,000, had effectively been forced out.

Overall, approximately 850,000 Jewish residents of the Arab world were expelled or otherwise forced to leave their homes, abandoning possessions and patrimony, in the years following Israel's creation in 1948. Vibrant, generations-old communities withered to near-negligible numbers.

That Iraqi community of 150,000 Jews in 1948 has dwindled to about ten today. In Egypt, a community of 75,000 in 1945 now numbers 50 to 100. In Aden, Yemen, a community of 63,000 in 1948 has shrunk to about 200 today. And 140,000 Jews lived in Tunisia in 1948; fewer than 100 remain. In Morocco, which is hailed today as the bastion of Jewish-Arab coexistence in the Arab world, a thriving community of more than a quarter million Jews lived their lives in peace before 1948. Today, there are perhaps 5,000 Jews residing in Morocco. Some left willingly; most felt they had no choice.

For centuries, long before the advent of Islam and long after it, Jewish communities lived peacefully and often prosperously and productively in Arab lands, among Arab people.

Their forced relocation and the material value they lost when they were compelled to abandon their homes and other property in Arab countries has never been redressed. Not one Jew from the Arab world has been compensated for his losses. Each one had to start over from scratch in his new land.

Compare the Jewish refugee experience with the Palestinian refugee experience. Neither Jewish refugees themselves, nor Israel, which was an underdeveloped country at the time it hosted most of these refugees, sought international aid from United Nations organizations or other international organizations. Both refugees and hosts envisioned and sought full integration into the larger society. The Arab world, in contrast, demanded the international community foot the bill for the refugees, who were to be kept in camps that, to this day, breed frustration, hatred and dependence.

The result of these contrasting approaches is this: While the plight of Palestinian refugees is well known throughout the world, has been the subject of numerous U.N. resolutions, and has been a major element in every Arab-Israeli peace plan, the plight of Jewish refugees is rarely mentioned.

Nevertheless, the rights and redress of Jewish refugees deserve recognition in any peace settlement. And, indeed, numerous international agreements pertaining to the Arab-Israeli conflict have been codified with the rights of Jewish refugees in mind.

U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 calls for a ''just settlement to the refugee problem,'' without limiting that problem to Palestinians. Presidents Carter and Clinton each explicitly stated that the issue of Jewish refugees must be part of any comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace agreement.

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And lest there be any doubt about their status, let me point out this very important fact: The United Nations High Commission on Refugees in 1957 mandated that Jewish people who fled Arab countries are, indeed, ''refugees.''

The right of Jewish refugees from Middle Eastern lands to seek redress does not in any way conflict with the right of Palestinian refugees to seek redress, and the resolution before us states this explicitly. This resolution merely expresses the sense of Congress that Jewish refugees also should not be denied their legitimate rights.

We are simply seeking to ensure that any comprehensive Middle East settlement is just and fully just to all the parties. That sentiment of basic fairness is one I fully embrace.

I strongly support this resolution. And I again congratulate my colleague, Mr. NADLER, for offering it.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 185 regarding the creation of refugee populations in the Middle East, north Africa, and the Persian Gulf region resulting from human rights violations.

Discussions of Middle Eastern refugees invariably focus exclusively and short-sightedly on the plight of those of Palestinian descent. Few are aware of the injustices faced by hundreds of thousands of Jews, Christians and others who fled from Arab lands and Iran either as a direct result of the Arab-Israeli conflict or from persecution associated with that conflict.

Perhaps the most telling example, Madam Speaker, is the case of the Jewish refugees from Arab lands. Many Jews saw their communities, which had existed vibrantly for centuries even before the advent of Islam, systematically dismantled. Their populations throughout the Arab world and Iran was reduced from over 1 million to just several thousand. They lost their resources, their homes, and their heritage sites fleeing in the face of persecution, pogroms and brutal dictatorships.

Jewish refugees who fled Arab countries and Iran left behind what today amounts to billions of dollars in assets. Not only have they received not one thin dime of compensation to this day, but their plight has not even received recognition by the United Nations nor similar international institutions.

While countless U.N. resolutions have been adopted focusing on the Palestinian refugee issue, no conferences have been held on the Jewish refugees. No U.N. agencies nor international human rights organizations address their fate. Failure to recognize their plight, Madam Speaker, along with the plight of the Christian communities throughout the region, only serves to perpetuate their suffering. Therefore, in past Congresses, I have sponsored resolutions similar to the one before us today, House Resolution 185. This resolution urges greater recognition of the plight of these often overlooked refugees, it emphasizes that any comprehensive Middle East peace agreement can only be credible, can only be enduring if it resolves all issues related to the rights of all refugees in the Arab world and Iran, including Jews, Christians and others.

I am proud to be the lead Republican cosponsor of this resolution. And I thank my good friend and my colleague from New York, Congressman JERRY NADLER, for having the insight to introduce it.

I urge the House to adopt this very important resolution.

And with that, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the sponsor of the resolution, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution which I introduced, along with Representatives ROS-LEHTINEN, CROWLEY and FERGUSON. I am proud to stand alongside of them, as well as Chairman BERMAN and Representative ACKERMAN, who have been strong leaders on the issue of Jewish refugees from Arab lands, in this historic moment of recognition of these refugees.

I would also like to take a moment to commend the leadership of our late chairman, Tom Lantos, whose leadership on this issue and on all human rights issues has been critical to opening this debate and to recognizing the rights of refugees throughout the world.

This resolution is not just about a forgotten chapter of history. For centuries, long before the advent of Islam and long after it, Jewish communities lived peacefully and often prosperously and productively in Arab lands among Arab people. Their forced relocation and the material value they lost when they were compelled to abandon their homes and other properties in Arab countries has never been redressed. For example, in Iraq, a community of 150,000 in 1948 dwindles to around 10 today. In Egypt, a community of 75,000 in 1945 became between 50 and 100 today. In Yemen and Aden, 63,000 in 1948 became 200 in 2003. 140,000 Jews lived in Tunisia in 1948, less than 100 remained in 2004.

In Morocco, which is hailed today as a bastion of Jewish-Arab coexistence in the Arab world, a thriving community of more than a quarter million Jews lived their lives in peace by 1948; by 2003, only 5,500 remained. Some left willingly, most did not.

While the plight of Palestinian refugees is well known throughout the world and has been a major element in every Arab-Israeli peace plan and negotiation, the plight of these Jewish refugees is rarely mentioned these days. Nevertheless, numerous international agreements pertaining to the Arab-Israeli conflict have been codified with the rights of the Jewish refugees in mind. U.N. Security Council resolution 242, passed on November 22, 1967, after the Six Day War, calls for a just settlement to the refugee problem without limiting that problem to Palestinians. In fact, the Soviet Union tried to limit that resolution to Palestinians and it was rejected.

Presidents Carter and Clinton stated explicitly that the issue of Jewish refugees must be a part of any comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace agreement. And lest there be any doubt about this status, the U.N. High Commission on Refugees in 1957 ruled that Jewish people that fled Arab countries were, indeed, ''refugees.''

This principle is reaffirmed in the Camp David Accords and in the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty. The treaty states, ''The parties agree to establish a Claims Committee for the mutual settlement of all financial claims.'' And it also states, ''Jewish refugees have the same rights as others do.''

These Jewish refugees, Madam Speaker, were expelled systematically under official regime policies, which included state-fostered anti-Jewish decrees, pogroms, murders and hangings, anti-Semitic incitement and ethnic cleansing. They were done in accordance with an Arab League 1947 decree that provided a formula to promote state-sanctioned discriminatory measures that were replicated in many Arab countries in a deliberate campaign to expel the entire Jewish population from their home countries. And unlike the Palestinians, the Jewish refugees, having been expelled from the Arab countries, were absorbed into their host countries, mostly by Israel. About 600,000 refugees went to Israel, and the remaining 300,000 fled to other countries, such as France, Canada, Italy and the United States. In Israel today, the majority of the population consists of Jews from Arab countries and their children and grandchildren.

The right of Jewish refugees from Middle Eastern lands to seek redress does not in any way conflict with the rights of Palestinian refugees to seek redress, and resolution states this explicitly. This resolution merely expresses the sense of Congress that Jewish refugees, many of whom were so effectively absorbed by the State of Israel, should not be denied their legitimate rights and compensation for the property of which they were deprived.

The resolution further states that a comprehensive Middle East peace agreement can be credible and enduring only if it achieves legitimate rights of all refugees, ''including Jews, Christians and other populations'' displaced from Middle East countries. Importantly, it also resolves that the President should instruct the U.S. Representative at the U.N. and all U.S. representatives in bilateral and multilateral fora to use their voice, their vote and the influence of the United States to ensure that any resolutions relating to the issue of Middle East refugees which include a reference to the required resolution of the Palestinian refugee issue must also include a similarly explicit reference to the resolution of the issue of Jewish refugees from Arab countries, and to make clear that the United States Government supports the position that as an integral part of any comprehensive and much to be desired Arab-Israeli peace, the issue of refugees from the Middle East, north Africa and the Persian Gulf must be resolved in a manner that includes recognition of the legitimate rights of and losses incurred by all refugees displaced from Arab countries, including Jews, Christians and other groups.

There is broad bipartisan support for this resolution, which was passed with unanimous consent from the Foreign Affairs Committee. Many Jewish groups have endorsed the resolution, including the American Jewish Committee, Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Hadassah, the Union for Reform Judaism, the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Orthodox Union, among others. I must particularly acknowledge the work of B'nai B'rith International and the strong leadership of Justice for Jews from Arab Countries, which has led the International Rights and Redress Campaign. As of September 2007, this coalition to secure the rights of Jewish refugees from Arab lands includes 72 organizations and 20 countries.

It is important to deal with this issue now while some of the original refugees are still alive. Justice for Jews from Arab Countries has organized a campaign to conduct public education programs on the heritage and rights of former Jewish refugees from Arab countries, to register family history narratives, and to catalogue communal and individual losses suffered by Jews who fled from Arab countries.

By adopting this resolution and urging that the rights of Jewish refugees be recognized in any future comprehensive Middle East settlement, we are simply seeking to ensure that any such agreement is just, fully just to all parties. As a member of the Quartet, and in light of the United States' central and indispensable role in promoting a just Middle East peace, the U.S. must reaffirm that it embraces a just and comprehensive approach to the issue of Middle East refugees. I urge strong report for this resolution.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY).

Ms. BERKLEY. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his leadership on this important issue.

Madam Speaker, when Israel declared its independence in May, 1948, seven Arab nations immediately attacked the fledgling country and sought to drive Israel into the sea. Simultaneously, many of the same Arab nations forced their own Jewish citizens to leave their ancestral homes, making refugees out of nearly one million people.

The issue of Jewish refugees from Arab lands speaks to one of the fundamental problems of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Many Arab countries have refused to accept the existence of Israel,

while cynically exploiting the Palestinian refugees in their war against Israel. Arab leaders willingly agree to confine the Palestinians to squalid camps where terrorism and extremism and hate are bred instead of resettling them and welcoming their Palestinian brothers to their own oil rich lands. They claim a ''right of return'' for Palestinian refugees in the hope that they will flood Israel in order to undermine and ultimately destroy the Jewish State of Israel.

Madam Speaker, this resolution begins to set the record straight, while setting out a balanced approach to address the refugee issue, all refugees.

Any peace plan must look at both sides of the refugee issue in an equal way. We must acknowledge the Jewish refugees from Arab lands, be aware of the hidden agenda behind a Palestinian ''right of return'' and expose the obstructive role played by both the Arab nations and the United Nations in the refugee issue. We must find just solutions for all refugees in this conflict, redressing the grievances of all sides while retaining Israel's integrity as a Jewish state.

Mr. WEXLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 185, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the creation of refugee populations in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf region as a result of unacceptable human rights violations and blatant anti-Semitism.

For over 2,500 years, Jewish communities have resided throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf region in large numbers. Unfortunately these vibrant Jewish communities have often been considered second-class citizens under onerous rulers. In the 20th century, widespread persecution and mass violations of human rights against Jewish minorities in Arab countries became unfortunately commonplace.

Upon the declaration of the State of Israel's independence in 1948, the difficult status of Jewish minorities was greatly exacerbated as Arab nations declared war or supported the destruction of the nascent state. In response, many members of the Jewish community were forced to flee their countries of birth or faced becoming a political hostage. Jewish properties were unlawfully seized and confiscated without any compensation or just redress. While there were once nearly a million Jews living in these regions, today there are only a few thousand Jews remaining in these Arab countries.

Unconscionably, the story of the Jewish refugees from Arab countries has been neglected by the United Nations and the international community for far too long. While Palestinian refugees from Israel have been one of the focal points of the international community, Jewish refugees from Arab states have been forgotten, if not intentionally ignored. This resolution recognizes the over 850,000 Jewish refugees from Arab states and expresses the sense of Congress that the international community should acknowledge the Jewish refugee issue as a part of any settlement of the Middle East conflict.

It is clear that the violations of human rights against Jewish refugees from Arab countries have never been adequately addressed by the international community. As a cosponsor of H. Res. 185, I believe it is essential that Congress work with the administration to rectify this black mark on history. To this end, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution, which sheds light on the plight of Jewish refugees throughout the Middle East.

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 185. I commend this body for recognizing the rights of Jewish refugees displaced from Arab countries. I agree that a resolution that addresses the legitimate rights of all refugees is inherent to establishing enduring peace in the Middle East.

The resolution draws its strength by including all refugees in the Middle East, including Jews, Christians, minority communities, Iraqis, and Palestinians. A lasting peace in the Middle East must abate feelings of hostility throughout all refugee populations. As the resolution suggests, this includes recognition of Jewish, Palestinian, and Christian refugee populations but must also encompass all Middle East refugee populations ''numbering in the hundreds of thousands and comprised of peoples from many ethnic, religious, and national backgrounds.''

As such, I urge this body to continue to be mindful of and work toward peaceful, enduring solutions for all refugee populations in the Middle East. Currently the two largest refugee populations in the world are Iraqi and Palestinian refugees. The United Nations has estimated that there are approximately 2,000,000 Iraqi refugees currently displaced from their homes (and another 2,200,000 internally displaced). These Iraqi refugees endure deprivation of food, shelter, and medical care. The United States must be mindful of the role of our foreign policy in the creation of this refugee population and our continuing role in addressing this humanitarian crisis.

United Nations-recognized Palestinian refugees currently constitute an approximate 3,700,000-person population. According to the United Nations Relief and Work Agency, UNRWA, of these refugees, approximately 1,300,000 Palestinian refugees continue to live in 58 recognized refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. Moreover, ongoing Israeli policies like settlement expansion, which contravene the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention as well as the basis of Palestinian-Israeli peace agreements, create new refugee populations today.

I support H. Res. 185 for recognizing the displacement, human rights, suffering and loss of all refugees. I encourage this body to do so in a way that brings us closer to establishing a just and long-lasting Arab-Israeli peace. To make this dream a reality we must truly rise to become the ''honest broker'' of peace in the Middle East.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, so I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 185, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING ALEXANDER LITVINENKO

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 154) expressing the sense of Congress that the fatal radiation poisoning of Russian dissident and writer Alexander Litvinenko raises significant concerns about the potential involvement of elements of the Russian Government in Mr. Litvinenko's death and about the security and proliferation of radioactive materials, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 154

Whereas Russian dissident and writer Alexander Litvinenko, a citizen and resident of Great Britain, suddenly fell ill on November 1, 2006, and died three weeks later in a London hospital;

Whereas British health officials concluded, following an autopsy, that Mr. Litvinenko died of radiation poisoning caused by ingestion of the radioactive element polonium-210, and British law enforcement officials have announced that they are treating Mr. Litvinenko's death as a murder;

Whereas polonium-210, according to the Health Physics Society, radiates alpha particles that cannot penetrate paper or human skin but, if ingested through eating, drinking, or breathing, are extremely toxic, with the ability to destroy cells, damage vital organs such as the liver, kidneys, and bone marrow, cause cancer, and result in human death;

Whereas according to the Health Physics Society, just one millionth of a gram of polonium-210 can be fatal, an amount invisible to the naked eye;

Whereas 97 percent of the world's legal production of polonium-210 occurs at the Avangard nuclear facility in Russia, and Russia is the world's leading exporter of polonium-210 for commercial purposes;

Whereas polonium-210 is presently neither produced in nor commercially exported to Great Britain;

Whereas polonium-210, being especially dangerous to public health and safety if improperly handled, may attract the attention of terrorists because it can be easily and safely concealed and transported and is not usually detectable by radiation detectors;

Whereas this instance of poisoning by use of polonium-210 could serve as a model for future use of the radioactive element to assassinate individuals, poison and kill large numbers of people, or spread general panic and hysteria amongst the public;

Whereas Mr. Litvinenko was a former agent and official in the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation during the period when present Russian President Vladimir Putin ran that agency;

Whereas in 1998 Mr. Litvinenko was fired from the Federal Security Service and subsequently arrested and briefly incarcerated without conviction for a criminal act after publicly accusing high-level officials of the Federal Security Service of crimes that included plotting assassination attempts;

Whereas Mr. Litvinenko fled Russia and successfully sought asylum in Great Britain,

becoming a naturalized British citizen in October 2006;

Whereas Mr. Litvinenko, after arriving in Britain, repeatedly accused the Federal Security Service and many of its officers, including now-President Putin, of involvement in organized crime, assassinations, and other illegal activity;

Whereas on November 1, 2006, before falling ill, Mr. Litvinenko reportedly met with three citizens of Russia, including former Federal Security Service agent Andrei Lugovoi;

Whereas the manner in which the polonium-210 was obtained, transported, and used must be fully investigated and revealed in order to reveal any defects or inadequacies in the present safeguard regime for that substance administered by the Russian Government and in order to prevent the unlawful, criminal, or terrorist acquisition or use of polonium-210 in the future;

Whereas the danger posed by polonium-210, as displayed by the discovery, subsequent to Mr. Litvinenko's death, of numerous cases of its exposure to objects and persons who had contact with Mr. Litvinenko and his meal companions, demonstrates the threat that the proliferation and use of polonium-210 poses to the lives of innocents worldwide, as well as to international security;

Whereas on July 15, 2006, the United States and Russia jointly announced the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, which ''will enhance cooperation . . . to combat the global threat of nuclear terrorism . . . [including] determined and systematic efforts to improve accounting, control, and physical protection of nuclear material and radioactive substances, as well as security of nuclear facilities; [and] detect and suppress illicit trafficking or other illicit activities involving such materials, especially measures to prevent their acquisition and use by terrorists'';

Whereas Mr. Lugovoi has won immunity from prosecution as a member of the Russian Duma in December 2007 elections allegedly influenced by government electoral manipulation, which provides credence to claims that he has enjoyed official support in obtaining that office and its associated immunity; and

Whereas the British investigation into Mr. Litvinenko's murder continues in an atmosphere of deteriorating relations between the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation due, in part, to a lack of agreement on the further pursuit of that investigation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the fatal radiation poisoning of Alexander Litvinenko raises significant concerns about the potential involvement of elements of the Russian Government in Mr. Litvinenko's death, and about the security and proliferation of radioactive materials;

(2) the use of such radioactive materials in such cases demonstrates a threat to the safety and security of the people of the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the United States, and other countries; and

(3) the President of the United States and the Secretary of State should urge Russian President Vladimir Putin and other officials of the Russian Government to cooperate fully with the British Government in its investigation into Mr. Litvinenko's death and to ensure the security of the production, storage, distribution, and export of polonium-210 as a material that may become dangerous to large numbers of people if utilized by terrorists.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each of control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to support this resolution that notes the tragic poisoning of Alexander Litvinenko, expresses concern about the potential involvement of elements of the Russian Government in his death, and highlights the need to ensure the security of radioactive materials.

□ 1315

And I'd like to thank my good friend and the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida, for introducing this important measure.

In late November 2006, Americans joined with many around the world in watching with horror as a youthful, energetic Russian dissident and British citizen dramatically changed appearances within days. Who can forget the piercing blue eyes of the bald and gaunt man staring intently at the camera from a London hospital bed?

After the completion of an autopsy, British health officials concluded that Alexander Litvinenko had died on November 23, 2006 of radiation poisoning caused by ingesting the radioactive element Polonium-210. British law enforcement officials classified his death as murder.

Alexander Litvinenko was an agent in the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation at the time when Vladimir Putin ran the agency. Mr. Litvinenko was fired from the service in 1998, then was arrested and briefly held without conviction after accusing senior Security Service officials of assassination plots.

Mr. Litvinenko successfully sought asylum in Britain, from where he continued to accuse the Security Service of involvement in illegal activities.

The night before falling ill, Mr. Litvinenko reportedly dined with three Russian citizens, including former Federal Security Service Agent Andrei Lugovoi.

On May 22, 2007, British authorities announced their intent to prosecute Mr. Lugovoi for the murder of Mr. Litvinenko. After Russia refused to extradite Mr. Lugovoi to Britain, a political dispute ensued between the two countries that resulted in the mutual expulsion of diplomats.

The murder of Alexander Litvinenko clearly raises disturbing questions about how elements of the Russian Government appear to deal with their enemies and perceived threats.

It also raises worrying questions about the security and proliferation of radioactive material. 97 percent of the world's legal production of Polonium-210 occurs at the Avangard nuclear facility in Russia, the country that is also the world's leading exporter of this substance for commercial purposes.

If the Russian government is not responsible for Litvinenko's death, as President Putin has stated, then it should be urgently investigating the security of the production, storage, distribution and export of Polonium-210 to prevent grave threats to international security.

The resolution calls on President Bush and Secretary Rice to urge President Putin and President-elect Medvedev to cooperate with British authorities in finding answers to ensure the safety and security of all our citizens.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 154, which I introduced.

The purposes of this measure, they're very straightforward. First, it is to put this Congress on record as being skeptical, to say the least, about the Russian Government's views and positions regarding the murder of the Russian dissident and writer Alexander Litvinenko in November of 2006.

We must keep in mind that Litvinenko, as a former agent of the Russian Security Service, was in a position to speak with credibility when he charged high level officials of the Russian Government with involvement in assassinations and organized crime and the use of state-sponsored terrorism for political purposes in the 1999 bombings of several Russian apartment buildings.

We note that Mr. Litvinenko's poisoning with the radioactive material known as Polonium-210 raises some interesting general facts. Polonium-210 is not produced, nor commercially exported to Britain where Mr. Litvinenko was murdered. Indeed, as Mr. BERMAN pointed out, 97 percent of the world's production of Polonium-210 takes place in Russia. And indeed, after the poisoning of Litvinenko in London, British investigators were able to track traces of the material to passenger aircraft serving the London to Moscow route.

Furthermore, the British investigation into the murder has found that Litvinenko had met with three visitors from Russia prior to the detection of the radioactive poison in his body. The British authorities are now, in fact,

seeking to prosecute a Russian citizen who currently resides in Russia for his involvement in the murder.

The second purpose of this measure, Madam Speaker, is to point out that Polonium-210 would prove to be a dangerous weapon that Islamic radicals could use seeking to inflict large numbers of civilian casualties, not just to murder an individual. Therefore, as the dominant producer of this material, it is incumbent upon the Russian Government to ensure the security from proliferation of the Polonium-210, and this resolution indeed makes that case.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I note that former Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott appeared before our Foreign Affairs Committee last October and said the following when asked about this case, and I quote. ''Many of the people running Russia today come from Security Services, the secret police. There has been a long and unbroken tradition of the use of murder as a means of controlling Russian society. And I can tell you that our British colleagues believe that they have at least a prosecutable case that goes very, very close to the seat of power in Moscow.''

Madam Speaker, the perpetrators of the 1999 apartment building bombings in Russia probably hope that the passage of time would cover their tracks and that people would forget and move on. That appears to be the case in Moscow with this case as well, unfortunately.

So the question before our President and this Congress is the following: Will that be allowed to happen in the Litvinenko case as well?

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution to keep in mind that the people of Russia live with this kind of threat every day. Their government is aggressively working to take back control over the economy, over their livelihoods, their access to uncensored news and their personal freedoms.

So, Madam Speaker, I hope that the House passes this resolution.

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this ill-conceived resolution. The U.S. House of Representatives has no business speculating on guilt or innocence in a crime that may have been committed thousands of miles outside United States territory. It is arrogant, to say the least, that we presume to pass judgment on crimes committed overseas about which we have seen no evidence.

The resolution purports to express concern over the apparent murder in London of a shadowy former Russian intelligence agent, Alexander Litvinenko, but let us not kid ourselves. The real purpose is to attack the Russian government by suggesting that Russia is involved in the murder. There is little evidence of this beyond the feverish accusations of interested parties. In fact, we may ultimately discover that Litvinenko's death by radiation poisoning was the result of his involvement in an international nuclear smuggling operation, as some investigative reporters have claimed. The point is that we do not know. The House of Representatives has no business inserting itself in disputes about which we lack information and jurisdiction.

At a time when we should be seeking good relations and expanded trade with Russia, what is the benefit in passing such provocative resolutions? There is none.

Madam Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to a very thought-provoking article by Edward Jay Epstein published recently in the New York Sun, which convincingly calls into question many of the assumptions and accusations made in this legislation. I would encourage my colleagues to read this article and carefully consider the wisdom of what we are doing.

Ms. ROS LEHTINEN. I have no further requests for time, and I give back the balance of our time.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 154, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2040) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the semicentennial of the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2040

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Civil Rights Act of 1964 Commemorative Coin Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress hereby finds as follows:

(1) On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks' brave act of defiance, refusing to give up her seat to a white person on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama, galvanized the modern civil rights movement and led to the desegregation of the South.

(2) On February 1, 1960, 4 college students, Joseph McNeil, Franklin McCain, David Richmond, and Ezell Blair, Jr., asked to be served at a lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, and lunch counter sit-ins began to occur throughout the South to challenge segregation in places of public accommodation.

(3) On May 4, 1961, the Freedom Rides into the South began to test new court orders barring segregation in interstate transportation, and riders were jailed and beaten by mobs in several places, including Birmingham and Montgomery, Alabama.

(4) Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was the leading civil rights advocate of the time, spearheading the civil rights movement in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s with the goal of nonviolent social change and full civil rights for African Americans.

(5) On August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., led over 250,000 civil rights supporters in the March on Washington and delivered his famous ''I Have A Dream'' speech to raise awareness and support for civil rights legislation.

(6) Mrs. Coretta Scott King, a leading participant in the American civil rights movement, was side-by-side with her husband, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., during many civil rights marches, organized Freedom Concerts to draw attention to the Movement, and worked in her own right to create an America in which all people have equal rights.

(7) The mass movement sparked by Rosa Parks and led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., among others, called upon the Congress and Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson to pass civil rights legislation which culminated in the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

(8) The Civil Rights Act of 1964 greatly expanded civil rights protections, outlawing racial discrimination and segregation in public places and places of public accommodation, in federally funded programs, and employment and encouraging desegregation in public schools, and has served as a model for subsequent anti-discrimination laws.

(9) We are an eminently better Nation because of Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and all those men and women who have confronted, and continue to confront, injustice and inequality wherever they see it.

(10) Equality in education was one of the cornerstones of the civil rights movement.

(11) On September 10, 1961, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote that African American ''students are coming to understand that education and learning have become tools for shaping the future and not devices of privilege for an exclusive few''.

(12) Over its long and distinguished history, the United Negro College Fund has provided scholarships and operating funds to its member colleges that have enabled more than 300,000 young African Americans to earn college degrees and become successful members of society.

(13) Those graduates include Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as well as leaders in the fields of education, science, medicine, law, entertainment, literature, the military, and politics who have made major contributions to the civil rights movement and the creation of a more equitable society.

(14) Congress has an obligation to lead America's continued struggle to fight discrimination and ensure equal rights for all.

(15) The year 2014 will mark the semicentennial of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

SEC. 3. COIN SPECIFICATIONS.

(a) DENOMINATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury (hereinafter in this Act referred to as the ''Secretary'') shall mint and issue not more than 350,000 $1 coins each of which shall—

(1) weigh 26.73 grams;

(2) have a diameter of 1.500 inches; and

(3) contain 90 percent silver and 10 percent copper.

(b) LEGAL TENDER.—The coins minted under this Act shall be legal tender, as provided in section 5103 of title 31, United States Code.

(c) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all coins minted under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

SEC. 4. DESIGN OF COINS.

(a) DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.—The design of the coins minted under this Act shall be emblematic of the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its contribution to civil rights in America.

(b) DESIGNATION AND INSCRIPTIONS.—On each coin minted under this Act there shall be—

(1) a designation of the value of the coin;

(2) an inscription of the year ''2014''; and

(3) inscriptions of the words ''Liberty'', ''In God We Trust'', ''United States of America'', and ''E Pluribus Unum''.

(c) SELECTION.—The design for the coins minted under this Act shall be—

(1) selected by the Secretary after consultation with the Commission of Fine Arts; and

(2) reviewed by the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee established under section 5135 of title 31, United States Code.

SEC. 5. ISSUANCE OF COINS.

(a) QUALITY OF COINS.—Coins minted under this Act shall be issued in uncirculated and proof qualities.

(b) COMMENCEMENT OF ISSUANCE.—The Secretary may issue coins minted under this Act beginning January 1, 2014, except that the Secretary may initiate sales of such coins, without issuance, before such date.

(c) TERMINATION OF MINTING AUTHORITY.—No coins shall be minted under this Act after December 31, 2014.

SEC. 6. SALE OF COINS.

(a) SALE PRICE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the coins issued under this Act shall be sold by the Secretary at a price equal to the sum of the face value of the coins, the surcharge required under section 7(a) for the coins, and the cost of designing and issuing such coins (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, and marketing).

(b) BULK SALES.—The Secretary shall make bulk sales of the coins issued under this Act at a reasonable discount.

(c) PREPAID ORDERS AT A DISCOUNT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall accept prepaid orders for the coins minted under this Act before the issuance of such coins.

(2) DISCOUNT.—Sale prices with respect to prepaid orders under paragraph (1) shall be at a reasonable discount.

SEC. 7. SURCHARGES.

(a) SURCHARGE REQUIRED.—All sales shall include a surcharge of $10 per coin.

(b) DISTRIBUTION.—Subject to section 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code, all surcharges which are received by the Secretary from the sale of coins issued under this Act shall be promptly paid by the Secretary to the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) to carry out the purposes of the Fund, including providing scholarships and internships for minority students and operating funds and technology enhancement services for 39 member historically black colleges and universities.

(c) AUDITS.—The United Negro College Fund shall be subject to the audit requirements of section 5134(f)(2) of title 31, United States Code, with regard to the amounts received by the Fund under subsection (b).

(d) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), no surcharge may be included with respect to the issuance under this Act of any coin during a calendar year if, as of the time of such issuance, the issuance of such coin would result in the number of commemorative coin programs issued during such year to exceed the annual 2 commemorative coin program issuance limitation under section 5112(m)(1) of title 31, United States Code (as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act). The Secretary of the Treasury may issue guidance to carry out this subsection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT) and the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material thereon.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself just a couple of minutes here at the beginning.

This is a very, very important and timely piece of legislation. H.R. 2040 is the Civil Rights Act of 1964 Commemorative Coin Act. As a steadfast proponent of this most important legislation, it is indeed my honor and privilege.

First and foremost, I wish to commend my good friend and my own personal hero and mentor from the great State of Georgia, my colleague, Mr. JOHN LEWIS, on the extraordinary work that he has done throughout his entire life, and certainly on the work to bring this commemorative coin bill recognizing the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to the floor with the minting of a $1 coin.

I applaud the bill for honoring not only the importance of this legislation, but also the many contributions of so many Americans from all walks of life, from all different backgrounds that have come together to make this country great, and certainly have made outstanding contributions during the civil rights era.

I further want to acknowledge the vital role of the United Negro College Fund, UNCF, that they have played in ensuring access to and opportunities for higher education for so many deserving students who, if it had not been for the UNCF, would not have received a college education. During its 64-year existence, the UNCF has raised more than $2.3 billion to support its 39 Historically Black Colleges and University member institutions. And during 2007, the UNCF raised an impressive $220 million in scholarships to help some 65,000 students realize their dreams of receiving a college education. So it's important for us to note that this is more than just a piece of legislation for it's important to note that the proceeds from the sale of this coin will go towards advancing what the Civil Rights Act initially made possible, opportunity for education and empowerment by benefiting the United Negro College Fund and those member schools which played such a vital role, Madam Speaker, in the sit-ins, they started on black college campuses, on the marches, the civil rights marches started by students on black college campuses, demonstrations in the deep south and throughout this country energized by those on black college campuses. These United Negro College Fund students, graduates, faculty and institutions played a significant part in the Civil Rights Movement, and I, as a young activist at that time, as many of my colleagues, am a graduate myself of a Historically Black University, Florida A&M University. And I might add, had it not been for Florida A&M University, Madam Speaker, I would not be standing in the Congress of the United States today.

Now, granted we've come a long way. However, there is still much, much work to do. I am living proof that minorities are able to elect the candidate of their choice as I was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives 34 years ago, becoming the youngest legislator to serve in the State House of Representatives at that time. I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to those who came before me, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 has been instrumental in achieving all of these successes.

I submit the following correspondence for the RECORD:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 6, 2008.

Hon. BARNEY FRANK,
Chairman, Financial Services Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN FRANK, I am writing regarding H.R. 2040, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 Commemorative Coin Act.

As you know, the Committee on Ways and Means maintains jurisdiction over bills that raise revenue. H.R. 2040 contains a provision that establishes a surcharge for the sale of commemorative coins that are minted under the bill, and thus falls within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means.

However, as part of our ongoing understanding regarding commemorative coin bills and in order to expedite this bill for Floor consideration, the Committee will forgo action. This is being done with the understanding that it does not in any way prejudice the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future.

I would appreciate your response to this letter, confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 2040, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the record.

Sincerely,

CHARLES B. RANGEL,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 6, 2008.

Hon. CHARLES B. RANGEL,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHARLIE: I am writing in response to your letter regarding H.R. 2040, the ''Civil Rights Act of 1964 Commemorative Coin Act,'' which was introduced in the House and referred to the Committee on Financial Services on April 25, 2007. It is my understanding that this bill will be scheduled for floor consideration shortly.

I wish to confirm our mutual understanding on this bill. As you know, section 7 of the bill establishes a surcharge for the sale of commemorative coins that are minted under the bill. I acknowledge your committee's jurisdictional interest in such surcharges as revenue matters. However, I appreciate your willingness to forego committee action on H.R. 2040 in order to allow

the bill to come to the floor expeditiously. I agree that your decision to forego further action on this bill will not prejudice the Committee on Ways and Means with respect to its jurisdictional prerogatives on this or similar legislation. I would support your request for conferees on these provisions within your jurisdiction should this bill be the subject of a House-Senate conference.

I will include this exchange of letters in the Congressional Record when this bill is considered by the House. Thank you again for your assistance.

BARNEY FRANK,
Chairman.

□ 1330

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HELLER of Nevada. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, it's a great honor to rise today to support passage of legislation honoring the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with the minting of a commemorative $1 coin.

It is a particular honor to be working on a bill sponsored by one of the heroes of the civil rights movement, Congressman JOHN LEWIS and my colleague DEBORAH PRYCE.

Madam Speaker, the Civil Rights Act is widely recognized as one of the most effective, influential pieces of legislation passed by the United States Congress in the last century. The statute helped dismantle the insidious system of legalized discrimination in voting and public accommodations in America and served as a model for subsequent civil rights laws. Equally important, the Civil Rights Act helped America belatedly reach the promise put forth by our Founding Fathers, that all men are indeed created equal.

The Act is the bedrock for the America we know today, a Nation that recognizes the equal rights of the disabled, women, the elderly, minority citizens, and other groups as invaluable contributors to our society, and all inherently equally deserving of the protections afforded by our Constitution.

The bill before us today provides for the minting of a Civil Rights Commemorative Coin, with the proceeds expected to raise up to $2.5 million for the United Negro College Fund, providing scholarships and internships for minority students and assisting our Nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities. As the bill honors our Nation's past, it helps to fund our Nation's future.

Madam Speaker, it is a great honor for me to be joined in this legislative effort by Congressman JOHN LEWIS. Mr. LEWIS, the principal sponsor, is a man whose courage, thoughtful advocacy, and leadership in the struggle for civil rights speaks for itself. His brave leadership in the first Selma to Montgomery march, and his support for nonviolent revolution in the face of the brutal attacks of that fateful Sunday are the very acts of courage the coin seeks to honor for future generations.

It is especially auspicious that we are taking up the bill this week, because Friday marks the tragic 40th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Today, we can help honor his legacy and his indelible and inalterable imprint on America by authorizing a tribute to his historic works in the form of a commemorative coin. While it is but a small tribute to a man who gave his life for our betterment, it is a permanent statement of gratitude from a Nation forever thankful for his vision, compassion, and determination.

Madam Speaker, pick up any newspaper in the country and you will see that the topic of race relations continues to be an important part of our American dialogue. But we should not be a Nation that hides from its past. We cannot sweep our past mistakes under the rug and refrain from debate on topics that we might find uncomfortable. Rather, we must know that the fight for equality for all is never ending and that recognizing and understanding our Nation's past is critical if we are to ensure a just America for all in the future.

The fight for civil rights continues, and the Civil Rights Commemorative Coin honors both our Nation's historic struggles and the promise for justice and equality for all the generations that will follow us.

I urge immediate passage of this bill, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Let me just extend my deep appreciation to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) for his kind words. They were very touching and meaningful. Thank you very much.

Now, Madam Speaker, if I may yield time to probably the most fitting and appropriate person to speak on this bill, the author of the bill, my friend and a man who has put his life on the line repeatedly for civil rights, for human rights and for making this country and the world the beloved place that we all seek. Let me yield as much time as he may need to my good friend, JOHN LEWIS of Georgia.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my friends and my two colleagues for those kind words.

I'm honored to stand here today as the chief sponsor of this legislation to recognize the brave and courageous men and women who paved the way for the historic, and necessary, set of laws we call the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

We would not be standing here today with this bill being considered on the floor, with 313 cosponsors, without the help of my good friend and colleague, Representative VIC SNYDER. Representative SNYDER was a champion of this bill. I appreciate his support of this bill and the ideas behind it.

I would also like to acknowledge Congresswoman DEBORAH PRYCE for her willingness to cosponsor this bill with me.

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks' brave act of defiance, refusing to give up her seat to a white person on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama, galvanized the modern-day civil rights movement. I remember as a young child, 15 years old, listening to the radio and hearing about Rosa Parks and the voice of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Their work inspired me and so many others to take up the cause of equality and join the movement. We must never forget the sacrifices that so many made.

I am proud, very proud, to be the lead sponsor of this legislation, which celebrates the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and to remember those who fought for its passage.

In 2014, the 50th anniversary of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, commemorative coins will be minted with the images of the brave men and women who fought, and even died, for these laws. These coins will serve as educational tools for our children and their children, so that the struggle that so many took part in will never, ever be forgotten.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was necessary, and it was right to pass. It greatly expanded civil rights protections. It outlawed segregation and racial discrimination in public places, places of public accommodation, the workplace, and even in federally funded programs. It also pushed to end segregation in our Nation's schools.

It is only right then that we are working with the United Negro College Fund to commemorate the 50th anniversary of this historic milestone. Discrimination in our education system was real. For many African Americans, their only hope for a college education was through a UNCF school. UNCF institutions were founded to provide an education for African Americans who were banned by law or by custom from seeking a college education in the all-white public and private universities of the South.

Today, UNCF continues their important mission of opening the doors to a college education. Over 60 percent of UNCF-supported students are the first in their families to attend college. By helping to fund the UNCF, these coins will put in reach a college education for first-generation students while also helping to ensure these important institutions of higher education remain open for future and unborn generations.

I'm proud to stand here today as we pay tribute to the 1964 Civil Rights Act and to remember those who made it possible. There is still much work to be done, and we must continue to fight today, tomorrow, and into the future.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote for this bill.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, now I would like to extend and yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, first of all, I want to thank Representative SCOTT from Georgia for yielding time, and I also want to commend the sponsor of this legislation

and recognize his tremendous leadership in the struggle for human rights since his teen years when he was a mere lad. We heard him mention the age of 15, and that's about the time that he became actively engaged and involved in the struggle for human rights.

This legislation highlights the Voting Rights Act of 1964, which even though all people in our country supposedly had the right to vote prior to that time, it provided the kind of protections that were necessary to make sure that those rights were not taken away, that those rights were not denied.

I also want to commend Representative LEWIS for his creative way of helping to raise money for the United Negro College Fund. I've been getting phone calls from my brother all week, and I know why he's calling me, because every year he and a friend of his, Jackis Casson, put on an event to raise money for the United Negro College Fund. And so he's been calling to solicit me to buy my tickets, and so the more money that we can generate through this legislation, the less money I might have to give.

So I commend you so much and thank you so much.

Mr. HELLER of Nevada. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, this has been an extraordinary occasion. It is very important to remember where we have been so that we will have a good guide to determine where we need to go, and we have done that this afternoon in not only memorializing this important Civil Rights Act, but using this memorial of the 50th anniversary of the passing of the Civil Rights Act to make a difference where it counts the most, and that is in helping with the education of our young people.

We have, indeed, made a difference here today. I recommend this bill, and we feel very strongly that we will get a unanimous vote on this bill.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2040 which is authored by my good friend from the Georgia delegation, Mr. JOHN LEWIS.

Almost 44 years ago, the Civil Rights Act was passed into law. The legislation was a long time in coming—in 1957 and 1960 similar legislation had failed to pass Congress, and many attempts were made to derail the bill that was eventually signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson on July 2, 1964.

However, the period leading up to passage of the Civil Rights Act seemed to happen in the blink of an eye compared to the long and arduous journey we have endured since. Ensuring equality for men and women of every race, creed, and orientation, though fixed in our laws in 1964, was not immediately fixed in the hearts and minds of the American people.

Martin Luther King once said, ''The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.''

So it has been with civil rights in this country. And, just as passage of antidiscrimination legislation did not end social discord in 1964, memorializing the Civil Rights Act on a coin from the U.S. Treasury, as H.R. 2040 proposes, does not mean discrimination has run its course in the United States. More than ever, as the United States struggles with the problem of so many foreign born living in this country, contemplates the idea of a black man or a woman as the President of this country, and negotiates with nations whose religion and morals differ widely from our own, we need to remember the values inherent in the Civil Rights Act.

I commend Mr. LEWIS and all the cosponsors for bringing this legislation to the floor and I urge all my colleagues to join us in support of it.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2040, requiring the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the semicentennial of the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, introduced by my distinguished colleague from Georgia, Representative JOHN LEWIS.

I speak out today to commemorate the progress we have made in casting out the demons of prejudice and discrimination. I speak out today recognize the steps we have taken as a Nation to get closer to the American Creed. However, I must also speak out today to call attention to the progress we have yet to make in order to fulfill the tenants of Civil Rights Act of 1964. I speak out today to challenge this Nation to uphold our founding principles of equal opportunity for all, regardless of race, color, sex, religion and national origin.

Though 44 years have passed since the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, today, in 2008, we are still witnessing horrible violations of the principles of this act. To cite a recent example, in Waller County, Texas, an attempted disenfranchisement of Prairie View A&M University students continues today, although the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed Prairie View A&M University student voter rights in 1979.

On November 5, 2003, the Waller County, Texas district attorney requested that the county Elections Administration bar the students at Historically Black College Prairie View A&M University from voting locally by virtue of his unilateral interpretation of ''domicile'' for voting purposes. Texas voter registration law only requires a person to be a resident of the county at least 30 days prior to the elections. African-American students represent the majority of Prairie View A&M's student body of 7,000 members, and these students constitute a major voting bloc in Waller County. The district attorney's request sought to effectively disenfranchise African-American college students in this area; as such, this request suggested a form of voter intimidation and likely had the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color. Despite a prolonged dialog with Texas officials regarding this matter, relief from the pressures and intimidation experienced by the students when attempting to exercise their rights was never provided. This example does not stand alone among the long list of discriminatory acts that continue to plague our Nation.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 Commemorative Coin Act requires the Secretary of the Treasury to mint and issue, during 2014, up to 350,000 $1 coins designed to be emblematic of the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its contribution to civil rights in America. This coin would symbolize our progress, commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and serve as a constant reminder of the work we still have to do. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 Commemorative Coin Act would also provide a surcharge of $10 per coin. All surcharges received in conjunction with the sale of this coin would be paid to the United Negro College Fund, UNCF. The $10 per coin surcharge will help the UNCF provide scholarships and internships for minority students. The money will also provide operating funds and technology enhancement services for 39 member historically Black colleges and universities throughout America.

Madam Speaker, this important legislation would commemorate a landmark event in our history as Americans. By requiring the Secretary of the Treasurer to mint coins in commemoration of the semicentennial of the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, this legislation will celebrate our history, while also pushing us forward into a better future. For these reasons, I strongly support H.R. 2040 and urge all Members to do the same.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2040, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR A NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR HARRIET ROSS TUBMAN

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 310) expressing support for a national day of remembrance for Harriet Ross Tubman.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 310

Whereas Harriet Ross Tubman was born into slavery in Bucktown, Maryland, in or around 1820;

Whereas in 1849 she escaped to Philadelphia and became a ''conductor'' on the Underground Railroad;

Whereas she was commonly referred to as ''Moses'' due to her courage and sacrifice in leading many enslaved persons out of bondage into freedom, endeavoring despite great hardship and danger of being re-enslaved;

Whereas Harriet Ross Tubman became an eloquent and effective speaker on behalf of the movement to abolish slavery;

Whereas during the Civil War, Harriet Ross Tubman assisted the Union Army as a cook, nurse, scout, spy, and became the first woman to lead an armed expedition in the war, leading to the liberation of more than seven hundred slaves;

Whereas after the Civil War, she became active in the women's suffrage movement and continued to fight for human dignity, human rights, opportunity, and justice;

Whereas in 1896, Harriet Ross Tubman purchased 25 acres of land in Auburn, New York, to create a home and hospital for indigent, aged, and sick African-Americans, which opened on June 23, 1908, as the Harriet Tubman Home for the Sick and Aged, becoming the only charity outside of New York City dedicated to the shelter and care of African-Americans in New York;

Whereas in 1944 the United States Maritime Commission launched the SS Harriet Tubman (Hull Number 3032), the first Liberty ship ever named for an African-American woman;

Whereas in 1978, Harriet Ross Tubman was the first honoree in the United States Postal Service Black Heritage Stamp Series;

Whereas the Episcopal Church has designated Harriet Ross Tubman a saint in its Book of Common Prayer;

Whereas Harriet Ross Tubman, whose courageous and dedicated pursuit of the promise of American ideals and common principles of humanity continues to serve and inspire all people who cherish freedom, died at her home in Auburn, New York, on March 10, 1913;

Whereas March 10, 1990, was designated as Harriet Ross Tubman Day and States such as Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, New York, and Texas host annual celebrations that honor the life of Harriet Tubman; and

Whereas we support honoring the contributions of Harriet Ross Tubman annually on March 10: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) supports the designation of a national day of remembrance for Harriet Ross Tubman; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to support and participate in appropriate ceremonies, programs, and other activities to commemorate a national day of remembrance for Harriet Ross Tubman.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

As a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of H. Con. Res. 310, which seeks to honor the life of Harriet Tubman and acknowledge the many sacrifices she made on behalf of freedom and the inalienable rights of all men and women.

She was a steadfast warrior for the values which we cherish today: freedom, justice, and equality for all. Without her, these values would not have been enjoyed by the dozens of African Americans that she rescued from slavery, in addition to many more that she helped by her unwavering commitment to emancipation.

□ 1345

H. Con. Res. 310 was introduced by Representative ELIJAH CUMMINGS of Maryland on March 5, 2008, and was considered by and reported from the Oversight Committee on March 13, 2008, by voice vote.

The measure has the support of over 60 Members of Congress and provides our body a collective opportunity to recognize and pay tribute to a woman who dedicated her life to ensuring equality and freedom, which stand at the foundation of our country, were afforded to all of its citizens, including those enslaved in the South.

Harriet Tubman was born Araminta Ross in 1820 to Harriet ''Rit'' Green and Ben Ross, a slave couple from Dorchester County, Maryland. From an early age, it was evident that Harriet Tubman was willing to put her life on the line to assist African Americans in escaping that peculiar institution we know as slavery. At 12 years old, she suffered a traumatic blow to the head from her overseer when she refused to help restrain a slave who was escaping. Due to the head injury she sustained, Harriet was plagued for the rest of her life with violent seizures and spells of unconsciousness.

Yet despite these ailments, Harriet Tubman continued to press on. In 1849 Harriet Tubman managed to escape from the plantation she worked on, located in the eastern part of Maryland. On her first trip up north, Tubman made great use out of the Underground Railroad and crossed over 90 miles to reach her final destination of Pennsylvania. Because of the dangers that lined every step of her journey, she had to travel at night, using the North Star for guidance. When she reached Philadelphia, she recalled that it felt like she was in heaven. Yet the memory of her family still in bondage caused Harriet to leave ''heaven'' and voluntarily return to the land of her enslavement. After the decision to save her family, she spent the majority of her life bringing individuals out of slavery by way of the Underground Railroad. In fact, Tubman became known as Moses because of her relentless efforts to aid more and more African American slaves out of captivity.

For 11 years Harriet Tubman risked her life to free over 70 slaves and their families. She also served as a Union spy during the Civil War and assisted abolitionist John Brown in recruiting men for the raid on Harpers Ferry in 1859. In the post-war era, Tubman devoted her efforts towards the women's suffrage movement up until her death in 1913. In a letter to honor her memory, Frederick Douglass wrote: ''Excepting John Brown, of sacred memory, I know of no one who has willingly encountered more perils and hardships to serve our enslaved people than she has.''

Madam Speaker, let us honor this true patriot for the courage and tenacity that she has shown in the face of great danger and great adversity. Harriet Tubman deserves our utmost respect and gratitude for her unconquerable valor, her harrowing dedication, and her unshakable faith all in the name of freedom. Therefore, I urge swift passage of H. Con. Res. 310.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution honoring Harriet Tubman.

Madam Speaker, Harriet Tubman is an American icon. She exemplified the ideals of courage, loyalty, and commitment in the face of adversity. After escaping from slavery in 1849, she immediately returned to Maryland at great personal risk to rescue her family members and others still bound in slavery. Some of the houses she used to stow escaped slaves are but a few miles from this very Chamber.

Over the course of her years as the self-described ''conductor'' of the Underground Railroad, Tubman led 13 missions into Maryland and rescued more than 70 slaves. She didn't stop with leading slaves to freedom. She also helped them find jobs, founded a community in Canada where freed slaves could be safe from fugitive slave laws, and later opened a home for elderly African Americans.

Tubman played an integral role in the 1859 raid on Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. She helped John Brown contact freed slaves and garnered support from other abolitionists and sympathizers in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware. As a member of the Union Army during the Civil War, Tubman became the first woman in American history to lead an armed expedition. When slavery finally ended in the United States, she turned her considerable talents and energies towards the women's suffrage movement. She represented all that is great about America: the ability, the will, and the wherewithal to do that which is right and, more importantly, to do it for precisely that reason.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank Mr. CUMMINGS for introducing this resolution, and I thank Mr. DAVIS for helping us shepherd this through the committee, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 310: Expressing support for a national day of remembrance for Harriet Ross Tubman. I wish to thank Representative CUMMINGS for sponsoring this important legislation.

Harriet Tubman was a remarkable woman, whose courage, struggle and dedication inspires respect and awe. It is appropriate that the Episcopal Church honors her as a saint.

Born into slavery, Harriet Ross did not know her exact date of birth. At the age of 12 years she refused to help a white overseer bind a recaptured slave. For her refusal she was hit in the head with a heavy rock; this injury was severe and its effects would plague her for the rest of her life. At the age of 30 Harriet Tubman would make her escape from slavery to

Canada by way of Philadelphia where she met William Stills and learned about the workings of the Underground Railroad. Tubman would go on to free hundreds from slavery and became known as ''Moses'' for her incredible bravery and sacrifice as she led the way to freedom as a ''conductor'' on the Underground Railroad. Harriet was a dedicated and outspoken member of the abolitionist movement.

During the Civil War she provided services as a nurse, cook, scout and spy for the Union Army, but was refused payment for her wartime service. She became an active member of the women's suffrage movement and went on to establish the Harriet Tubman Home for the Sick and Aged in Auburn, NY, in 1908. She worked to maintain this home, the only one of its kind outside of New York City, dedicated to the care and sanctuary of African-Americans in New York.

Harriet Tubman was a true heroine. I encourage the designation of a national day of remembrance to celebrate her life. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H. Con. Res. 310.

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 310, expressing support for a national day of remembrance for Harriet Ross Tubman.

I am proud to be a co-sponsor of this resolution which recognizes the courage and sacrifice with which Harriet Tubman led slaves out of bondage and into freedom. Her work was an important part of moving the U.S. toward a more perfect Union.

As an African-American woman who had been emotionally and physically abused by her owners, Harriet Tubman did the near impossible by freeing herself from a life of slavery. She also had the courage to continue on and help others, guiding hundreds of slaves out of abuse and fear and into freedom and respectful employment. Harriet Tubman not only fought against the most immediate inequalities experienced by African-American slaves, but reached out further, becoming active in the women's suffrage movement.

While the Civil War has long since ended and slavery been abolished, many Americans continue to be enslaved by new forms of abuse and discrimination. Domestic violence and economic inequality imprison many today in fear and submission. Thankfully, Harriet Tubman's actions continue to inspire Americans to find the courage to help each other. In Minnesota, her legacy is alive in the activities of the Tubman Family Alliance agency, which provides safe passage from violence for women and children, and helps them achieve their own freedom, just as Harriet Tubman helped so many people achieve freedom.

It is critical that we remember the courage with which this woman selflessly strove to help others despite the risk of enslavement and death. We must recognize and strive to emulate such bravery not just once a year, but all year. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important resolution.

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 310, expressing support for a national day of remembrance for Harriet Ross Tubman.

During the month of March, when we celebrate Women's History Month across the nation, it is important that we recognize and celebrate the immeasurable contributions of women such as Harriet Tubman, who bravely led our Nation in the abolitionist movement, taking enormous risks in her fight for the freedom and equality of all Americans.

Harriet Tubman was not only an abolitionist, leading more than 700 slaves to freedom, but served nobly in the Union Army during the Civil War as the first female to head an armed expedition.

Following her accomplishments in the Civil War, Harriet Tubman went on to be a leader in the women's suffrage movement, diligently fighting for women's right to vote, and founded the Harriet Tubman Home for the Sick and Aged, a home and hospital to care for elderly and ailing African-Americans in New York.

Her bravery and dedication to the principles of freedom and equality serve as a positive example to us today, as we continue working together to provide quality education, healthcare, housing, and opportunity to all Americans, regardless of race, gender or income.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 310, expressing support for a national day of remembrance for Harriet Ross Tubman, introduced by my distinguished colleague from Maryland, Representative CUMMINGS. Harriet Ross Tubman was an African-American abolitionist, humanitarian, and Union Spy during the United States Civil War and as such deserves to be honored for her brave service by members of the United States Congress.

Harriet Tubman was born into slavery in Dorchester County, Maryland, of purely African ancestry. Harriet Tubman was born Araminta ''Minty'' Ross to slave parents, Harriet ''Rit'' Green and Ben Ross. Rit was owned by Mary Pattison Brodess and later her son Edward, while Ben was legally owned by Mary's second husband, Anthony Thompson, who ran a large plantation near the Blackwater River in Dorchester County, Maryland. Tubman was beaten and whipped often by her various owners as a child. Early in life she suffered a traumatic head wound when an irate slave owner threw a heavy metal weight at her, intending to hit another slave. The injury caused disabling seizures, headaches, and powerful visionary and dream activity, and spells of hypersomnia which occurred throughout her entire life.

In 1849, Tubman became ill, and her value as a slave was diminished as a result. Edward Brodess tried to sell her but could not find a buyer. Angry at this effort and the unjust hold he kept on her relatives, Tubman began to pray for her owner, asking God to make him change his ways. After her sell was considered finalized she 'switched' tactics on how she was praying and one week later Brodess died. Tubman expressed regret for her earlier sentiments. Ironically, Brodess's death increased the likelihood that Tubman would be sold and the family would be broken apart. Tubman refused to wait for the Brodess' family to decide her fate, despite her husband's efforts to dissuade her. ''There was one of two things I had a right to,'' she says, ''liberty or death; if I could not have one, I would have the other.''

Harriet Tubman was given a piece of paper by a white neighbor with two names, and told how to find her path to freedom. In 1849, Tubman escaped to Philadelphia. At the first house she was put into a wagon, covered with a sack, and driven to her next destination. Following the paper in route to Pennsylvania, she initially settled in Philadelphia, where she met William Still, the Philadelphia Stationmaster on the Underground Railroad. With the assistance of Still, and other members of the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society, she learned about the workings of the UGRR. She immediately returned to rescue her family. Slowly, one group at a time she brought relatives with her out of state, and eventually guided dozens of other slaves to freedom.

Traveling by night with extreme caution, Tubman never lost a passenger. Heavy rewards were offered for many of the people she helped free, but no one knew it was Harriet Tubman who was helping them. When a far-reaching United States Fugitive Slave Law was passed in 1850, she helped guide fugitives further north into Canada, and helped newly-freed slaves find work. In 1851 she began relocating members of her family to St. Catharines, Ontario Canada West. North Street in St. Catharines remained her base of operations until 1857. While there she worked various odd jobs to finance her activities as a Conductor on the UGRR, and attended the Salem Chapel BME Church on Geneva Street. Word of her exploits had encouraged her family, and biographers agree that she became more confident with each trip to Maryland. As she led more and more individuals out of slavery, she became popularly known as ''Moses''—an allusion to the prophet in the book of Exodus who led the Hebrews to freedom.

When the American Civil War broke out in 1861, Tubman saw a Union victory as a key step toward the abolition of slavery. Tubman hoped to offer her own expertise and skills to the Union cause, too, and soon she joined a group of Boston and Philadelphia abolitionists heading to the Hilton Head District in South Carolina. She became a fixture in the camps, particularly in Port Royal, South Carolina, assisting fugitives. Tubman worked for the Union Army, first as a cook and nurse, and then as an armed scout and spy. The first woman to lead an armed expedition in the war, she guided the raid on the Combahee River, which liberated more than seven hundred slaves.

Harriet Tubman, widely known and well-respected while she was alive, became an American icon in the years after her death. In all she is believed to have conducted approximately 300 persons to freedom in the North. The tales of her exploits reveal her highly spiritual nature, as well as a grim determination to protect her charges and those who aided them. She always expressed confidence that God would aid her efforts, and threatened to shoot any of her charges who thought to turn back. When she died, Tubman was buried with military honors at Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn.

Today, I seek to offer my condolences for her death, and also recognize her lifetime of accomplishments. For these reasons, I strongly support H. Con. Res. 310 and urge all my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr.

DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 310.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF BORDERLINE PERSONALITY AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1005) supporting the goals and ideals of Borderline Personality Awareness Month, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1005

Whereas borderline personality disorder (BPD) affects the regulation of emotion and afflicts approximately 2 percent of the general population;

Whereas BPD is a leading cause of suicide, as an estimated 10 percent of individuals with this disorder take their own lives;

Whereas BPD usually manifests itself in adolescence and early adulthood;

Whereas symptoms of BPD include self-injury; rage; substance abuse; destructive impulsiveness; a pattern of unstable emotions, self-image, and relationships; and may result in suicide;

Whereas BPD is inheritable and is exacerbated by environmental factors;

Whereas official recognition of BPD is relatively new, and diagnosing it is often impeded by lack of awareness and frequent co-occurrence with other conditions, such as depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, anxiety, and eating disorders;

Whereas despite its prevalence, enormous public health costs, and the devastating toll it takes on individuals, families, and communities, BPD only recently has begun to command the attention it requires;

Whereas it is essential to increase awareness of BPD among people suffering from this disorder, their families, mental health professionals, and the general public by promoting education, research, funding, early detection, and effective treatments; and

Whereas the National Education Alliance for Borderline Personality Disorder and the National Alliance on Mental Illness have requested that Congress designate May as Borderline Personality Disorder Awareness Month as a means of educating our Nation about this disorder, the needs of those suffering from it, and its consequences: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives supports the goals and ideals of Borderline Personality Disorder Awareness Month.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of H. Res. 1005, as amended, which expresses support for greater recognition of the goals and ideals of Borderline Personality Awareness Month.

H. Res. 1005 was introduced by Representative TOM DAVIS of Virginia, a longstanding member and leader on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, on February 27, 2008, and has the support and cosponsorship of over 50 Members of Congress. The measure was considered by the Oversight panel on March 13, 2008, and was passed by voice vote at that time after being amended for technical purposes.

Madam Speaker, while many people may not be aware of borderline personality disorder, it is a mental illness that is more common than bipolar disorder and schizophrenia and has been found to affect a little over 2 percent of adults, particularly young women.

BPD, as it is commonly referred to as, is a serious mental illness characterized by pervasive instability in moods, interpersonal relationships, self-image, and behavior. The instability caused by this illness often leads to disruptions in one's family and work life, long-term planning, and ultimately a person's sense of self-identity.

Each and every one of us has a personality; however, for those individuals who suffer from personality traits that are inflexible, maladaptive, or psychologically disruptive, more research and awareness on borderline personality disorder is an absolute must. And that is why I rise in support of H. Res. 1005. Passage of this measure will help to raise the profile and the general public's understanding of borderline personality disorder and the corresponding BPD month of awareness.

I commend Representative DAVIS from Virginia for introducing this legislation and urge its passage.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, mental illness affects Americans all across the Nation. It afflicts those of us from all races, colors, religions, and income levels. It doesn't wait for a convenient time to surface. It strikes indiscriminately, without regard to the challenges, pain, and anguish it visits upon the families and friends of its victims.

It is important that we recognize the struggle people with these afflictions endure as they strive for a normal life. It is equally important we recognize the struggles visited upon those friends and family members who have to cope with the disease and, often, the victim him or herself.

Today, this House will take an important step in raising awareness of a little known and often misunderstood mental illness. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the designation of May as Borderline Personality Awareness Month.

Borderline personality disorder is a devastating psychiatric disorder caused by the inability of the afflicted individual to manage emotions effectively. Symptoms of this disorder include impulsivity, mood swings, episodes of rage, bodily self-harm, chaotic relationships, and fear of abandonment. Some people with this disorder can't hold a job. Others are high functioning. But in any case their private lives are often in turmoil.

More than 3 million American adults have borderline personality disorder. Twenty percent of patients admitted to psychiatric hospitals have borderline personality disorder. Their victims have a suicide rate 400 times that of the general population.

Madam Speaker, these numbers call us to action. Although this disorder was officially recognized by the psychiatric community in 1980, studies have shown it lags far behind in research, treatment options, and family education compared to other psychiatric disorders of similar prevalence. With passage of H. Res. 1005, this House will take an important step in spreading awareness of this disorder. Madam Speaker, the National Alliance on Mental Illness maintains a help line at 1–800–950–6264 for general information on mental illness. This help line can help those in need of assistance.

I am proud to have sponsored this resolution and am greatly encouraged by our considering of it today. Passage of this will go a long way to increase awareness of its existence and the heavy toll this disorder takes on our society. I applaud the work the National Alliance on Mental Illness and the National Education Alliance on Borderline Personality Disorder have been doing throughout our Nation in this vital area.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 1005, a resolution supporting the designation of May as Borderline Personality Disorder Awareness Month. I want to thank my colleague TOM DAVIS for his leadership on an issue that is very important to many Americans.

Borderline personality disorder is a serious mental health illness that centers on the inability of people to manage their emotions effectively. Approximately 4 million Americans suffer from borderline personality disorder. Its symptoms include destructive impulsiveness, rage, marked shifts in mood, bodily self-harm,

chaotic relationships, fears of abandonment, substance abuse, and unstable self-identity. Although it was officially recognized in 1980 by the psychiatric community, borderline personality disorder is at least two decades behind in research, treatment options, and education compared to other major mental illnesses.

Borderline personality disorder can have a devastating impact on people's lives. While some persons with this disorder may be functioning normally in certain settings, their private lives are often in turmoil. Others are unable to work and require financial support. If Americans would like more information on borderline personality disorder, I encourage them to visit the National Education Alliance for Borderline Personality Disorder Web site at www.neabpd.org or the National Alliance on Mental Illness Web site at www.nami.org.

Madam Speaker, this resolution acknowledges the pressing burden of those afflicted with borderline personality disorder and seeks to spread awareness of this under-recognized, and often misunderstood, mental illness. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1005, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1400

SUPPORTING THE GOALS, IDEALS, AND HISTORY OF NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1021) supporting the goals, ideals, and history of National Women's History Month, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1021

Whereas the purpose of National Women's History Month is to increase awareness and knowledge of women's involvement in history;

Whereas as recently as the 1970s, women's history was rarely included in the kindergarten through grade 12 curriculum and was not part of public awareness;

Whereas the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County (California) Commission on the Status of Women initiated a ''Women's History Week'' celebration in 1978 centered around International Women's History Day, which is celebrated on March 8th;

Whereas in 1981, responding to the growing popularity of women's history celebrations, Congress passed a resolution making Women's History Week a national observance;

Whereas during this time, using information provided by the National Women's History Project, founded in Sonoma County, California, thousands of schools and communities joined in the commemoration of National Women's History Week, with support and encouragement from governors, city councils, school boards, and Congress;

Whereas in 1987, the National Women's History Project petitioned Congress to expand the national celebration to include the entire month of March;

Whereas educators, workplace program planners, parents, and community organizations in thousands of American communities, under the guidance of the National Women's History Project, have turned National Women's History Month into a major local learning experience and celebration;

Whereas the popularity of women's history celebrations has sparked a new interest in uncovering women's forgotten heritage;

Whereas the President's Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History was established to consider how best to acknowledge and celebrate the roles and accomplishments of women in American history;

Whereas the National Women's History Museum was founded in 1996 as an institution dedicated to preserving, interpreting, and celebrating the diverse historic contributions of women, and integrating this rich heritage fully into the Nation's teachings and history books;

Whereas the House of Representatives recognizes March, 2008, as National Women's History Month; and

Whereas the theme of National Women's History Month for 2008 is visionary female artists and their contribution to our cultural heritage: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Women's History Month;

(2) recognizes and honors the women and organizations in the United States that have fought for and continue to promote the teaching of women's history; and

(3) reaffirms its commitment to promoting National Women's History Month, which this year honors female artists.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SERRANO). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she might consume to the author of this legislation, Representative LYNN WOOLSEY of California.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, March was the 20th Annual National Women's History Month. That is why I am so pleased to introduce H. Res. 1021, a resolution to recognize and honor this National Women's History Celebration.

In America, women were once considered second-class citizens, whose rights were restricted from voting to property ownership, actually. But here we are today; one woman is a major candidate for President of our Nation and another woman is Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Sadly, until the late 1970s, women's history wasn't taught in many of our schools, and was almost completely absent in media coverage and cultural celebrations. That is why the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women, which I chaired, initiated a Women's History Week Celebration in 1978. This celebration centered around International Women's History Day.

The National Women's History Project, located in my district, was founded in 1980 by many dedicated women who poured their hearts and their ideas into promoting and expanding the weeklong celebration. With the help of several dedicated women, including Mary Ruthsdotter, Molly Murphy MacGregor, Maria Cuevas, Paula Hammett, and Betty Morgan, thousands of schools and communities joined in the commemoration of Women's History Week by bringing specific lessons on women's achievements into the classroom, by staging parades to engage neighborhoods in the celebration.

Their hard work, their dedication paid off. The celebration started a national movement. And in 1981, Congress responded to the growing popularity of Women's History Week by making it a national observance and eventually expanding the week to a month in 1987. Imagine what American history lessons would be today without the inclusion of Harriet Tubman's Underground Railroad operation, or Mary Katherine Goddard, who was the first person to print the Declaration of Independence with the names of all the signers included.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in reaffirming our commitment to the celebration of women's history by supporting H. Res. 1021 that will ensure that our grandchildren and our great grandchildren learn and care about women like Amelia Earhart and eventually of course the first woman President.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman WAXMAN, I want to thank Ranking Member DAVIS, and Chairman DAVIS for supporting this resolution, as they have continually supported the efforts of all women. Supporting this resolution will make it impossible to study American history without remembering the contributions of women as well. So I thank you all.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me start by thanking and congratulating the gentlelady from California for bringing this resolution to the floor. It was given a lot of thought. This is something that I think is very, very important, and I am honored to speak in support of H. Res. 1021, recognizing and celebrating Women's History Month.

Each March we express appreciation for the brilliance, bravery and determination women have demonstrated throughout U.S. history. Women in the United States often found themselves second-class citizens in their own country. They have had to fight for many of the rights men always have enjoyed; to vote, to own property, even in some cases, to be obtain an education.

From the iron will of Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams and mother of John Quincy Adams, who wrote that women, ''will not ourselves bound by any laws which we have no voice,'' to the reforms advanced by Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony, women have stood for their country by standing up for themselves.

The contributions made by women to our Nation can't be overlooked. Clara Barton, a Civil War nurse, founded the American Red Cross. Amelia Earhart was a pioneer in aviation. Harriet Tubman, who we honored earlier today, an escaped African American slave, risked everything to bring others to freedom as the conductor of the Underground Railroad. The Women's Suffrage Movement finally made America whole.

Today, American women enjoy many of the fruits of these early labors. They serve at or near the highest levels of government, business and other positions of power and influence. The doors to careers, education and achievement seem as open to them as to men. But that doesn't mean the struggle is over or that heroines of the past should be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members to join me by supporting this resolution. I want to again thank Representative WOOLSEY for bringing this to our attention and thank Chairman WAXMAN and Chairman DAVIS for their assistance in bringing this to the floor.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I too want to thank and commend Representative WOOLSEY for her introduction of this legislation. I also want to thank the 200 women who attended a town hall meeting which I held in my district on Sunday in recognition of Women's History Month. I want to thank Reverend Helen Cooper, Pastor of the Westside Center of Truth Church for being the host.

As a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of H. Res. 1021, as amended, which is designed to provide recognition and support for National Women's History Month, which just ended yesterday with the conclusion of the month of March.

H. Res. 1021 was first introduced by Representative LYNN WOOLSEY of California on March 3, 2008, and has the support and cosponsorship of 80-plus Members of Congress, both men and women from both sides of the aisle. The measure was considered by the Oversight panel on March 13, 2008, and was passed by voice vote after being amended for technical purposes.

Mr. Speaker, I guess it's only accurate to say that history, whether American or International, would not have been written as it is without the role of women. But all too often the vast significance of women throughout history goes unnoticed and under appreciated, which is why organizers in Sonoma County, California, established back in 1978 a public celebration of women's history, calling it Women's History Week. In 1987, Congress expanded the celebration to a month, and March was declared Women's History Month.

Since the 1970s, we in America have seen notable growth in the study and expansion of women's history. In fact, today almost every college offers women's history courses and most major graduate programs offer doctoral degrees in this important field.

Even today, we continue to witness history makers. From our very own Speaker of the House, to top Presidential contenders, business women, scientists and athletes, women are clearly making key contributions to our communities, our country, and our world. As we celebrate female artists and their contributions to our cultural heritage as this year's theme of National Women's History Month, let us as a body once again elevate and support the goals, ideas and history of Women's History Month and pass the measure at hand.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it's now my pleasure to yield such time as she might consume to Representative TSONGAS of Massachusetts.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate National Women's History Month, and particularly this year's focus on female artists. I commend the organizations and communities across the country that celebrated Women's History Month by educating people about the many contributions women in the arts have made. My hometown of Lowell, Massachusetts, is a great example.

The hard work of members of the Lowell community made Lowell Women's Week 2008 a great success by bringing together diverse organizations that held art displays and workshops all around women's art and history. In Lowell, women's commitment to the arts coincided with the cities founding as this country's first planned industrial city. At the time of its founding in the late 19th century, the young women working the textile mills also published a literary magazine of essays and poetry entitled: The Lowell Offering.

Without commemorative months like this one, some of our most interesting women's history would be forgotten. This resolution rightly honors female artists of the past. But I also salute the many women who throughout our communities tirelessly support the arts through philanthropic means or with their time and effort.

I hope the passage of this resolution today does not mark the end of a month of remembrance, but is a catalyst for renewed interest in learning what great women of the past have given us.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1021, supporting the goals, ideals, and history of National Women's History Month.

As recently as the 1970s, women's history was largely unaddressed in school curriculum and among the general public. In 1987, the National Women's History Project petitioned Congress to expand the national celebration of Women's History from 1 week to the entire month of March. Since then, the National Women's History Month Resolution has passed both Chambers of Congress with bipartisan support each year.

Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have been a strong supporter of Women's Rights, such as guaranteeing that women and families have adequate time to care for themselves and family members when they become ill, without facing the loss of job security and wages. As a member of the Health Subcommittee, I have worked diligently with my colleagues in Congress to bring increased awareness and services for women's health issues, such as early detection and treatment of ovarian cancer. Since its inception in 1987, Women's History Month, under the guidance of the National Women's History Project, has become a renowned celebration of the accomplishments of women everywhere, recognizing the limitless opportunities that women have in the modern world, and generating a renewed interest in the rich cultural heritage of women.

This year during Women's History Month, we celebrate female artists and their contribution of originality, beauty, and imagination to the art world. I hope that we will continue to work together in Congress to support the cultural contributions of women, and critical women's rights and women's health issues, not only during Women's History Month, but year round.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 1021, which supports the goals and ideals of National Women's History Month and pays honor to those who promote the teaching of women's history.

I commend the National Women's History Project, which was founded in northern California, for establishing the legacy of Women's History Month; and I thank Congresswoman WOOLSEY, a fellow Californian, for bringing this important resolution to the floor today.

From the earliest days of our great Republic, women have been marginalized throughout many parts of society. But as our country has developed, so too have the rights and responsibilities of women. In 1917, Jeanette Rankin blazed a path for women in Congress, putting

the first crack in our country's highest glass ceiling. Only 3 years later, our Nation ratified the 19th Amendment, guaranteeing that political enfranchisement in America will never be denied due to gender. In 1964, the Civil Rights Act extended gender protections to the workplace and beyond. And as Members of the 110th Congress, we have the privilege to serve alongside a woman who ably executes this institution's highest office and who is the most senior female in American political history.

However, the journey from disenfranchisement and marginalization is not complete. Women working full time still earn 80 cents to every dollar earned by men. In this House—the greatest representative body in the world—the number of women serving is hardly proportional to the population we represent.

In addressing these persistent inequities, I believe we will be well served by a thorough understanding of the great strides taken by women in the past. A study of women's history is a study of America's path toward greater equality and liberty. The story of women in our country lights the way to the fulfillment of our highest ideals.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution honors the decision made over two decades ago to set aside time for the teaching of women's history, and it highlights the salience of women's history as we chart a course for the future. I commend Ms. WOOLSEY for her leadership on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to join in affirming the importance of National Women's History Month.

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, I affirm today my support for H. Res. 1021, supporting the goals, ideals, and history of National Women's History Month. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this resolution demonstrating the commitment of the House of Representatives to promoting National Women's History Month, which this year celebrates female artists and their contribution of originality, beauty, and imagination to the world of art.

I am proud that my home state of South Dakota has a strong tradition of women in the arts and I would like to thank South Dakotans for the Arts for its work promoting the arts and supporting women artists in my home state. I'd like to describe for my colleagues some of the talented and remarkable women artists and authors that have found inspiration in hills and prairies of South Dakota.

Women in South Dakota have done the work of art throughout our history, beginning with our First Peoples and continuing today.

Native American women practice traditional art forms passed from generation to generation, adapting changes in materials and technique to add beauty and new texture to the traditional art. Their work includes the quillwork and quilts of Alice New Holy Blue Legs and Nellie Star Boy Menard, as well as the contemporary silver of Linda Szabo and paintings of Joanne Bird.

Some of South Dakota's pioneer women artists arrived in the Dakota Territory after studying at major schools of art in New York, Boston, Chicago, and Paris. They helped to bring the artistic disciplines of the East and Europe to the Northern Plains. As new colleges and universities were opened in what is present-day South Dakota, women helped to found departments of art and joined the teaching faculty.

In South Dakota, these pioneer artists and teachers included two very influential women who contributed both through their own artwork and through their dedication to their students.

Grace French, born in 1858, arrived in Rapid City, Dakota Territory in 1885. She painted the remarkably beautiful landscapes of the area with color and subtlety, adding poetry and beauty to the popular imagination of the Plains and the West.

Ada Bertha Caldwell was born in 1869 and graduated from the School of the Art Institute in Chicago. She accepted a position at Springfield College at Yankton, South Dakota. In 1900, she founded the Department of Art at what is now South Dakota State University, and was a teacher and major influence for Harvey Dunn, a noted illustrator and painter of pioneer life on the South Dakota prairie.

South Dakotans also celebrate the many talented women in literature that have enriched our lives and deepened our understanding of a sense of place and history with their stories. American favorites from South Dakota include Laura Ingalls Wilder, Linda Hasselstrom, Kathleen Norris and Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve.

For these few examples and numerous others, I am pleased to join with my colleagues today to honor these women artists and authors. May their contributions continue to provide joy, education, and inspiration to future generations on the Northern Plains and throughout our Nation.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Women's History Month. April was designated as Women's History Month in 1987 to honor women and the achievements they have made throughout the years. I want to pay special tribute to my female colleagues in the California delegation.

I am proud that California has led the way in electing women to some of the highest offices in the federal government. Currently, there are 19 women from California in the House of Representatives, more than any other state. Among these are the Speaker of the House, a Chair and a vice-Chair, and 12 subcommittee Chairs. These women, who hold leadership positions, wield an enormous amount of power that was un-heard-of just a couple of decades ago.

In the fall of 2006, the American people elected the Democrats to the majority and as a result, they put into motion a process that would ultimately break one of the ''glass ceilings'' for women in politics. After she was sworn in, NANCY PELOSI, the first ever female Speaker of the House said, ''It says to women everywhere that not only a glass ceiling but a marble ceiling can be broken and that anything is possible.'' This was an historical day for women, not only from the United States, but from around the world. I have talked to numerous women who have mentioned watching this momentous occasion on TV.

These women hold their positions in part because of the hard work of women like Jeannette Rankin of Montana, who served from 1917–1919 and again in 1941–1943; Mae Ella Nolan of California, who served from 1923–1925; Florence Kahn of California, who served from 1925–1937; and Helen Douglas of California, who served from 1945–1951. These women were pioneers in the field of politics at a time when politics was a man's purview. Thanks to these women, we have elected the first woman Speaker of the House, who is third in line for the Presidency.

Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute to the women across the country, and around the world, who have made history by their varied accomplishments. And the women who have come before you and have helped lead the way for women in the political arena.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1021, expressing support for the goals, ideals, and history of National Women's History Month. I would like to thank my friend and colleague, Congresswoman WOOLSEY, for introducing this legislation, which I am proud to cosponsor. Let me also thank the chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, Chairman WAXMAN, for bringing this resolution before us today.

The purpose of National Women's History Month is to increase awareness and knowledge of women's involvement in history. I strongly believe that it is vital to honor the originality, beauty, imagination, and multiple dimensions of women's lives. As recently as the 1970s, women's history was rarely taught in schools, and was not part of public awareness. To address this situation, the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County, California, Commission on the Status of Women initiated a ''Women's History Week'' celebration for 1978. In 1981, in response to the growing popularity of women's history celebrations, Congress passed a resolution making Women's History Week a national observance. Within a few years, thousands of schools and communities across the country were celebrating National Women's History Week.

The popularity of women's history celebrations has sparked a new interest in uncovering women's forgotten heritage. Under the guidance of the National Women's History Project, educators, workplace program planners, parents and community organizations in thousands of American communities have turned National Women's History Month into a major celebration and a springboard for celebrating women's history all year round.

Mr. Speaker, in the early days of our great Nation, women were relegated to second class status. Women were considered subsets of their husbands, and after marriage they did not have the right to own property, maintain their wages, or sign a contract, much less vote. It was expected that women be obedient wives, never to hold a thought or opinion independent of their husbands. It was considered improper for women to travel alone or to speak in public.

The fight for women's suffrage was formally begun in 1848, and, in 1919, after years of petitioning, picketing, and protest parades, the 19th amendment was passed by both Houses of Congress; it was ratified the following year.

However, the right to vote did not give women equal rights, and subsequent decades saw an ongoing struggle for equality. A major success came with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. This law, enacted in June 1972, states ''No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.''

Title XI, introduced by Congresswoman Patsy Mink, also notable as the first Asian American woman elected to Congress, has opened countless doors to educational activities, perhaps most prominently including high

school and collegiate athletics, to women. Congresswoman Mink's legacy lives on as, each year, hundreds of women across the Nation participate in NCAA athletics, learn teamwork and perseverance, earn scholarships enabling them to study at college, and enjoy equal footing with men in the academic arena.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to pay tribute to the women, local heroes, of my district. Women like Ramona Tolliver, long time Fifth Ward resident, former precinct chair, founding board member of Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation, member of Our Mother of Mercy Catholic Church, and member of the Metropolitan Organization, who is still actively advocating for her community. Women like Nellie Joyce Punch, long time Fifth Ward resident, retired educator at Phyllis Wheatley High School, former precinct chair, founding board member of Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation, member of the Methodist Church, also actively working on behalf of her community. Both Ms. Tolliver and Ms. Punch are active in Houston's Fifth Ward, where they act as the conscience for the community, calling for change and actively working to better our city.

Women like Dr. Charlesetta Deason, principal of Houston's DeBakey High School for Health Professions. Dr. Deason helms a school that offers students interested in science and health careers an alternative to the traditional high school experience, located in the renowned Texas Medical Center and boasting an ethnically diverse faculty and an excellent introductory study of medicine.

Or women like Harris County Commissioner Sylvia Garcia, the first Hispanic and first woman to be elected in her own right to the office. Commissioner Garcia is active in the Houston community, and she has served on more than 25 community boards and commissions, including the San Jacinto Girl Scouts, the Houston Hispanic Forum, the American Leadership Forum, the Texas Southern University Foundation, and the Institute of Hispanic Culture.

As a Nation, we have come a long way toward recognizing the important role women play, not only in our local communities, but in our Nation as a whole. Since 1917, when Representative Jeannette Rankin of Montana became the first woman to serve in Congress, 243 more women have served as U.S. Representatives or Senators. In 1968, Shirley Chisholm became the first African American woman elected to Congress; I am now proud to be one of 13 African American women serving in this body.

In addition, we are now, for the first time, under the leadership of a woman Speaker of the House. Speaker PELOSI has led this Democratic Congress in a new direction, listening to the will of the American people, as it was clearly expressed last November.

Mr. Speaker, the great tragedy of women's history is that, many times, the history of women is not written down. Too often, throughout the course of history, the contributions of women have gone unrecorded, unheralded, and are now forgotten. And so, Mr. Speaker, during Women's History Month, we do not stand here only to remember the Eleanor Roosevelts, Harriet Tubmans, and Rosa Parks, women who are now celebrated in our schools and history books, but also the millions of female unsung heroes who built this Nation, and who made it truly great.

I would like to pay special tribute to women, mothers, and grandmothers across the country. In particular, I would like to draw attention to the growing phenomenon of grandparents raising children. As of 1996, 4 million children were being raised by their grandparents, and statistics published the following year indicated that more than one-tenth of all grandparents provided the primary care for their grandchildren for at least 6 months and typically much longer. These numbers continue to grow, and these grandparents, generally ineligible for financial or social support, often suffer greatly to provide a safe and loving home for these children.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, we pay tribute to the brave women who serve proudly in our Nation's military. We have come a long way since the first American woman soldier, Deborah Sampson of Massachusetts, who enlisted as a Continental Army soldier under the name of ''Robert Shurtlief.'' Women served with distinction in World War II: 350,000 American women served during World War II, and 16 were killed in action. In total, they gained over 1,500 medals, citations, and commendations. In December 1989, CPT Linda L. Bray, 29, became the first woman to command American soldiers in battle, during the invasion of Panama.

The war in Iraq marks the first time in American history that a substantial number of the combat wounded are women. 350,000 women are serving in the U.S. military—almost 15 percent of active duty personnel, and one in every seven troops in Iraq is a woman. Women play a role in nearly all types of military operation, and they have time and time again demonstrated extreme bravery, courage, and patriotism.

I would particularly like to honor one of our heroic daughters: Army SPC Monica L. Brown. Brown is the first woman in Afghanistan and only the second female soldier since World War II to receive the Silver Star, the Nation's third-highest medal for valor. Army SPC Monica Brown was part of a four-vehicle convoy patrolling near Jani Kheil in the eastern province of Paktia on April 25, 2007, when a bomb struck one of the Humvees. After the explosion, in which five soldiers in her unit were wounded, Brown ran through insurgent gunfire and used her body to shield wounded comrades as mortars fell less than 100 yards away. Army Specialist Brown, a native Texan, represents the best of our Nation's fighting men and women, and she clearly demonstrates that the admirable qualities of patriotism, valor, and courage know no gender.

Mr. Speaker, Women's History Month is an opportunity for all Americans to reflect on the women who have built, strengthened, and maintained this great Nation. Women who have often gone unrecognized and unheralded for their great achievements, sacrifices, and contributions. I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the women in their communities, in their families, and in their lives.

I, along with the residents of the 18th Congressional District of Texas, recognize the unique contributions of women throughout the course of American history. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I had some other speakers who had intended to be here. Unfortunately, they have not arrived, and I would yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1021, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CODY GRATER POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5168) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 19101 Cortez Boulevard in Brooksville, Florida, as the ''Cody Grater Post Office Building''.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5168

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CODY GRATER POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 19101 Cortez Boulevard in Brooksville, Florida, shall be known and designated as the ''Cody Grater Post Office Building''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Cody Grater Post Office Building''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1415

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleagues, particularly the gentlewoman from the Sunshine State of Florida, in consideration of H.R. 5168, which names the postal facility in Brooksville, Florida, after a fallen hero, Army Specialist Cody Grater.

Introduced on January 29, 2008, H.R. 5168 is offered by Congresswoman

GINNY BROWN-WAITE, Representative of Florida's Fifth Congressional District, and is cosponsored by the State's entire congressional delegation. Congresswoman GINNY BROWN-WAITE's measure, H.R. 5168, was reported from the Oversight Committee on February 26, 2008, by voice vote.

This morning's postal naming bill honoring Specialist Grater brings to life the tragic yet heroic story of another American soldier who gave his life in service to this great country of ours.

A native of Spring Hill, Florida, Specialist Cody Grater was tragically killed on July 29, 2007, when his guard position was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade near Baghdad in Iraq. Specialist Grater was only 20 years old when he lost his life in the line of duty as a member of the 407th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division out of Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

The son of Anita Lewis and Larry Decker, Cody Grater joined the Army in April of 2006, and for his service, although short-lived, he has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart. It is reported that during his burial service at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida, the streets were lined for miles with well-wishers and people waving flags, saluting and crying in tribute to a true American hero.

Mr. Speaker, let us also join that host of well-wishers, loved ones and friends of Specialist Cody Grater and pass H.R. 5168, designating the Cortez Boulevard Post Office Building in Brooksville, Florida, in his honor.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the author of this legislation, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE).

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. I thank the gentleman for recognizing me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 5168, which will rename the post office on Cortez Boulevard in Brooksville, Florida, after Private First Class Cody Grater. Cody was a resident from my district who lived in Spring Hill. He gave the ultimate sacrifice, his life, for his country while serving in Iraq.

Cody Grater joined the Army in 2006 when he was only 19 years old. Actually, my grandson went to high school with him, so this tragedy certainly did hit home with our family. Cody was proud to be serving his country and hoped to make a career out of his service in the Army. By the time of his death in July 2007, Cody had received the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star Medal, the Combat Action Badge and many other honors.

While serving on guard duty in Baghdad, the rooftop where Cody stood guard was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade. Just two weeks earlier, Cody been on leave in Florida with his family, where he was telling people about his previous experiences in Iraq, sharing it with his friends, family and former high school mates. Even though he was just at the halfway point of his tour of duty, Cody expressed plans to reenlist after his initial service in the Army was completed.

I hope that this act of renaming the post office will memorialize Cody's brave and selfless life. Cody Grater epitomizes the courage and patriotism of our volunteer military, and we must never forget his great sacrifice to our Nation.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, which rightfully honors Cody Grater.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation to rename the post office located at 19101 Cortez Boulevard in Brooksville, Florida, in honor of Private First Class Cody Grater.

Private First Class Grater's love for his country can't be disputed, of course. He joined the U.S. Army as soon as he finished Springstead High School in Florida, and then made the ultimate sacrifice, laying down his life for the country he held dear.

Growing up in Hernando County, Florida, Cody enjoyed working with cars and reading military-themed books. This, of course, led him to join the Army in April of 2006, where he was assigned to the 40th Brigade Battalion, 2nd Brigade Command Team, and then reassigned to the 82nd Airborne Division.

On July 29, 2007, Private First Class Grater was standing post on a rooftop of an outpost in Baghdad when he and a fellow comrade were struck by a rocket-propelled grenade. Tragically, 20-year-old Pfc. Grater was killed.

Among his many awards and decorations for his remarkable achievements were the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Army Service Ribbon and the Combat Action Badge.

Pfc. Grater loved serving his country and firmly believed he was making a difference. With gratitude for his bravery and sacrifice to our country, I ask all Members to join me in voting to rename the post office located at 19101 Cortez Boulevard in Brooksville, Florida, in his honor.

I want to thank Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE for bringing this legislation forward, and Chairman WAXMAN and Chairman DAVIS for their assistance in moving this to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5168.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PAYING ATTORNEYS OF INDIGENT DEFENDANTS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5551) to amend title 11, District of Columbia Official Code, to implement the increase provided under the District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2008, in the amount of funds made available for the compensation of attorneys representing indigent defendants in the District of Columbia courts, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5551

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. IMPLEMENTATION OF INCREASE PROVIDED IN FUNDING FOR COMPENSATION OF ATTORNEYS REPRESENTING INDIGENT DEFENDANTS IN DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS.

(a) INCREASE IN HOURLY RATE.—Section 11–2604(a), District of Columbia Official Code, is amended by striking ''$65 per hour'' and inserting ''$80 per hour''.

(b) INCREASE IN CAPS ON TOTAL COMPENSATION PAID FOR PARTICULAR CASES.—Section 11–2604(b), District of Columbia Official Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(b) The compensation to be paid to an attorney appointed pursuant to this chapter shall not exceed the following maximum amounts:

''(1) For representation of a defendant before the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for misdemeanors or felonies, the maximum amount set forth in section 3006A(d)(2) of title 18, United States Code, for representation of a defendant before the United States magistrate judge or the district court for misdemeanors or felonies (as the case may be).

''(2) For representation of a defendant before the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, the maximum amount set forth in section 3006A(d)(2) of title 18, United States Code, for representation of a defendant in an appellate court.

''(3) For representation of a defendant in post-trial matters for misdemeanors or felonies, the amount applicable under paragraph (1) for misdemeanors or felonies (as the case may be).''.

SEC. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by this Act shall apply with respect to cases and proceedings initiated on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in

which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she might consume to the author of this legislation, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I especially thank him for his alacrity and the expert way in which he has carried this bill quickly to and through the process.

Mr. Speaker, this is a no-cost bill. Indeed, the appropriations for an increase in the amounts paid to these attorneys has been appropriated.

This is another of those District of Columbia anomalies. The courts of the District of Columbia operate through payments from the appropriations of the Congress of the United States and the judges are Title I attorneys. Therefore, District of Columbia judges may not use the funds that have been appropriated to raise the hourly rate of these attorneys, who are essential to the functioning, particularly of the criminal justice system, but also of the civil justice system, in the District of Columbia. They supplement the Public Defender Service of the District of Columbia.

These attorneys have not had their hourly rates raised since 2002, when they were set at $65 per hour. They have requested $80 per hour. They are being granted $80 an hour, this in spite of the fact that the rate of inflation has been between 3 and 4 percent a year. They, of course, had in mind that they went some years where their rates did not keep up with the rates of other attorneys who serve Federal courts. Of course, they recognize that we are not going to raise their rates every year, but this is what the Congress is willing to do at this time.

It does seem to me that the last thing we want to do is to slow down in particular criminal justice processing in the District of Columbia, particularly where there are already funds from the Appropriations Committee available, and when the failure to spend them only comes from a jurisdictional technicality, where we and we alone can indeed authorize the spending of these funds.

What H.R. 5551 does is simply accomplish this authorization. I am very, very grateful to Chairman DAVIS for bringing this bill forward so quickly.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation. I am pleased it has moved so quickly through the committee and is being considered by the House today.

When I was chairman of the D.C. Subcommittee, Congress enacted legislation I sponsored known as the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997. This law in part granted Congress authority over the District's court system in matters relating to public defender services. The law also amended the D.C. Home Rule Act to the same effect.

H.R. 5551, authored by Ms. NORTON, would authorize a provision of the D.C. Appropriations Act of 2008 which increased from $65 per hour to $80 per hour the amount of compensation for attorneys representing indigent clients before the District of Columbia Superior Court.

The current compensation rate of $65 per hour was established in fiscal year 2002, an increase from the previous rate of $50 per hour. Attorneys representing indigents in similar cases before U.S. District Courts are compensated at a rate of $100 per hour. No opposition to this bill was raised, either during the committee hearing or at the committee markup.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. Again, I thank Ms. NORTON for bringing this forward, and Chairman WAXMAN and Chairman DAVIS for moving this ahead so quickly. I think this needs to be enacted.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I stand with my colleague, Congresswoman ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON from our Nation's Capital, the District of Columbia, in consideration of H.R. 5551, which will provide for a much-needed increase in the compensation paid to attorneys assigned to represent indigent clients in the D.C. court system.

Congresswoman NORTON and I introduced this measure on March 6, 2008. On March 11, 2008, the Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and the District of Columbia held a hearing to examine aspects of the legislation, and on March 13, 2008, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform considered and passed the bill out of committee by voice vote.

H.R. 5551 calls for an increase in the hourly pay rate from $65 to $80 for Criminal Adjusters Act, CJA attorneys, representing indigent defendants in the D.C. courts. The measure would also increase the caps on the total compensation paid to these attorneys per case type to be equal to the total compensation paid to attorneys representing similar clients in Federal Court.

□ 1430

The increased compensation rate for CJA attorneys practicing in D.C. courts would only apply to cases that proceeded or initiated on or after the date of enactment of the Act.

Mr. Speaker, a core element of our unique democracy is the right and requirement that every citizen, regardless of income or socioeconomic class, be afforded adequate counsel or representation when confronting judicial proceedings. In fact, one of the most important decisions in this area of law was handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1942, when it held that the Sixth Amendment required the government afford indigent defendants with competent counsel. The measure we have before us further reiterates this fundamental concept by helping to ensure that the D.C. court system is in a competitive position to attract the best and brightest lawyers to represent the indigent. And so, Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 5551.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5551.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PRESERVING EXISTING JUDGESHIPS ON THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 550) to preserve existing judgeships on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The text of the Senate bill is as follows:

S. 550

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. COMPOSITION OF SUPERIOR COURT.

Section 903 of title 11 of the District of Columbia Code is amended by striking ''fifty-eight'' and inserting ''61''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she might consume to the distinguished gentlelady from the District of Columbia, Delegate ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON.

Ms. NORTON. Again, thank you, Mr. Chairman, because your quick action on these matters affecting criminal and civil justice in the District of Columbia could not be more important to us. I appreciate the expertise of you

and your staff in moving this bill forward.

Like the prior bill, Mr. Speaker, this is not a home-rule matter, because the courts involved are Federal courts, article 1 courts. Indeed, this matter started with the Senate of the United States which approves the judges of the D.C. Superior Court and confirms them as it confirms judges of other Federal courts. This bill again may be difficult to understand, but it is equally without additional cost to the Federal Government.

This House was vigilant to see to it that the District of Columbia now has a reformed family court as a part of the Superior Court system. And may I thank the prior then-majority leader, Mr. DeLay, who worked so closely with me on this bill and saw to it that the bill was funded, that there were additional judges, and that essentially a court which had not been revised for 30 years is now a state-of-the-art family court.

However, the Congress in its concern that children and families have adequate processing through this court mandated that there be at least 15 of these judges who would be family court committed judges only. The purpose was to keep or to repair the prior circumstance where these matters were distributed to the full 58 judges in the ordinary course of business. By segregating these matters out, these matters involving families and children, we sought to see to it that they were handled quickly and efficiently.

Congress never intended, however, to reduce the number of judges available to important criminal and civil matters, but in fact the cap has had that effect. So we have had an anomalous situation where the President of the United States, seeing a vacancy in the superior court unrelated to the family court, simply goes ahead and does what he is supposed to do; he nominates somebody to in fact fill that vacancy. But because of the cap which says you have got to have at least 15 of the judges to be family court judges, and with no increase in the number of judges, that person is sitting out there or standing out there, as you may, waiting for a vacancy to occur in the superior general part of the court as opposed to the family court.

What this bill does is to recognize what Congress intended in the first place, and that is to do no harm to either section. So, there would be a full cadre of family court judges, but certainly to do no harm to the processing of civil and criminal court judges. Therefore, to retain the kind of balance we had before, we would have to raise the number of judges available to the superior court; and that would mean, instead of 58 as the at-now raise reads, you would have 61.

Importantly, Mr. Speaker, you will note that there is no cost to the Federal Government. And both the chairman and I went to great lengths to make sure that we were not talking about increased appropriations. The court has assured us, and we have done our homework to assure ourselves, that the amount is already available in the appropriations that come to the Superior Court. All that is needed is for us to free up, if I may say so, the President of the United States so his nominees can in fact take their seats when in fact they are nominated.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I will be brief. I think Ms. NORTON outlined the history of this and why we are where we are today.

Unlike a lot of legislation that comes to the floor on the District of Columbia, this actually emanated in the Senate, with Senators AKAKA, LIEBERMAN, and VOINOVICH joining hands to bring this. This legislation, S. 550, increases the total number of judgeships on the Superior Court from 58 to 61.

In response to reports of abuse and neglect in child family services cases pending in the D.C. Superior Court in 2001, Congress created the family court in the district and assigned a dedicated cadre of judges to handle child and family cases. The legislation before us today is essentially a technical correction to the Family Court Act we enacted in 2001, increasing the cap on the number of judges in the D.C. superior court to accommodate the creation of this new family court.

I want to thank Chairman WAXMAN and Subcommittee Chairman DAVIS for moving this legislation so expeditiously to the floor. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of S. 550, which reserves existing judgeships on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia by increasing the cap on the number of judges that can serve on the court. Senate Bill 550 would increase the number of associate judges permitted to serve on the D.C. Superior Court from 58 to 61.

In accordance with the terms of the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Act of 1997, Congress now wields legislative and funding authority over the District of Columbia court system. Under the terms of this arrangement, section 11–903 of the District of Columbia Official Code established an overall limit of 58 on the number of judges that may be seated on the Superior Court. The current limit of 58 is in addition to a chief judge.

However, in 2001, Congress passed the D.C. Family Court Act, and included in the Act a new provision that allowed the previously established limit on the number of judges to be exceeded only to appoint additional family court judges. As a result of this provision, the current number of associate superior court judges, combined with the 15 judges now seated on the D.C. Family Court, the cap of 58 has now been exceeded. This means that judgeship vacancies in the superior court cannot be filled unless additional retirements occur, which has led to delays in judicial proceedings, increased costs from prolonged litigation, and case backlogs. S. 550 would address these issues by increasing the number of associate judges from 58 to 61.

S. 550, which was first introduced by Senator DANIEL AKAKA, passed the Senate under unanimous consent on February 4, 2008, and on March 11, 2008 the Subcommittee on Federal Workforce Postal Service in the District of Columbia held a hearing to examine aspects of the legislation. The bill was then considered by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, where it passed by voice vote. Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful that we, too, can approve Senate Bill 550 with overwhelming support from both sides of the aisle.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 550.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ESTABLISHING MARCH 2008 AS NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE MONTH

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 945) raising awareness and promoting education on the criminal justice system by establishing March 2008 as ''National Criminal Justice Month''.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 945

Whereas there are approximately three million Americans employed within the justice system;

Whereas approximately seven million adults are on probation, parole, or are incarcerated;

Whereas millions of Americans have been victims of crime and, consequently, lost income, incurred medical expenses, and suffered emotionally;

Whereas the cost of crime to individuals, communities, businesses, and the various levels of government exceeds the billions of dollars spent each year in administering the criminal justice system;

Whereas, in 2006, fifty percent of Americans admitted they fear that their home would be burglarized when they are not home; thirty-four percent of American women feared that they would be sexually assaulted; and forty-four percent of Americans feared they would be a victim of a terrorist attack;

Whereas approximately thirty-five percent of Americans have very little or no confidence in the criminal justice system and the negative effects of crime in regard to confidence in governmental agencies and overall social stability are immeasurable;

Whereas crime rates have dropped since the early 1990s, but most Americans believe that the rate of crime is increasing;

Whereas Federal, State, and local governments increased their spending for police protection, corrections, judicial, and legal activities in fiscal year 2005 by 5.5 percent or $204 billion; and

Whereas there is a need to educate Americans and to promote awareness within American society as to the causes and consequences of crime, as well as the strategies and developments for preventing and responding to crime: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(A) National Criminal Justice Month provides an opportunity to educate Americans on the criminal justice system; and

(B) Americans should be aware of the causes and consequences of crime, how to prevent crime, and how to respond to crime; and

(2) the House of Representatives urges policymakers, criminal justice officials, educators, victim service providers, nonprofits, community leaders, and others to promote awareness of how to prevent and respond to crime through National Criminal Justice Month.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, the measure before us calls attention to a critically important issue, the state of our Nation's criminal justice system. We do this by designating March as National Criminal Justice Month, because it will serve to raise awareness of the causes and consequences of crime, as well as our crime prevention efforts. It is a subject and an area that, for too long, we have not paid close attention to, and it is our feeling that this designation will have a great impact upon our work.

Millions of Americans have been victimized by crimes, and many millions more pass through our criminal justice system. We have more than 2 million Americans behind bars, I am sad to say. This means that almost one out of every 100 Americans is incarcerated. Among African American men between the ages of 20 and 34, one in nine are behind bars. What a tragedy. What a waste of human life and potential.

The New York Times observed, ''We have become a prison nation.''

[From the New York Times, Mar. 10, 2008]

PRISON NATION

After three decades of explosive growth, the nation's prison population has reached some grim milestones: More than 1 in 100 American adults are behind bars. One in nine black men, ages 20 to 34, are serving time, as are 1 in 36 adult Hispanic men.

Nationwide, the prison population hovers at almost 1.6 million, which surpasses all other countries for which there are reliable figures. The 50 states last year spent about $44 billion in tax dollars on corrections, up from nearly $11 billion in 1987. Vermont, Connecticut, Delaware, Michigan and Oregon devote as much money or more to corrections as they do to higher education.

These statistics, contained in a new report from the Pew Center on the States, point to a terrible waste of money and lives. They underscore the urgent challenge facing the federal government and cash-strapped states to reduce their overreliance on incarceration without sacrificing public safety. The key, as some states are learning, is getting smarter about distinguishing between violent criminals and dangerous repeat offenders, who need a prison cell, and low-risk offenders, who can be handled with effective community supervision, electronic monitoring and mandatory drug treatment programs, combined in some cases with shorter sentences.

Persuading public officials to adopt a more rational, cost-effective approach to prison policy is a daunting prospect, however, not least because building and running jailhouses has become a major industry.

Criminal behavior partly explains the size of the prison population, but incarceration rates have continued to rise while crime rates have fallen. Any effort to reduce the prison population must consider the blunderbuss impact of get-tough sentencing laws adopted across the United States beginning in the 1970's. Many Americans have come to believe, wrongly, that keeping an outsized chunk of the population locked up is essential for sustaining a historic crime drop since the 1990's.

In fact, the relationship between imprisonment and crime control is murky. Some portion of the decline is attributable to tough sentencing and release policies. But crime is also affected by things like economic trends and employment and drug-abuse rates. States that lagged behind the national average in rising incarceration rates during the 1990's actually experienced a steeper decline in crime rates than states above the national average, according to the Sentencing Project, a nonprofit group.

A rising number of states are broadening their criminal sanctions with new options for low-risk offenders that are a lot cheaper than incarceration but still protect the public and hold offenders accountable. In New York, the crime rate has continued to drop despite efforts to reduce the number of nonviolent drug offenders in prison.

The Pew report spotlights policy changes in Texas and Kansas that have started to reduce their outsized prison populations and address recidivism by investing in ways to improve the success rates for community supervision, expanding treatment and diversion programs, and increasing use of sanctions other than prison for minor parole and probation violations. Recently, the Supreme Court and the United States Sentencing Commission announced sensible changes in the application of harsh mandatory minimum drug sentences.

These are signs that the country may finally be waking up to the fiscal and moral costs of bulging prisons.

Each year, we on all of our criminal justice systems spend more than $200 billion. The Pew Center Report states that Connecticut, Delaware, my own State of Michigan, Oregon, and Vermont spend as much or more money on corrections as they do on higher education. I think this is a disgraceful circumstance, and the policies of simply incarcerating increasing numbers of Americans without real opportunities for rehabilitation fail those who go through the criminal justice system, but, more than that, it hurts and diminishes every American.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1445

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate Mr. CONYERS, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, for whom I have great respect. This bill was on the calendar to take up in weeks past, but it was pulled a number of times, resulting in it being taken up at this time. We are grateful that it has been allowed to come to the floor.

I rise in support of House Resolution 945, and I want to commend my good friend and fellow Texan, and also fellow recovering judge, TED POE, the original sponsor of this legislation, for his dedication and commitment to the issue of criminal justice.

The goal of this resolution is to raise awareness and promote education of the criminal justice system by establishing March as the National Criminal Justice Month. It is important that Congress encourages Americans to learn more about the criminal justice system, and the approximately 3 million Americans who work within the system.

As a former prosecutor, judge and chief justice, I have been honored to be involved with some of our Nation's best who work in the criminal justice system for some time. Throughout that experience, I have been consistently impressed with the professionalism and the ability of the public servants who work in the field of criminal justice. These brave and dedicated Americans work every day to make our country safe for ourselves and for our families.

Further, it is important to recognize the gains that have been made in combating crime across the Nation. Crime rates began dropping within the last 20 years as more tools were given to law enforcement and the more dangerous criminals have been locked up for longer periods of time, though there are some who are working to reverse that decade-long trend.

I have great respect, as I said, for the Judiciary Committee chairman, who mentioned the reference to this being called a prison nation; and it is tragic that we have so many people who are locked up. I must say that one of the things that concerned me and drove me from the bench were having an increasing number of people who ended up in the criminal justice system before me as a district judge, having allegedly committed felonies, and in the cases I

am talking about where they admitted them, told about their background, had testimony about it in court, but it began to break my heart.

Back in the 1960s, we had legislation called The Great Society legislation that was well intentioned. There were single mothers that were seen to be trying to survive with only a deadbeat father to help. And the Federal Government looked, saw the need and said let's help these people. They began giving checks to women for each child born out of wedlock. And I began having more and more young mothers, some older mothers, who would have a child out of wedlock, many times encouraged to do so by people they respected and loved, and they found out rather quickly that check will not allow the individual to live a decent living and take care of the child. So they would have another child, thinking that two checks would help, and then three.

It broke my heart that our Federal Government had lured people into a rut and not given them a way out. So it is important that we be careful in considering legislation that we pass. Of course, everybody has to be responsible for their own actions, but the legislation we pass is important, and I think it is wonderful that my friend, Mr. POE, has sponsored this legislation, and that our chairman, Mr. CONYERS, has encouraged this and supported it, in establishing March as the National Criminal Justice Month.

Congress will provide an opportunity now to educate Americans through this designation about the criminal justice system, and will make Americans more aware of causes and consequences of crime, as well as how to prevent crime and how to respond to crime. This resolution will also recognize and applaud the efforts of law enforcement officials, judges, court staff, and the many probation and parole officers who work with offenders to help them reintegrate into the community. Those are all important positions. We appreciate them all. I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I only have a little bit more to add, and so I yield myself a little more time.

This measure is a good one even though it comes a little late. Some may have noticed that this is for a celebration in March, and this is April. The reason is that we couldn't get it on the schedule before now, but there were many celebrations in connection with this matter that occurred.

I want to commend the judge and distinguished member of the Judiciary Committee from Texas who is managing the bill for his personal comments that he has brought to this matter today. I can imagine the kinds of things that not only him but members of the judiciary across this country are seeing, heartbreaking incidents, circumstances and experiences.

There are so many people that are incarcerated, they are in prison because of nonviolent offenses, of sentencing procedures that are really out of the hands of the court. People think of the unlimited powers of the judiciary. Many times they are restricted in terms of what it is they can do and how they can handle the matters that come before their courts.

I am impressed that our colleague would tell us of some of the things that move him in his experience in the judiciary. Now I don't want to think that he was driven from the judiciary to the Congress because that is like jumping out of the frying pan into the fire; but I am happy that he serves on the committee with great distinction, and we always are pleased to be able to work together on these kinds of matters.

In that spirit, I urge the support of H. Res. 945.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as the right honorable Judge POE may consume.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding, and I also want to thank the chairman for moving this piece of legislation.

I introduced this legislation to declare March as National Criminal Justice Month, and the purpose is to educate Americans on how important our justice system is and encourage discussion on how to prevent and respond to criminal conduct.

Our criminal justice system employs over 3 million Americans at the local, State and Federal levels of the government. And the word and the emphasis should be on the phrase ''justice system'' because it involves the cooperation of law enforcement and prosecutors, courts, correctional officers, and many other persons.

In my former life, I spent 8 years as a prosecutor in the Houston area, and then I spent 22 years on the criminal court bench in Houston, hearing over 25,000 felony cases.

When I came to Washington, D.C., I established the bipartisan Victims Rights Caucus to advocate on behalf of crime victims and law enforcement. It is apparent to me that victims need a voice in Congress. They don't have high paid and high-dollar lobbyists; they expect Members of Congress to be their advocates.

Each year, millions of Americans become victims of criminal conduct, everything from stealing to homicide, and these individuals do not choose to become victims. They are thrown into the criminal justice system without ever having a say. The devastating consequences of crime remain with the victims long after the crime is over with; and the purpose of the criminal justice system is to provide closure for victims and punish people who commit crimes against the rule of law, which is society's rules of law.

I hope this resolution encourages communities to discuss the causes and the consequences and long-term effects of criminal conduct. When a crime occurs, a community must respond by apprehending the individual and ensuring appropriate punishment if that person is found guilty, and, of course, helping the victim that is in need.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 35 percent of Americans have little or no confidence in our criminal justice system. It is unfortunate that one-third of the people in this country feel that way. If you turn on your local news each night, the first thing that most local newscasts have is the latest crime that has been committed in a neighborhood. It is mostly bad news, and much of that bad news is about criminal conduct. Americans should have more confidence in our criminal justice system. I am convinced that our criminal justice system is the best system in the world.

I had the opportunity to visit the former Soviet Union. They don't have a criminal justice system. They just have a system. The same is true with China, when I visited their system on how they administer their laws. There is no justice in that system. It is just a system.

And here in the United States, we do have the best criminal justice system in the world on determining the guilt of an individual and giving defendants and victims of crime certain rights in the court, and maintaining the worth of the individual. Every year individuals, communities, businesses, and all levels of government spend millions and billions of dollars administering our justice system. The cost of crime is not cheap, and the aftermath of crime is not cheap either. Yet the price is worth it because of the price we pay to ensure our order, safety and appropriate punishment for those who fail to follow our laws.

As my fellow Texan and former judge, Judge GOHMERT, has mentioned time and time again, there are numerous cases where we both have seen individuals who have come to the criminal justice system that have been victims of criminal conduct. And long after that trial is over with, even if the offender is convicted and sent to the Texas penitentiary for the maximum period of time, they suffer the repercussions of criminal conduct. Many of them are never able to cope with that conduct, and spend the rest of their lives in desperate hope, and wishing that crime had not occurred against them.

We as Americans need to be sensitive to those individuals. We need to be sensitive to the people who live among us who have crime committed against them.

So I hope this resolution gets more communities talking about the best way to prevent and respond to crime, and I want to urge its adoption.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 945, raising awareness and promoting education on the criminal justice system by establishing March

2008 as "National Criminal Justice Month," introduced by my distinguished colleague from Texas, Representative TED POE. This important legislation calls on policymakers, educators, criminal justice officials, community leaders, victim service providers, nonprofits, and others to promote awareness of how to prevent and respond to crime through the creation of a National Criminal Justice Month.

A country's criminal justice system is often a reflection of what values the society deems to be important. Our criminal justice system serves as a means for society to enforce the standards of conduct necessary to protect individuals and the community. During this month we need to be mindful of the need for criminal justice reform. Currently, there are approximately seven million adults on probation, parole, or are incarcerated causing the cost of crime to individuals, communities, businesses, and the various levels of government to be well into the billions. I have sought to alleviate a number of the sentencing disparities responsible for such frivolous government spending through various pieces of legislation, including my "The Second Chance Act" and "The Drug Sentencing Reform and Cocaine Kingpin Trafficking Act of 2007" that will help to lessen some of the economic and social burden. Our focus should be to educate Americans and to promote awareness within American society as to the causes and consequences of crime, as well as the strategies and developments for preventing and responding to crime.

The American people deserve to have a knowledge of the criminal justice system; thus, allowing society to feel safe in their homes as well as on the streets. In 2006, fifty percent of Americans admitted they feared that their home would be burglarized when they are not home, thirty-four percent of American women feared that they would be sexually assaulted, and forty-four percent of Americans feared they would be a victim of a terrorist attack. That is unacceptable. Americans need to be educated about the criminal justice system and how it works to protect all Americans.

During this month there has to be a joint effort between policymakers, criminal justice officials, educators, victim service providers, nonprofit organizations, community leaders, and others to promote awareness of how to prevent and respond to crime. It is imperative that we reach out through all the above names avenues to ensure that each and every American knows just how their criminal justice system operations protect them.

This important legislation creates an avenue through which to educate the American people about the criminal justice system as well as the causes and consequences of crime, how to prevent crime, and how to respond to crime. I strongly support this important legislation and urge all my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 945.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1500

ARTS REQUIRE TIMELY SERVICE (ARTS) ACT

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1312) to expedite adjudication of employer petitions for aliens of extraordinary artistic ability, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1312

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Arts Require Timely Service (ARTS) Act''.

SEC. 2. EXPEDITED ADJUDICATION OF EMPLOYER PETITIONS FOR ALIENS OF EXTRAORDINARY ARTISTIC ABILITY.

Section 214(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Attorney General'' each place it appears and inserting ''Secretary of Homeland Security''; and

(2) in paragraph (6)(D)—

(A) by striking ''(D) Any'' and inserting ''(D)(i) Any'';

(B) by striking ''Once the'' and inserting ''Except as provided in clause (ii), once the''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(ii) The Secretary of Homeland Security shall adjudicate each petition for an alien with extraordinary ability in the arts (as described in section 101(a)(15)(O)(i)), an alien accompanying such an alien (as described in clauses (ii) and (iii) of section 101(a)(15)(O)), or an alien described in section 101(a)(15)(P) (other than an alien described in section 214(c)(4)(A) (relating to athletes)) not later than 30 days after—

''(I) the date on which the petitioner submits the petition with a written advisory opinion, letter of no objection, or request for a waiver; or

''(II) the date on which the 15-day period described in clause (i) has expired, if the petitioner has had an opportunity, as appropriate, to supply rebuttal evidence.

''(iii) If a petition described in clause (ii) is not adjudicated before the end of the 30-day period described in clause (ii) and the petitioner is an arts organization described in paragraph (3), (5), or (6) of section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such Code for the taxable year preceding the calendar year in which the petition is submitted, or an individual or entity petitioning primarily on behalf of such an organization, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide the petitioner with the premium-processing services referred to in section 286(u), without a fee.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, H.R. 1312 is a bipartisan measure intended to address the extended delays in visa processing faced by nonprofit arts organizations when they invite foreign artists to perform in the United States.

Hosting a performance by a foreign artist or arts group requires, obviously, a great deal of planning. And the host organization has to calendar the event, advertise it, and sell tickets far in advance. And these efforts are made with the expectation that the visa petitions filed by the guest performers will be adjudicated in time for their arrival in the United States. If their adjudication is delayed, it causes a tremendous disruption and has led some arts organizations in the world to stop engaging foreign artists altogether because they can't risk the expensive canceling of performers.

Performances by foreign artists give American audiences the opportunity to experience a variety of arts traditions. And when they're called off, it's not just the host organization and the audience that bears the cost, the cancelled show impacts the local economy as well.

Current law requires the Department of Homeland Security to process petitions for O and P visas within 2 weeks of receipt of a completed petition. And the Department has implemented a premium 15-day processing for a $1,000 fee, but when a visa is required to be processed in 14 days, it seems particularly unreasonable to ask a nonprofit entity to pay $1,000 for a 15-day service. So, what we do in this measure is strike a balance by giving the Department 30 days, more than twice the current processing time, and if the visa is not processed in 30 days and the petitioner is a nonprofit organization, the bill requires the Department to provide premium processing for no additional fee.

I'm happy to say that my colleagues, the former Judiciary Committee Chair, JAMES SENSENBRENNER, and the current ranking member, LAMAR SMITH of Texas, have tried and worked with us to arrive at a solution similar to the one laid out in this bill.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for his generous comments a while ago, and I certainly appreciated working with him on this bill as well.

Performing arts organizations use O and P visas to bring many talented foreign artists to our country to perform

before American audiences. Despite the fact that the Immigration Nationality Act provides that the Department of Homeland Security shall adjudicate O and P visas within 14 days, adjudication of up to 180 days has been reported. These long delays create the risk that performances involving international artists must be cancelled, creating high economic risks to arts institutions and the local economies they support.

Henry Fogel, President of the American Symphony Orchestra League, has stated that, ''nonprofit arts organizations confront long waits and uncertainty in gaining approval for visa petitions for foreign guest artists. This degree of uncertainty can prove too risky for many performing arts organizations and is having a direct impact on their ability to present foreign guest artists. Orchestras must sell tickets in advance, creating a financial obligation to their audiences. Performances are date, time and location specific, and the nature of scheduling, booking and confirming highly sought after guest soloists and performing groups requires that the timing of the visa process be efficient and reliable.''

The INA does provide that the Department of Homeland Security can charge a fee of $1,000 to provide premium processing for employment-based visa petitions, adjudication within 15 days. However, many nonprofit arts organizations cannot afford to pay this extra amount either because they are a small, cash-strapped institution, or because they sponsor many foreign artists over a year's time. The Arts Required Timely Service, ARTS, Act provides that if a nonprofit organization's petition for an O visa or for a P visa is not adjudicated within 30 days, it will receive premium processing free of charge.

I support this bill. And I want to thank the chairman and Mr. BERMAN for their bipartisan amendment in committee that clarified that only arts organizations that are qualified as tax exempt under 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code can receive the fee waiver, and that organizations petitioning for athletes do not qualify for this waiver.

Mr. KING, the gentleman from Iowa and the ranking member of the Immigration Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee, offered a number of amendments in the Judiciary Committee markup of this bill. For example, one provided that only small and nonprofit arts organizations should be eligible for the fee waiver. These amendments would have, in fact, improved the bill. Unfortunately, they were not adopted.

On the whole, however, this is a good bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, although there is great support for this bill, I have no other requests for time. And in full confidence and trust of the other side, I return the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the chairman that I will not take advantage of his yielding back the time. I do, however, yield 4 minutes to Mr. KING, the gentleman from Iowa, the ranking member of the Immigration Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank Mr. SMITH, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, and the chairman for his graciousness.

I appreciate the privilege to address this issue under these circumstances. And I make no pledge about taking advantage of the situation, but I will stay with the attitude and the comity that the chairman demonstrates always, and that is that I come to the floor here to rise in opposition to this bill.

First I want to explain that premium processing is in the event that the normal application for the visa isn't processed in time, then the performing arts organization, which is a 501(c) nonprofit organization, can then apply. If they want to pay $1,000 premium to turn that around quickly, they can do that today.

So, I'm looking at this thing from the perspective of this is a fee-based system that we have. We fund USCIS through fee-based, and we had hearings in the committee and we brought that forward and it's clear. So, it becomes a zero sum game. If you decide that you're going to provide a premium processing service for one organization, that means the burden of the cost of that gets distributed across all the other applicants.

So, I'm stuck with this image of, let me just say the Metropolitan Museum of Art. I'm very convinced, and have not been there, that people arrive there in limousines wearing tuxedos and formal gowns, and at the same time, I know that they have a foundation that is quite significant. For example, assets of $2,424,000,000 in the foundation, an annual revenue stream of $326 million. Now, out of $326 million in annual revenue or $2.4 billion in the foundation, it seems to me that those kind of very wealthy, not-for-profit wealthy organizations could come up with the extra thousand dollars, particularly because people are arriving in tuxedos and getting out of limousines at the expense of the poor person who is in blue jeans and sneakers. And that's my argument here.

I yield to the chairman.

Mr. CONYERS. I thank the gentleman, STEVE KING, for yielding to me.

In other words, you're recommending that we should have had a two-tier system, because there are some aspiring jazz performers in Europe who want to come over, and they have considerably less than $2 billion in accumulated assets.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, I would submit that the wealthy foundations have the revenue to be able to provide for the premium processing in the event that they didn't plan far enough ahead to get their application in on time. I would think those with the highest wealth should be the ones that have the most ability to plan ahead or to pay if they fail to plan ahead.

Mr. CONYERS. Well, it's so uncharacteristic of you to want to sock the rich and not just charge everybody the same amount.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the chairman and I appreciate his remarks. And there is probably some basis for him to make that argument.

Just to close this argument, I will argue first that I offered a series of amendments which Mr. SMITH addressed, and I exempted those foundations with less than $1 million in annual revenues. Then I went up the line to $10 million and then $50 million. I was trying to find that place by which it would get to somebody's conscience on the Judiciary Committee or in this Congress that we should say, you have enough money to manage this yourself. We never found that plateau. I actually wrote one that would have been a googolplex, kind of an unlimited number, but I'm confident it would have been rejected as well.

So, I would just submit that the one organization that I've singled out here, Metropolitan Museum of Art, would have revenue in the 5 minutes we've discussed this to be able to pay for the premium processing of a single artist and accumulate in that hour about enough for 14 artists.

So, I think we should have drawn the line at taking care of our small foundations, and for that reason I am opposing this bring. And I appreciate the sentiment that brings it to the floor.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LUNGREN) who, like Mr. KING, is a member of the Immigration Subcommittee. He will be our last speaker.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. I thank the gentleman for the time, and I rise in support of this bill.

I was with my 90-year-old mother on Sunday back in Sacramento. And I remember when my mom used to drag me and my six brothers and sisters off to the Long Beach Symphony Orchestra. And I remember when she worked with the leaders of the orchestra to bring other performers over to perform. It's not an easy thing when you have an organization like that. I know the gentleman from Iowa is talking about some of the more expensive organizations, but we're talking in this bill about all of these nonprofits being able to have the flexibility to bring foreign artists over here.

Interestingly, the Congress, a number of years ago, asked the agency involved to have a flexible system which would allow them to make the request up to 1 year before. And what happened was the agency turned it around and

said well, you couldn't do it unless it was at least 6 months or a year before. So, it sort of defeated the very flexibility Members of Congress asked for to allow this to happen.

We should understand that what we've been trying to do is get the agency to deal with these applications in a timely fashion. And the idea that you would get premium service is really kind of an interesting idea, to ask the government to do what it should do, but to do it on time we now charge you for it. Well, we do that in some circumstances because we do have difficulty with budgets, but here we're talking about only nonprofit art organizations.

So many times on this floor, it seems to me, we do more than we should; we go out and we solve problems that aren't there. We often pass legislation in search of a problem. This is not that case. This is a problem that does exist. These organizations, the Alabama Symphony Organization, the Florida West Coast Symphony, the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, the Hubbard Street Dance in Chicago, the Louisville Orchestra, the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, Opera of Cleveland, Paul Taylor Dance Company, Pittsburgh Opera, Sarasota Opera, Florida Grand Opera, I mean, you can go down and down and down, and you see this is all over the country, a request of community organizations that are not profit that are just asking for the flexibility to be able to bring foreign artists here, which also creates an environment for U.S. artists to go overseas. And I'm old enough to recall during the Cold War that was one of the things we thought was a good thing. In fact, if you think about it, the Soviets, that's one of the things they didn't want, they didn't want American artists over there and they didn't want their artists over here. Why? Because it really began to open the eyes of many people as to some of the greatness that we have and the freedom that we have and the artistic merit that exists in a country such as ours.

So, I would just hope that we would support this bill. It should not be controversial. Hopefully, it will be a unanimous vote.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee has explained the problem addressed by H.R. 1312. I just want to add a short history of the bipartisan work on this issue. I also want to express my appreciation to Chairman CONYERS for moving the bill and to some of my colleagues who have been advocating for this solution for quite some time.

For several years now, a bipartisan group of Members has been urging USCIS to find and administrative remedy for lengthy processing times experienced by arts organizations petitioning for O and P visas. In October 2003, I was joined by 15 Members in sending a letter to USCIS Director Aguirre encouraging him to implement a number of reforms in the processing of arts-related visas. At the time, arts organizations filing for O and P visas were in a real catch-22. They were not allowed to file visa petitions earlier than 6 months before a performance, but USCIS was routinely taking longer than 6 months to adjudicate the petitions.

To their credit, USCIS did what they could to remedy the problem by regulation. But USCIS could not do administratively what we recommended, which was to create a consequence for failing to meet the required processing time for O and P petitions. That was the impetus for this bill.

The only remedy available without the bill was to pay for premium processing. Telling a nonprofit arts organization to pay $1,000 for expedited process is in effect saying: "You've paid $390 to file this petition that we're required by law to process in 14 days, but for an extra $1000, we might process in 15 days." That just doesn't make any sense.

What we've done in this bill is create an incentive for timely processing.

Solving this problem has been a joint effort. We have had the benefit of input from the Department of Homeland Security, as well as the cooperation of Ranking Member LAMAR SMITH, who worked with us to tighten the language of the bill at markup. I want to express my appreciation for the collaboration of my colleagues Mr. LUNGREN, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CHABOT, our former colleague on the Judiciary Committee, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and the many other Members who joined in the efforts leading up to this legislation.

International arts exchange is, in a sense, cultural diplomacy. Just a few weeks ago, the New York Philharmonic made a historic trip to Pyongyang. I understand that the 300-member delegation was the largest U.S. presence in North Korea since the end of the Korean war. The Philharmonic's musical director called the visit "a gesture of friendship and goodwill from one people to another." These exchanges may not resolve the world's conflicts, but they create bonds that can pay substantial dividends in years to come.

The ARTS Act is meant to encourage and facilitate these exchanges, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1312, the "Arts Require Timely Service, ARTS, Act," introduced by my distinguished colleague from California, Representative BERMAN. This important legislation amends the Immigration and Nationality Act to allow for the expedited adjudication of an employer petition for an alien of extraordinary artistic ability, an alien accompanying such alien, or an alien who is an athlete or entertainer.

Mr. Speaker, to paraphrase President John F Kennedy, the true greatness of a nation can be measured by its accomplishments in the domain of the arts and culture. America has always benefited from the free flow of foreign artistic talent, some of which has served this country with great distinction, to mention but the late great cellist and Soviet dissident Mstislav "Slava" Rostropovich. Our immigration system is an important gateway for artists and musicians from abroad and as such it should serve the broader cultural goals of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, by inviting foreign artists to perform, arts organizations in the United States provide American audiences the opportunity to experience a variety of artistic talent and encourage a supportive climate for American artists to perform abroad. In the last several years, nonprofit arts organizations have confronted dramatic delays and uncertainties in the processing of visa petitions for foreign guest artists. These delays not only impact the immediate availability of foreign artists to perform alongside American artists, but also threaten to impede the ability of U.S. artists to perform abroad.

When a nonprofit arts organization invites a foreign performer, or an entire symphony for that matter, the organization must calendar, advertise, and ticket performances far in advance, all on reliance that they will successfully petition for a visa for their guest performer. In the last several years, delays in processing have led many smaller arts organizations to stop engaging foreign artists altogether because they cannot risk the potential expense of canceling a performance as a result of slow visa processing. Those organizations that have persevered have seen increasingly frequent situations in which performances involving foreign guest artists must be cancelled because the U.S. Immigration and Citizenship Services, USCIS, cannot process visa petitions within a 6-month period before the performance. This is an issue not only for the arts organizations bringing in a foreign artists, but also American artists who are slated to be part of these performances, as well as all of the support staff employed by the organizations as a result of a performance.

Most nonprofit arts organizations cannot afford the current $1,000 fee for premium processing, a program that was adopted primarily at the request of for-profit corporations. Yet, regular visa processing can now take up to 180 days—too long for arts organizations to accommodate. These delays in the visa process can harm nonprofit institutions and the local economies in which they exist.

Since 2003, a bipartisan group of Members has urged USCIS to remedy this problem administratively. In October of that year, 16 members sent a letter to the USCIS Director encouraging him to implement a number of reforms including reducing processing for O and P petitions filed by or on behalf of nonprofit organizations to 30 days or automatically remove those petitions to premium processing at no additional fee. To date, these reforms have not been made administratively, and in discussions, USCIS has represented that they are not certain they could make such changes without legislative action.

The ARTS Act would address visa processing delays facing nonprofit arts organizations by amending section 214(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to require USCIS to shift to premium processing without additional fees any O or P visa that is not processed within 30 days of filing a complete petition if the petitioner is or is filing on behalf of a qualified nonprofit organization.

Mr. Speaker, it is not by accident that I wrote a letter on this subject to then USCIS Director Eduardo Aguirre. This act exemplifies the bipartisan spirit in which we should approach this important matter so that our Nation could continue to shine in the cultural field as it shines in other domains.

Mr Speaker, this legislation speaks directly to principles of cultural and intellectual exchange that our great Nation was founded upon. I am proud to support this legislation and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1312.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1312, the Arts Require Timely

Service Act, or the ARTS Act, and I thank Congressman BERMAN and Chairman CONYERS for their leadership on this important issue.

Under immigration law, foreign artists or groups must obtain a visa in order to perform in America. However, over the last few years, this process has been severely delayed, leading some nonprofits to stop planning events that include foreign artists altogether. These delays not only impact the immediate availability of foreign artists to perform alongside American artists, but also threaten to impede the ability of U.S. artists to perform abroad.

The ARTS Act would address these delays by requiring the Government to expedite—without any additional fees—visas for foreign artists that are not processed within 30 days of filing, if the visa petition is filed on behalf of a qualified nonprofit organization.

The ARTS Act will help end the delays and uncertainties in the processing of visa petitions for foreign guest artists coming to the United States.

America is a great land of opportunity for artists, and in my district, this is particularly true. New York City prides itself as being an international center for the arts, yet the current system is failing it. It is becoming increasingly difficult for too many foreign artists to come to America to perform. Foreign artists bring to America their own unique artistic abilities, and every time they are essentially prevented from performing in America, we do a disservice to the arts and to ourselves.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1312, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1515

COMMEMORATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASSASSINATION OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1061) commemorating the 40th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and encouraging people of the United States to pause and remember the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1061

Whereas 40 years ago on April 4, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the moral leader of America, was taken from us all too soon by an assassin's bullet, while standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, Tennessee, where he was to lead sanitation workers in protest against low wages and intolerable working conditions;

Whereas Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., while just one man, changed America forever in a few short years through his preaching of nonviolence and passive resistance;

Whereas Dr. King was the preeminent civil rights advocate of his time, leading the civil rights movement in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s and earning world-wide recognition as an eloquent and articulate spokesperson for equality;

Whereas Dr. King dedicated his life to securing the fundamental principles of the United States of liberty and justice for all United States citizens;

Whereas Dr. King was a champion of nonviolence who fervently advocated nonviolent resistance as the strategy to end segregation and racial discrimination in America, and in 1964, at age 35, he became the youngest man to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition for his efforts;

Whereas through his work and reliance on nonviolent protest, Dr. King was instrumental in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965;

Whereas Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., broke down walls of racial segregation and racial discrimination in places of public accommodation;

Whereas Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., opened doors to the participation of all Americans in the political process;

Whereas the work of Dr. King created a basis of understanding and respect and helped communities, and the United States as a whole, to act cooperatively and courageously to restore tolerance, justice, and equality between people;

Whereas in the face of hatred and violence, Dr. King preached a doctrine of nonviolence and civil disobedience to combat segregation, discrimination, and racial injustice, and believed that people have the moral capacity to care for other people;

Whereas Dr. King awakened the conscience and consciousness of the United States and used his message of hope to bring people together to build the ''Beloved Community'', a community of justice, at peace with itself;

Whereas Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., through his persistence, raw courage, and faith brought about a nonviolent revolution in America without firing a single bullet; and

Whereas our country and our society are better because of what he did and what he said: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives encourages all Americans to—

(1) pause and remember the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on this, the 40th anniversary of his death;

(2) commemorate the legacy of Dr. King, so that, as Dr. King hoped, ''one day this Nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal''; and

(3) remember the message of Dr. King and rededicate themselves to Dr. King's goal of a free and just United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONYERS. I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 1061.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CONYERS. I thank the Speaker, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, this Friday, April 4, will mark the 40th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination in 1968.

I note that, once again, our distinguished colleague from Georgia, JOHN LEWIS, has introduced a bipartisan House Resolution calling upon all Americans, on this anniversary, to pause and remember the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and I'd like to acknowledge the many members of the Judiciary Committee supporting this resolution, LAMAR SMITH, GERALD NADLER, ZOE LOFGREN, BOBBY SCOTT, KEITH ELLISON, STEVE COHEN and others.

Dr. King was not only our greatest civil rights leader, but he was also the person that personally has given me the political, philosophical undergirding to attempt to transfer his belief system into some of the objectives of the United States through the Congress. What a leader he was.

I shall be in Memphis this Friday celebrating, with the distinguished gentleman from New York, Harry Bellefonte, and many others, the work that he has done in trying to bring justice, understanding, full employment, an economic system, and end the war in this country and in this world.

He addressed, on the night before his assassination, the sanitation workers in Memphis at the Mason Temple. And I don't know about you, but it seemed to me that he had a premonition that he was spending the last days of his life on earth in this cause. He seemed to have projected his understanding of how fleeting his life may have been.

Of course, I'm also connected to Dr. King by his family, Coretta Scott King and their children, and of course, the unbelievably courageous Mrs. Rosa Parks, who later came to Detroit and honored my office by working there for many, many years.

And so I'm very pleased to join in with this re-examination and remembrance of our great leader, to me, one of the greatest leaders of the 20th century. And so I'm proud to stand before you as the chairman of the Judiciary to bring this resolution forward.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill commemorates the 40th anniversary of the tragic assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King was the leader of a historic, nonviolent revolution in the U.S. Over the course of his life he fought for equal justice and led the Nation towards racial harmony.

While advancing this great movement, Dr. King's home was bombed, and he was subjected to relentless personal and physical abuse. Despite this violence, Dr. King responded in peace

with strong conviction and sound reason. And as a preacher, Dr. King's religious beliefs were essential to the success of his nonviolent efforts. It is doubtful that such a long and enduring movement of peace could have survived in the face of such violence without the power of religious inspiration behind it.

From 1957 to 1968, Dr. King traveled over 6 million miles and spoke over 2,500 times about justice and equal freedom under the law.

On August 28, 1963, Dr. King led a peaceful march of 250,000 people through the streets of Washington, D.C. And it is here, in this city, where he delivered a speech that spoke for all Americans, regardless of the color of their skin. In his ''I Have a Dream'' speech, Dr. King called the march the ''greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation,'' and he was right.

''I have a dream,'' he said, ''that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.''

Dr. King not only lived the American dream, but he opened that same door of opportunity for millions of Americans. He lived for the causes of justice and equality.

On the evening of April 4, 1968, while standing on the balcony of his hotel room in Memphis, Tennessee, Dr. King was assassinated. But a single vicious act could not extinguish Dr. King's legacy, which endures to this day. And America is a better, freer Nation because of his legacy.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased now to yield as much time as he may consume to the one person in the House of Representatives and the United States Senate that knew Martin King, Jr., better than any of us here. He's a distinguished civil rights leader in his own right, but he worked closely with Dr. King and the SCLC and SNCC and other civil rights organizations. I am pleased to recognize the gentleman from Georgia, John Lewis, for as much time as he may consume.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend and my colleague, Chairman CONYERS, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is fitting and appropriate that we pause, as a Nation and as a people, to remember the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a man who changed America forever.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee on April 4, 1968. He had emerged as a leader, not just for a people, but for a Nation. His leadership and commitment to a truly interracial democracy played a key role in ending legal segregation in America. He led the first major nonviolent campaign in modern America when he emerged as the leader of the Montgomery bus boycott that lasted 381 days.

He inspired thousands and thousands of people to follow the way of nonviolence. In doing so, he inspired other movements and had an effect on so many young people and some not so young.

Just think, a few short years ago, in America, there were signs that said, ''White women, Colored women,'' ''White men, Colored men,'' ''White waiting, Colored waiting.'' There was segregation in public accommodations and transportation. Men and women of color could not even register to vote.

Dr. King created a climate, created an environment that the power of the courts, the power of Congress, and the President of the United States couldn't look the other way; they couldn't say no.

In his short life, he led the American people on a journey that is ongoing even today.

Mr. Speaker, I will never forget coming to Washington with him in early June, 1963. We met with President Kennedy and other leaders in his administration. Dr. King informed the President that there was a crisis in our country and that he had to act.

Later, Dr. King came back to Washington to speak and to march on Washington. This time he was able to bring 250,000 Americans, Black and White, and people of all faiths and backgrounds. On that day, he transformed the steps of the Lincoln Memorial to a modern-day pulpit. On that day, he shared his dream of the Beloved Community, a truly interracial democracy.

I can still hear him saying, ''I have a dream today, a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.''

Mr. Speaker, today we encourage all citizens, especially our young people, to take time to reflect on the teachings and the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. Our Nation is a better place, and we are a better people because of him.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I don't have any other speakers at this time. I will yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), the chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. CONYERS. I thank the gentleman from Texas, the ranking member, Mr. SMITH.

I would like now to recognize STEVE COHEN, our distinguished colleague from Memphis, Tennessee, for 2 minutes.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This Friday, our Nation will recognize the 40th anniversary of a most infamous day in our country's history, the assassination of the great Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

It's impossible to speak about Dr. King without remembering his eloquence and powerful oratory. Dr. King brought his brilliant mind and God-given speech to bear against mighty forces, forces which were entrenched and interwoven so powerfully in the very fabric of our country that the task to overcome seemed nearly impossible. But he was not deterred. And even from the distance of 40 years, what Martin Luther King, Jr., accomplished in his short number of years on this earth is awe-inspiring. He started a march to justice that he still inspires and which moves toward fulfillment.

An assassin's shot rang out in Memphis, silencing a most beautiful and eloquent man, but it didn't silence his dream. He was a man who worked with Bayard Rustin to take Gandhi's principles of nonviolence and change a country through different forms of civil disobedience that had not been seen in this country successfully.

He brought a march to Washington that's still the greatest march known to this day, a collection of individuals demanding a change of course for this country. And he changed this country and changed, his force made this Congress and the President of the United States, at that time, Lyndon Johnson, change its course and bring about great civil rights legislation.

A man whose life and death continues to define our country and our world, his dream survives his death, and will continue to survive as long as we know what is good and just about our Nation.

The man could be killed, but not the dream. The dream lives in each of us. Though the fires of progress sometimes seem to dwindle to embers, each time we declare that all people are equal, each time we fight against discrimination and intolerance, and each time we speak truth to power, each time we do those things we fan the flame of Martin Luther King's dream and his purpose and his passion lives on in us.

Martin Luther King spoke truth to power, and that is a great thing.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased now to recognize the distinguished gentleman from Georgia, Mr. DAVID SCOTT, and I recognize him for 3 minutes.

□ 1530

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you, Chairman CONYERS. It's so good to be here with my good friend Mr. LEWIS from Georgia and Mr. COHEN from Tennessee.

Mr. Speaker, today, we gather to pay tribute and to recognize an extraordinary life on the 40th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Mr. Speaker, in the book of Genesis in the 37th chapter, in the 19th verse, it says these words: Lo, here cometh the dreamer. Let us slay him and then we shall see what will become of his dream.

I think that is a most fitting way to enter my remarks this afternoon about Dr. King, for his was truly a dream, but that dream was built on three strong pillars. One was public accommodations. The other was voting rights. But the other, and perhaps the tougher, was economic rights, how do we get the lever to make the dream a reality. Dr.

King knew full well it didn't matter if we could sit anywhere on the bus if we don't have money to get on the bus. It doesn't matter if we could live anywhere we wanted if we didn't have money to buy the house and to keep the house.

So, as we reflect today on that economic right, it is so fitting that so much is still to be done. For as we look at the front page of the New York Times yesterday, we find that there are more people who are on food stamps percentage-wise in this country than 40 years ago when Dr. King died. What has happened to his dream after he was slain?

It's so fitting that if we start to think for a moment what Dr. King was doing in those moments and hours before his death. He was grappling with the economic question, moving back and forward from Washington, D.C., to Atlanta, Georgia, to Memphis, dealing with the poor people's campaign, the war on poverty, and, most significantly, dealing with the most basic of economic rights, a livable wage for jobs for the sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee.

And so he knew that the work had not been done. His prophetic words, as Chairman CONYERS referred, it's almost as if he was preaching his own funeral when he said he had reached the mountaintop and had looked over and seen the promised land. I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight that we, as a people, will get to the promised land. And all the threats that were on his life, it was as if he knew that the bullet in 24 hours was out there waiting for him.

And he said in his immortal words: I fear no man, for mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.

So, as we gather here, let us understand that that dream is still not the reality; although the pillars that he planted, part of them are. It is the tough bucket of the economic issues that we are grappling with on the floor of this House of Representatives as we speak, keeping people in their homes, getting people so they can work and have employment and jobs, opening up the economic system so that people will have businesses and participate in a livable way.

So, as we reflect, let us remember those words from Genesis: Lo, here cometh the dreamer. Let us slay him and then we shall see what will become of his dream.

We in this House of Representatives can make that dream a reality by finishing that final plank, the economic plank.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased now to recognize the gentleman from Maryland, the Honorable ELIJAH CUMMINGS, who is not only an attorney but a person of deep religious persuasions, a leader in the church. He has worked continually in the area of civil rights, voter activity, and I yield him as much time as he may consume.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding, and I associate myself with the words that have already been spoken by all of my colleagues.

My last colleague who spoke, I just want Mr. SCOTT, as I listened to him I could not help but think about the first chapter of Habakkuk, fifth verse, and in that verse it says that God says that He will do miracles and He will do it during our time, and if He were to tell us what those miracles would be, we would not believe Him.

I rise in support of this resolution, sponsored by the distinguished gentleman from Georgia, commemorating the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King on the 40th anniversary of his assassination.

Mr. Speaker, young Americans of this time are the third generation to come of age since Representative JOHN LEWIS and other brave young Americans worked with Dr. King to lead America from inequity towards justice and from violence toward a more peace-filled world.

We have been inspired and heartened to witness the young people of our time engaged in the democratic process this year like no other. They are renewing Dr. King's message and are crying out to us in Dr. King's voice, through the often harsh realities of their lives.

I must submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that whatever their ethnic backgrounds may be, far too many of these idealistic young Americans are being subjected to the most crippling segregation of all, the segregation from opportunity that is the inevitable result of poverty. I've often said that our children are the living messages we send to a future we will never see.

And Mr. Speaker, this new, energized, and determined generation is also challenging the foreign policies of this great Nation, even as Dr. King challenged American foreign policy four decades ago.

In this spirit, Mr. Speaker, I join Representative LEWIS, a true American hero who put his own life and safety on the line for these American principles, and I ask that my colleagues join me in supporting this resolution. In doing so, we honor Dr. King and his legacy to America through our actions, as well as through our words.

And as it was said in Habakkuk, miracles will happen. The question is whether we will believe in them and do as Dr. King did. Dr. King looked out, and he was not blinded by what he saw, but he saw things that others did not see, but more significantly, he took his vision and put it in the form of a mission and accomplished much.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, it's now my high privilege to recognize the majority leader, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) who many years ago had me bring to one of his meetings Rosa Parks, and that was the beginning of a very important relationship between Mrs. Parks and STENY HOYER and myself.

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend for yielding.

JOHN CONYERS is a distinguished leader of the civil rights movement, whose leadership and commitment and tenacity and steadfastness led to declaration of a holiday, a holy day in many respects, a day of recommitment when we remember the life, legacy, and teaching of Martin Luther King, Jr. I did not know Dr. King. I met him but didn't know him.

But I have known JOHN CONYERS and I have known JOHN LEWIS, and I know them both and they are giants themselves. JOHN LEWIS, of course, is the sponsor of this resolution, who represents Atlanta, who came from Alabama, who marched across the Edmund Pettis Bridge, confronted by troops who wanted to stop him from doing what is basic to the United States of America, the right of every citizen to express their view on how their government ought to be peopled and run, the right to vote.

As a result of his courage, the leadership of Dr. King and JOHN CONYERS and so many others, we passed a Voting Rights Act. I am honored to stand with these two giants.

I understand that Mr. SMITH, the ranking member of the committee, helped bring this bill to the floor.

I am of that generation that remembers the dark day in April of 1968, followed too closely by another dark day on June 6, just two-and-some-odd months later.

Mr. Speaker, 40 years ago this Friday, Martin Luther King, Jr., was murdered. He was an American prophet. He called us to love justice, to love our brothers and sisters of every color, of every race, of every nationality, of every religion, of every gender. He spoke the truth, but on April 4, 1968, he was taken from us. But his lesson was not taken from us nor his example.

In this flawed and fallen world, hate and rage and violence will have their day, but if we can find even a sliver of good in that crime, it must be this: Dr. King died on a balcony, an open place, a public place. Dr. King showed us, he proved with his own body, that a just cause is worth dying for, as our Founding Fathers had done, as frankly, in my religion, Jesus did.

It is worth living for, too, he showed us. This resolution, even though I will vote for it wholeheartedly, even though I trust it will pass unanimously, even though it's offered by my good friend JOHN LEWIS, who ''toiled, and wrought, and thought'' with Dr. King, is just words on paper, unless we match it with the resolve of our lives. That is what Dr. King wanted us to do.

Our conduct, our actions, are the only honors we have worth giving. These words on paper take on value when, and only when, they spur us toward what Dr. King called ''a committed life.''

After the autopsy, which showed that his 39-year-old body held the strained and tired heart of an elderly man; after two brown mules pulled his casket in a

wooden cart through the streets of Atlanta; after tens of thousands assembled to put him to rest, Dr. King spoke at his own funeral.

The loudspeakers played a tape of one of his old sermons, and these were the words that echoed through the Ebenezer Baptist Church. ''I don't want a long funeral. I'd like somebody to mention that day that Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to give his life serving others. I'd like for somebody to say that day that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to love somebody. I want you to say that day that I tried to be right on the war question. I want you to be able to say that day that I did try to feed the hungry. And I want you to be able to say that day that I did try in my life to clothe those who were naked.''

We can say all of it, with truth, about Martin Luther King, Jr., a great American, a great leader, a great man and, yes, a citizen revered, respected, and honored by the world, for he saw himself not just as an American, proud though he was of this Nation's promise, but also he saw himself as a part of all mankind.

May we do our best to live by his example as we remember the sad day when his body was taken from us, but they could not take his lessons.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1061,''Observing the 40th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and encouraging the people of the United States to pause and remember the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and for other purposes,'' introduced by my distinguished colleague from Georgia, Representative JOHN LEWIS. This praiseworthy legislation will commemorate the 40th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination by expanding his legacy and honoring his paradigm of nonviolence, courage, compassion, dignity, and public service.

On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated while on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. In remembering the 40th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination, we should take a moment to reflect upon the purpose for which Dr. King and other civil rights pioneers so resiliently fought. Through his philosophical words and fortified stance against racial injustice, Dr. King provided a road map for all to unite and share in the prosperity of this great democracy. While we acknowledge that our Nation has come a long way, Dr. King's dream has yet to be realized in its entirety. Martin Luther King's contributions to our history place him in this unparalleled position. It is Dr. King who represents the best in all of us and it is in his memory that we continue to devote ourselves to his vision.

In his short life, Martin Luther King was instrumental in helping us realize and rectify those unspeakable wrongs which tarnished the name of America. African Americans needed a Martin Luther King, but above all, America needed him. The significant qualities of this special man cannot be underestimated nor taken for granted. Within a span of 13 years, from 1955 to his death in 1968, he was able to expound, expose, and extricate America from many wrongs. Dr. King's inspiring words filled a great void in our nation, and answered our collective longing to become a country that truly lived by its dignified principles. And so we memorialize this man of action, who put his life on the line for freedom and justice every day.

Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King's ''I Have a Dream'' Speech, delivered on August 28, 1963, was a clarion call to each citizen of this great Nation that we still hear today. His request was simply and eloquently conveyed—he challenged America to live up to the true meaning of its creed, to make real the words written in its Declaration of Independence and to have a place in this Nation's Bill of Rights. It is with this goal in mind that we strive to provide equal opportunity to all.

Dr. King spoke about his contentment with the end of his mortal life in his last speech, ''I've Been to the Mountaintop,'' on April 3, 1968 at Mason Temple. Even then he lifted up the value of service as the hallmark of a full life and reiterated the importance of continuing the struggle for human rights. ''We've got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn't matter with me now because I've been to the mountaintop.'' We must continue to pay homage to the valor of a man who endured harassment, embarrassment, beatings, and bombings. We commemorate the man who went to jail 29 times to achieve freedom for others, and who knew he would pay the ultimate price for his leadership, but kept on marching and protesting and organizing anyway. Dr. King's vision of equality under the law should never lose its vigor despite times of unevenness in our equality. For without that vision—without that dream—we can never continue to improve on the human condition.

During these difficult days when the United States is bogged down in a misguided and mismanaged war in Iraq, which has claimed the lives of over 4,000 men and women, we should also remember that the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was, above all, a person who was always willing to speak truth to power. There is perhaps no better example of Dr. King's moral integrity and consistency than his criticism of the Vietnam War being waged by the Johnson Administration, an administration that was otherwise a friend and champion of civil and human rights. He stated, ''We are adding cynicism to the process of death, for they must know after a short period there that none of the things we claim to be fighting for are really involved.''

Dr. King was taken from us too soon at the tender age of 39 years old. Many people remember that Dr. King died in Memphis, but few remember why he was there. On that fateful day, the 4th day of April in 1968, Dr. King came to Memphis to lead a strike by the city's sanitation workers.

The death of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., will never overshadow his life. He was both a dreamer and a man of action. Forty years after his death, Dr. King continues to teach us all. He leaves a legacy of hope, tempered with peace; although, it is a vision not yet fulfilled.

Mr. Speaker, words cannot convey or adequately repay the debt that is owed. We cannot sufficiently articulate the feelings of sorrow that are still universally felt; however, we can pay Dr. King and other civil rights pioneers no greater tribute than to carry on the work they believed in and paid the ultimate sacrifice for. The contributions that Dr. King provided are priceless and will never be forgotten. As we recognize the 40th Anniversary of the slaying of a martyr, let us remember to commemorate his vision, remember his message, and rededicate ourselves to his goal of a free and just United States. I hope every person here rededicates his or her life to fulfilling his legacy—that all of us here highly resolve that Dr. King's dream never dies but becomes a living reality for all the children of this great nation and the world.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation, and, in-so-doing, giving Dr. King the respect that he so greatly deserves.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank my colleague from Georgia Mr. JOHN LEWIS for introducing this resolution which honors the life and legacy of one of America's greatest citizens, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Today, nearly 40 years after he was tragically taken from us, we are still striving to create a society of equal opportunity which he so eloquently called for. We still have a long way to go before his goals will be achieved, but at least he left for us a beacon of hope toward which we can all strive.

I am privileged to represent the Thirtieth District of Texas in the Congress and would note that there are many in North Texas who have endeavored to maintain the legacy of Dr. King. Indeed, in their everyday actions, the clergy, elected officials, students and community in the district strive to implement Dr. King's philosophy.

In 1964, King became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to end segregation and racial discrimination through civil disobedience and other nonviolent means.

It is ironic that his life was taken so prematurely at the hands of violence as he visited Memphis, Tennessee to help lead sanitation workers in a protest over black workers being sent home with no pay because of bad weather when white workers remained on the job. This tragic incident happened the day after he gave his ''I've been to the Mountaintop'' speech during which he seemed to almost prophetically foreshadow his impending death.

Dr. King stood for the common man and for social and political justice in every facet and echelon of life. As a man of vision and determination to do God's will, King was truly destined to lead the people to the ''promised land.''

Sadly, like Moses, Dr. King was not able to go into the promised land of opportunities with those he led so far through the wilderness of injustice, hatred, and bigotry. Still today, there are many that have been left to rough their way through the thicket of discrimination and racism. Therefore, it is our responsibility to carry on the beacon he left for us that lights the way to true equality and justice.

Mr. Speaker, we can honor Dr. King by bowing our heads in memory of him, but only for a moment. For we must then lift our heads, hold each other hands, look ahead, heads high, and continue the fight for his sacrifice for this Nation which was freedom, equality and opportunity for all.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1061, a measure that observes the 40th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and encourages the people of the United States to

pause and remember the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This Friday, April 4, 2008, marks the tragic 40th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination. Dr. King's work for civil rights has remained an inspiration to all those committed to liberty and freedom throughout the world.

While April 4 marks a sad day in American history, it is my hope that, as a nation, we will continue to reflect on the actions and accomplishments of Dr. King. Let April 4th be a day on which we celebrate Dr. King's life, study his teachings, and honor his legacy.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was born on January 15, 1929, and grew up in Georgia, attending segregated schools throughout his early education. Overcoming these unjust beginnings, King went on to receive a Bachelor of Arts from Morehouse College in 1948, a Bachelor of Divinity from Pennsylvania's Crozer Theological Seminary in 1951, and a Ph.D. from Boston University in 1955 before becoming pastor at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama.

Dr. King was actively involved in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and championed efforts for racial equality. In 1955, after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery bus, Dr. King led the historic Montgomery Bus Boycott, the first nonviolent demonstration of the Civil Rights Movement. There, his steadfast adherence to nonviolence and unwavering devotion to the struggle for equality in the face of threats to his life propelled him to the leadership of the Civil Rights Movement.

In 1957, Dr. King was elected President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), where he drew inspiration from Christianity and the teachings of Ghandi to be a major leader in the Civil Rights Movement. In the ensuing decade, Dr. King was feverishly active in the struggle for racial equality, constantly traveling the country to orchestrate and participate in demonstrations and delivering the inspirational addresses for which he is renowned. In that time he also penned five books and many essays, consulted to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, and became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. Unfortunately, Dr. King was assassinated on the evening of April 4, 1968, on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, Tennessee, where he planned to lead a protest march to show solidarity with striking garbage workers the next day.

The nonviolent manner in which Dr. King fought for fundamental freedoms, such as desegregation and the right to vote, has had a lasting impact on the psyche of this country. Perhaps the greatest example of Dr. King's leadership and legacy is his "I Have a Dream" speech, which he gave in front of the Lincoln Memorial during the March on Washington in 1963. In that speech, Dr. King spoke about his dream for a nation where his four children would not be judged by the color of their skin, but by their character.

Mr. Speaker, Friday may be the anniversary of the death of one of our nation's greatest citizens, but I also hope it is a day on which we can reflect on the positive changes that were set in motion due to Dr. King's work. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. raised the conscience of America. He made our nation reexamine our commitment to freedom and liberty, and he did so with a message of peace and nonviolence. To this day, Dr. King's work, message, and legacy remain imprinted on the minds of those who carry on his noble cause across America, from Montgomery, Alabama, to Northwest Indiana.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 1061, authored by my good friend from the Georgia delegation, Mr. JOHN LEWIS.

Since his death 40 years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. has come to be known as a visionary who drove political and social change in our country. And, as the Civil Rights movement evolved, he was an indispensable figure who made historic progress toward fulfilling the country's promise of freedom and justice for all.

As a student at Morehouse, I was greatly influenced by his faith-oriented philosophy—something which still guides me today. I remember meeting him on the Morehouse campus, where he had been a student himself a few years before and where he often returned.

Before deciding on Emory Law School, I entertained the notion of going to seminary just as Dr. King did. In the end I decided to become a lawyer, in part because I realized that every time Dr. King went to jail, he needed a lawyer to help to get him out.

Unfortunately I never had the privilege of helping him get out of jail. Forty years ago this month, I marched behind the mule-drawn wagon that carried his coffin, and I sang at his funeral as a member of the Morehouse Glee Club. It was an experience that will always remain vivid in my memory.

Of course, Martin Luther King, Jr. was not a perfect person. He never claimed to be. Like all of us, he was a human being. But he possessed an abundance of qualities that ultimately made him an heroic and patriotic figure.

He had unwavering faith not only in God, but also this country. He possessed limitless courage and sacrifice in the name of that faith, and endured numerous beatings, jailings, and dangers. He showed tremendous organizational skill by bringing people together and forging a consensus when no one else could.

And his brilliant oratorical skill—eloquence and logic coupled with an appeal to better ourselves.

In his eulogy for Dr. King, Dr. Benjamin Mays said:

"[Dr. King] had faith in this country. He died striving to desegregate and integrate America to the end that this great nation of ours, born in revolution and blood, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created free and equal, will truly become the lighthouse of freedom . . ."

Martin Luther King, Jr. will be remembered this week as a great leader of the civil rights era, a humanitarian, a man of God, a crusader, and by his family, as a loving husband and father.

Additionally, many of us remember a man who lived his life in pursuit of this country's founding principles. So as we commemorate his life with this resolution in the United States House of Representatives—I would also like to remember him as one of America's great patriots.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of the assassination of one of the most prominent leaders of the American Civil Rights Movement, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King made the ultimate sacrifice advocating for civil rights when he was assassinated on this day 40 years ago while standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, Tennessee. His untimely death gives our nation impetus to realize the dream he espoused, and carry on his legacy.

Dr. King fought to raise the moral and political consciousness of all Americans. As a Baptist preacher, philosopher, and activist, he was most interested in creating a world where he could peacefully and righteously raise his own children. He was passionate about ending poverty and war, both in this country and abroad. Though he is revered for his role within the African American community, he believed that the struggle he led was ultimately for the liberation of the United States and all those who believed in freedom. In this time of global uncertainty and conflict, his wisdom and foresight should resonate with us all.

I would like to share an excerpt from his speech given on April 4, 1967 at a meeting of Clergy and Laity Concerned at Riverside Church in New York City:

"Somehow this madness must cease. We must stop now. I speak as a child of God and brother to the suffering poor of Vietnam. I speak for those whose land is being laid waste, whose homes are being destroyed, whose culture is being subverted. I speak for the poor of America who are paying the double price of smashed hopes at home and death and corruption in Vietnam. I speak as a citizen of the world, for the world as it stands aghast at the path we have taken. I speak as an American to the leaders of my own nation. The great initiative in this war is ours. The initiative to stop it must be ours. . . .

The only change came from America as we increased our troop commitments in support of governments which were singularly corrupt, inept and without popular support. All the while the people read our leaflets and received regular promises of peace and democracy—and land reform. Now they languish under our bombs and consider us—not their fellow Vietnamese —the real enemy."

Dr. King believed in our collective potential to stand for justice and peace everywhere. On this day, we honor his life and legacy by protecting his dream, and living up to our inherent potential.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1061.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H. Con. Res. 310, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 1005, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 1021, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

□ 1545

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR A NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR HARRIET ROSS TUBMAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 310, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 310.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 416, nays 0, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 150]

YEAS—416

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Udall (CO)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield (KY)
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman (VA)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—14

Andrews
Cubin
Fossella
Granger
Jefferson
Pryce (OH)
Reynolds
Rothman
Rush
Schwartz
Shuler
Tauscher
Udall (NM)
Waxman

□ 1611

Mr. GUTIERREZ changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCING THE PASSING OF FORMER REPRESENTATIVE BILL DICKINSON OF ALABAMA

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

Mr. EVERETT. Members, it is my sad duty to notify the House that a former colleague, Bill Dickinson, passed away last night at age 82. Bill represented Alabama's Second District prior to me, from 1964 to 1992. He served as the ranking Republican on the House Armed Services Committee during the Reagan military build-up years.

His death marks a loss to Alabama and to the Nation, and I now ask for a moment of silence from the body.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas). Members will rise and observe a moment of silence.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF BORDERLINE PERSONALITY AWARENESS MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1005, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1005, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 414, nays 0, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 151]

YEAS—414

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon

Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Udall (CO)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield (KY)
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman (VA)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—16

Andrews
Calvert
Cubin
Granger
Jefferson
Pryce (OH)
Reynolds
Rothman
Rush
Schwartz
Shuler
Tauscher
Terry
Udall (NM)
Wamp
Waxman

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes left in the vote.

□ 1621

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title was amended so as to read: ''Resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Borderline Personality Disorder Awareness Month.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS, IDEALS, AND HISTORY OF NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1021, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1021, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 413, nays 0, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 152]

YEAS—413

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali

Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Udall (CO)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield (KY)
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman (VA)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—17

Andrews
Calvert
Cubin
Granger
Jefferson
McCaul (TX)
Pryce (OH)
Renzi
Reynolds
Rothman
Rush
Schwartz
Shuler
Tauscher
Udall (NM)
Wamp
Waxman

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes left to vote.

□ 1628

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5501, TOM LANTOS AND HENRY J. HYDE UNITED STATES GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AGAINST HIV/AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS, AND MALARIA REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

Mr. WELCH of Vermont, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110–562) on the resolution (H. Res. 1065) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5501) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2009 through 2013 to provide assistance to foreign countries to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

□ 1630

ELECTING CERTAIN MEMBERS TO A CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1066

Resolved, That the following named Members be, and are hereby, elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives:

(1) COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES.—Mr. Foster, Mr. Carson.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAMES OF MEMBERS AS COSPONSORS OF H.R. 3547

MR. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Representatives ROYBAL-ALLARD, LINDA SÁNCHEZ, SOLIS, and BERMAN be removed as cosponsors of H.R. 3547, and instead be added to H.R. 5477. These members were listed as cosponsors on one bill when they should have been listed as cosponsors on the other due to a clerical error.

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

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.

APRIL FOOL'S DAY AT THE WHITE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, today is April the 1st, a day that also goes by the nickname April Fool's Day. For most of us, this is a day of trickery that only comes once a year. For the White House, it is a day that comes all too often. The mistruths, the lies, the deceptions, whatever you want to call them, keep flowing out of the White House and from its cronies.

Just the other day, our very own ambassador to Iraq said, and I quote him, ''I think there has to be an honest discussion of the consequences of Iraq.'' An honest discussion. Now? Why didn't the administration do that 5 years ago, I ask you? Just now we need to put on our thinking caps and get serious about Iraq? We are in the sixth year of this occupation, and Ambassador Crocker thinks now is the time to contemplate what is going to happen in Iraq? This is far beyond a day late and a dollar short. They are 5 years late and one-half trillion dollars short.

But this never ending April Fool's Day goes on and on. How about these oldies but goodies:

In July 2002, then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld had a one-word answer for reporters who asked whether Iraq had relationships with al Qaeda terrorists. His answer was, ''Sure.''

Vice President DICK CHENEY in August 2002 simply stated, ''There is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction. There is no doubt he is amassing them to use against our friends, against our allies, and against us.''

On January 28, 2003, in his annual State of the Union, the President asserted that the British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa. He continued, ''Our intelligence sources tell us that he has attempted to purchase high-strength aluminum tubes suitable for nuclear weapons production.''

The administration, which has racked up one-half trillion dollars in debt, even made the claim that Iraqi oil would pay for the war and that we would be met with cheers and flowers.

Remember that old proverb: Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. But, you know what? The American people were not fooled by these statements, and this Congress mustn't be fooled, either. That is why 92 Members of this House have sent a clear message to the President. We signed a letter stating that we will not support any more blank checks. In fact, we said we will only support appropriating additional funds for U.S. military operations in Iraq during fiscal year 2008 and beyond for the protection and safe redeployment of our troops out of Iraq before President Bush leaves office.

There is absolutely nothing funny about these tricks that the administration has played on this Nation. April Fool's Day ends today. We must not take any more nonsense from the White House, and we must not sign one more blank check.

HONORING JOHN MONTGOMERY

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. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a public servant who has given a great deal not only to the State of North Carolina but to the country as a whole.

Since 1972, Mr. John Montgomery has served the Department of Veterans Affairs on behalf of our Nation's veterans. Later this month, he will retire from his position as director of the VA regional office in Winston-Salem in North Carolina.

Born in Providence, Rhode Island in 1944, Mr. Montgomery is an Army veteran who served in an artillery unit in Vietnam from January 1969 to April of 1970. He earned a bachelor's degree from Brown University in 1967 and a law degree from Boston University in 1972. Mr. Montgomery began his VA career in Hartford, Connecticut regional office as a claims examiner in 1972. In 1975, he transferred to the VA central office in Washington, D.C. as a legal consultant, and 2 years later, he was

selected as the adjudication officer at the VA Medical and Regional Office Center in Togus, Maine. Mr. Montgomery was named director of the Providence, Rhode Island VA Regional Office in 1980.

In February of 1995, he traveled to North Carolina to begin work in his current position as director of the VA Regional Office in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. In this position, he has been responsible for administering federal benefits to 790,000 veterans and their families living in North Carolina. These services total more than $1.2 billion in annual benefit payments.

The Winston-Salem Regional Office provides benefits and services in all program areas to veterans, servicemembers, and reservists residing in North Carolina. These programs include compensation, pension, loan guarantee, and vocational rehabilitation.

From 1995 to 2007, Mr. Montgomery oversaw the growth of the Winston-Salem Office from 240 employees to 530 employees. During this period, the office grew to the second largest disability office in the United States.

In 2005, he was successful in having Winston-Salem selected as one of only two national benefits delivery at discharge sites at regional offices. This achievement created an additional 55 professional full-time positions and helped to ensure that the regional office would be a key player in the VA for many years to come.

As director, Mr. Montgomery has supported the veteran community in hiring practices as well as in claims disability work. Of the 516 employees hired at the regional offices in the last 10 years, 260 were veterans, and of that number, 127 were disabled veterans.

Each year, I visit the Winston-Salem Regional Office to learn about the work being done there and, more importantly, to personally thank the VA employees for all they do on behalf of our Nation's veterans. It was during one of these visits that I was struck by a letter I saw hanging on the wall of Mr. Montgomery's office. His family had received a letter from President Franklin D. Roosevelt after losing a loved one in World War II. And I quote President Roosevelt's letter.

''He stands in the unbroken line of patriots who have dared to die that freedom might live and grow, and increase its blessings. Freedom lives, and through it, he lives, in a way that humbles the undertakings of most men.''

I am so grateful that my friendship with Mr. Montgomery led me to this wonderful quote, which I have since shared in my own letters to families who have lost a loved one in Afghanistan or Iraq.

During my visits, Mr. Montgomery has generously acted as my guide and has introduced me to employees and visiting veterans. I have witnessed firsthand all of the great work being done by Mr. Montgomery and his staff to take care of our Nation's veterans. They have excelled in their efforts to reduce the number of pending claims while still maintaining the accuracy of their case audits.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I wish to congratulate Mr. Montgomery on his retirement and his long and successful career of service with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Through his work on behalf of our Nation's veterans, he has earned the respect of so many people, and I know he will be missed.

John Montgomery, thank you for a job well done. I wish you all the best for a long and happy retirement. May God bless you and your family in the years ahead, and may God bless our men and women in uniform, and may God bless America.

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

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

THE HOUSING STIMULUS PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, The Politico, a newspaper that is published and distributed here in the Congress, has an article today about how hard the Democrats are working to address the housing stimulus plan that the American people are waiting for.

In places like Ohio, the mortgage foreclosure rate is at all-time highs, and Washington seems to be frozen. There was a program passed here that I voted for for housing counseling to try to help workouts a few months ago; and then I learned that, in a community as hard struck as northern Ohio is, it yielded $60,000. $60,000 in a region where hundreds and hundreds of people are losing their homes.

□ 1645

Washington doesn't seem to be able to match the reality of what is happening across this country.

A newspaper today reports that Senator CHRIS DODD from the other body stated that ''Congress needs cooperation. This is not a partisan issue. Our economy is in trouble. We need people to step up and recognize it is Americans that are at risk, and it is America that is at risk.''

The figures state that in another sign of distressed housing markets, home equity dipped below 50 percent, an historic low for our Nation. Home mortgage volume fell by 17.5 percent last quarter, and pending home sales also are reaching new lows. We know what the reality is. And yet today, all the major papers had lead stories about the resignation of the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Mr. Alphonso Jackson. USA Today reports: ''HUD chief departure a blow to President.

''For the first time in President Bush's tenure, one of his Cabinet members is stepping down amid a criminal investigation.''

The article continues: ''The FBI has been investigating the ties between Mr. Jackson and a friend who was paid $392,000 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as a construction manager in New Orleans, according to the Associated Press.'' It is quite a long story about that resignation.

And then in the Washington Post, the same sort of story, ''Jackson Resigns as HUD Secretary, Longtime Bush Friend is Facing Cronyism Investigation.''

Mr. Jackson announced his resignation yesterday, leaving the Bush administration without a top housing official in the midst of this vast mortgage crisis which has shaken not just the American economy but the global economy.

The New York Times lead editorial today: ''Put the Housing Back in HUD.'' Boy, can we underline that.

It talks about what a sad commentary it is on the Bush administration's low regard for HUD's mission that Mr. Jackson was permitted to remain in office for so long. And it points out in 2006, an inspector general's report found Mr. Jackson had urged his staff members to favor Mr. Bush's supporters when it awarded contracts. And more recently, the Philadelphia Housing Authority sued Mr. Jackson, charging he had threatened to take away $50 million from that authority because its president would not turn over valuable property to a developer with ties to Mr. Jackson. He has refused to answer the Senate's questions about the matter, and the Times ends with this admonition: ''Mr. Jackson's resignation clears the way for President Bush to name a top caliber successor, given the seriousness of the mortgage crisis.'' It should also be an occasion to reflect on the cost of appointing HUD secretaries whose priorities are politics and patronage rather than housing and urban development, which was the mission of HUD from the very beginning.

We are celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Kerner Commission Report; and as we look at the disaster we are facing in housing across this country that demands a national response, to have the major official here in our Nation's capital have to step down under a cloud of wrongdoing, and to have no one in place, a team of people who can really reach out to the American people and help as many of them as possible hold onto their largest form of savings, which is their home, is an absolute national disgrace.

It seems like the organizations that are here in our Nation's capital aren't really serious about helping the American people to hold onto their most prized possession after their family, their home, for heaven's sake.

You really wonder what has been going on inside that administration,

what has been going on on Wall Street with people walking away with tens of millions of dollars in fees, and the American people's equity just being washed down the drain.

I recommend to the President that he go beyond appointing a person of high repute to the office of Secretary of HUD and have a strike team in the White House that can deal with every region of this country being so hard hit in this mortgage crisis.

Madam Speaker, I will include the articles for the RECORD.

[From the USA Today, Apr. 1, 2008]

HUD CHIEF DEPARTURE A BLOW TO PRESIDENT

(By David Jackson)

WASHINGTON.—For the first time in President Bush's tenure, one of his Cabinet members is stepping down amid a criminal investigation.

Housing Secretary Alphonso Jackson, a longtime Bush ally from Texas, said Monday he'll leave his post on April 18. He announced his departure on the fourth anniversary of his Senate confirmation.

The FBI has been investigating the ties between Jackson and a friend who was paid $392,000 by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department as a construction manager in New Orleans, according to the Associated Press. Jackson's friend got the job after Jackson allegedly asked a HUD staffer to pass along his name to the Housing Authority of New Orleans.

Other Bush Cabinet members, such as former Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, have left office under political clouds. But Jackson, 62, is the highest ranking Bush official to depart in this manner. Last June, former deputy Interior secretary Steven Griles was convicted and sent to prison for lying to a congressional panel about the access and favors he gave to lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

James Thurber, who directs the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies at American University, said Jackson's resignation is not good news for Bush as he seeks political leverage with Congress and tries to stay relevant during an intense presidential campaign to succeed him.

''This is the last thing that he needs,'' Thurber said.

Separately, Jackson and HUD still face a federal lawsuit by the Philadelphia Housing Authority, accusing Jackson of retaliating against that agency because it refused to turn over land to one of his developer friends.

Carl Greene, executive director of the Philadelphia agency, told USA TODAY that Jackson ''orchestrated a series of procedural and enforcement actions'' designed to deprive his agency of federal funds.

Greene said his lawyers still may want to question Jackson, but his main goal is to get the department ''to allow us to continue carrying out our mission.''

HUD official Mark Studdert said in a March 19 letter the federal government was not retaliating against the Philadelphia agency, but was citing it for not being in compliance with federal law on tenants with physical disabilities.

Jackson did not mention the federal investigation or the lawsuit during his brief announcement. ''There comes a time when one must attend diligently to personal and family matters,'' said Jackson, without taking questions from reporters.

The resignation came 10 days after Democratic Sens. Patty Murray of Washington and Chris Dodd of Connecticut urged Bush to remove Jackson, citing ''the clouds of justice Department investigations and reports of an empanelled grand jury'' at a time of nationwide mortgage failures.

Bush, who flew early Monday to Kiev, Ukraine, issued a statement saying he accepted Jackson's resignation with regret. A friend of Jackson since they both lived in Dallas in the early 1990s, Bush said, ''I have known him to be a strong leader and a good man.''

In 2006, the Dallas Business Journal reported Jackson said that he rejected a contract with one man who told him he did not like Bush. That led to a report by the HUD inspector general that Jackson told employees to consider political affiliation when deciding contracts. The inspector general said there was no evidence that contracts were actually awarded on such a basis.

Jackson told the inspector general that the report of his comments in Dallas was not true.

[From the Washington Post, Apr. 1, 2008]

JACKSON RESIGNS AS HUD SECRETARY

(By Dan Eggen and Carol D. Leonnig)

Embattled Housing and urban Development Secretary Alphonso Jackson announced his resignation yesterday, leaving the Bush administration without a top housing official in the midst of a vast mortgage crisis that has shaken the global economy.

Jackson, a longtime friend and former neighbor of President Bush, departed after the White House concluded he had too many controversies swirling around him to be an effective Cabinet member, several HUD officials said privately.

Jackson has been accused of favoritism involving HUD contractors for two years, and the FBI and the Justice Department are investigating whether he steered business to friends.

Several Democratic lawmakers demanded Jackson's resignation last month after he refused to answer questions about the accusations including a lawsuit filed by the Philadelphia Housing Authority against HUD that alleged Jackson and his aides used the department to punish the authority for refusing to transfer valuable property to one of Jackson's friends.

[From the New York Times, Apr. 1, 2008]

PUT THE HOUSING BACK IN HUD

As relieved as we were to see Alphanso Jackson resign on Monday as the secretary of housing and urban development, it was a sad comment on the Bush administration's low regard for HUD's mission that Mr. Jackson was permitted to remain in office so long.

Mr. Jackson offered the usual excuse for resigning; his family, apparently, needs to see more of him. It's evident, though that his resignation has something to do with the ongoing investigation of Mr. Jackson for allegedly using his position for partisan politics and to reward friends. Even this administration, with its high tolerance for that sort of behavior, no doubt considered it uintenable—finally—to have such a dubious housing chief when home mortgages are in crisis.

Mr. Jackson made little impression in either housing or urban development. He did make headlines in April 2006, however, when he boasted that he had taken a contract away because the contractor had been critical of President Bush. ''Why should I reward someone who doesn't like the president, so they can use funds to try to campaign against the president?'' The Dallas Business Journal quoted him as saying in a speech.

Mr. Jackson later said that he was lying when he talked about awarding contracts for political reasons, but an inspector general's report later that year found that Mr. Jackson had urged his staff members to favor Mr. Bush's supporters when it awarded contracts.

More recently, the Philadelphia Housing Authority sued Mr. Jackson, charging that he had threatened to take away $50 million because its president would not turn over valuable property to a developer with ties to Mr. Jackson. He has refused to answer the Senate's questions about the matter.

Federal authorities are also reportedly investigating whether he steered housing contracts in New Orleans and the Virgin Islands to friends.

HUD has a long history of mismanagement and corruption, which has been particularly pronounced in Republican administrations. That is most likely because with rare exceptions, like former HUD Secretary Jack Kemp, Republicans do not seem to believe in the agency's mission. Samuel Pierce, the HUD secretary for all eight years of Ronald Reagan's presidency, defended Mr. Reagan's sharp cuts in subsidized housing. He presided over a department mired in scandals, including ones that led to criminal convictions of several of his aides.

President Bush consistently backed Mr. Jackson, as recently as last month after Senators Patty Murray, Democrat of Washington, and Christopher Dodd, Democrat of Connecticut, called for his dismissal. But questions kept mounting about Mr. Jackson's integrity at a time when his department's Federal Housing Administration has an important role to play in trying to stave off foreclosures.

Mr. Jackson's resignation clears the way for Mr. Bush to name a top-caliber successor, given the seriousness of the mortgage crisis. It should also be an occasion to reflect on the cost of appointing HUD secretaries whose priorities are politics and patronage rather than housing and urban development.

SUNSET MEMORIAL

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I stand once again before this body with yet another Sunset Memorial.

It is April 1, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun set today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand—just today. That is more than the number of innocent American lives that were lost on September 11th, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,853 days since the travesty called Roe v. Wade was handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million of our own children.

Some of them, Madam Speaker, cried and screamed as they died, but because it was amniotic fluid passing over their vocal cords instead of air, we couldn't hear them.

All of them had at least four things in common.

They were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone. Each one of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each of their mothers, whether she realizes it immediately or not, will never be the same. And all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever.

Yet even in the full glare of such tragedy, this generation clings to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our

own silent genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims to date, those yet unborn.

Madam Speaker, perhaps it is important for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves again of why we are really all here.

Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government."

The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution. It says: "No state shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law." Madam Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here. It is our sworn oath.

The bedrock foundation of this Republic is that clarion Declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Every conflict and battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to our commitment to this core self-evident truth. It has made us the beacon of hope for the entire world. It is who we are.

And yet Madam Speaker, another day has passed, and we in this body have failed again to honor that foundational commitment. We failed our sworn oath and our God-given responsibility as we broke faith with nearly 4,000 more innocent American babies who died today without the protection that we should have given them.

Madam Speaker, let me conclude, in the hope that perhaps someone new who heard this sunset memorial tonight will finally embrace the truth that abortion really does kill little babies, that it hurts mothers in ways that we can never express, and that 12,853 days spent killing nearly 50 million unborn children in America is enough; and that the America that rejected human slavery and marched into Europe to arrest the Nazi 1Holocaust, is still courageous and compassionate enough to find a better way for mothers and their babies than abortion on demand.

So tonight, Madam Speaker, may we each remind ourselves that our own days in this sunshine of life are also numbered and that all too soon each of us will walk from these Chambers for the very last time.

And if it should be that this Congress is allowed to convene on yet another day to come, may that be the day when we finally hear the cries of the innocent unborn. May that be the day we find the humanity, the courage, and the will to embrace together our human and our constitutional duty to protect the least of these, our tiny American brothers and sisters, from this murderous scourge upon our Nation called abortion on demand.

It is April 1, 2008—12,853 days since Roe v. Wade first stained the foundation of this nation with the blood of its own children—this, in the land of free and the home of the brave.

THANK YOU, PAT SALBERG

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bid a fond farewell to a long-time member of my district staff, Pat Salberg. Pat recently retired after 23 years of dedicated service to the people of Illinois' 13th Congressional District.

Having served as a caseworker on the staff of my predecessor, Representative Harris Fawell, Pat was kind enough to agree to stay with my office—only temporarily, she said—to aid the transition. That was 10 years ago.

It seems her retirement plans just kept getting pushed back by an untiring love of helping others. From seniors with Social Security questions to a homeless mom looking for shelter for her child, Pat never hesitated to go above and beyond to find a solution for those in need.

Were you to ask her colleagues about it, they would tell you that her love for others is rivaled only by her love of animals, both cuddly and otherwise. In fact, members of my staff in the district are to this day forbidden from stepping on spiders or other insects that might be roaming around the office. Pat insisted that they be scooped up to safety and set free outside.

One time she even tried to save a live lobster that someone had unwittingly given her as a gift. Pat didn't rest until it had been set free in a co-worker's pond.

Needless to say, it is little surprise to any of us who know Pat that Pat plans to spend some of her newly acquired free time volunteering at the Brookfield Zoo. I expect she will also spend more time gardening and playing bridge with friends.

Madam Speaker, Pat is a wonderful colleague and will always remain a part of our team in the 13th Congressional District. As she turns to new, more leisurely pursuits in life, I would like to wish her good health and great happiness. I know her two daughters, Wendy and Debbie, as well as her grandchildren, Megan, Scott, and Collin, will be glad to have Pat around even more. And I thank them for letting us borrow her for as long as they did.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Pat Salberg for all she has done for the community and for me. We will miss her dearly.

HONORING CHARLIE ARA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, this afternoon I rise to recognize Mr. Charlie Ara, the recipient of the First Annual Cesar Chavez Humanitarian Award for the 56th Assembly District of California, for over 50 years of community service and activism in the field of human and civil rights.

Mr. Ara was ordained a Roman Catholic priest by Cardinal James Francis McIntyre on April 25, 1956, at St. Vibiana's Cathedral in Los Angeles, California.

From 1956 to 1970, he served as associate pastor in five large parishes in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles: St. Lawrence Martyr in the South Bay area; St. Finbar's in the Burbank-Glendale area; Visitation in West Los Angeles; All Saints in El Sereno; and St. Cecilia's in the Tustin-Santa Ana area of Orange County.

On August 28, 1963, Mr. Ara participated in the March on Washington, along with over 250,000 people, and experienced Martin Luther King Jr.'s ''I Have a Dream'' speech. Mr. Ara has carried Mr. KING's message of equality throughout his career.

Mr. Ara became a strong advocate for social justice, including support for farm workers, anti-Vietnam War activists, and fair housing legislation for Mexican-American families living in public housing projects in East Los Angeles.

In 1970, Mr. Ara married. He and his wife, Shirley, were blessed with five wonderful children: Martin John, Jose Anthony, Rana Annette, Dawna Gibrana, and Matthew Charles.

Mr. Ara became the chief executive and administrator of anti-poverty programs funded by the California Community Services Administration, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the City of Long Beach Department of Rehabilitation.

Through these programs, Mr. Ara assisted Latinos and other ethnic minorities by directing men and women to job training programs. Mr. Ara also established English classes for the Spanish-speaking community, served as a liaison with the welfare department, and sought assistance for the elderly.

Mr. Ara also wrote and obtained the first mental health government grant for the Asian American community in Long Beach serving widows of fallen military servicemembers.

In addition to his advocacy work, Mr. Ara holds a doctoral degree in psychology and has been a marriage and family counselor for 36 years. He has written a best-selling marital success guide titled, ''The Grass is Greener Where It is Watered.''

Mr. Ara has prepared many thousands of couples for marriage, and has made numerous appearances on national television and radio programs to discuss his work.

Most recently, Mr. Ara led an effort with the Hubert Humphrey Democratic Club of Cerritos and the African-American community to observe the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday in the city of Cerritos.

Madam Speaker and distinguished colleagues, please join me in recognizing Charlie Ara for his many years of service to the community, and for his many years of social justice advocacy. He is a great man who does great work in our community. We respect him tremendously, and he deserves this honor.

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

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

TWO MICHELLES, TWO AMERICAS & SHAME V. PRIDE

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

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, an article came across my desk earlier today which I believe needs and deserves the attention of this House. It is titled, ''2 Michelles, 2 Americas & Shame v. Pride.'' It was written by Michelle Malkin.

She writes: ''Like Michelle Obama, I am a 'woman of color.' Like Michelle Obama, I am a working mother of two young children. Like Michelle Obama, I am member of the 13th generation of Americans born since the founding of our great Nation.

''Unlike Michelle Obama, I can't keep track of the numbers of times I have been proud—really proud—of my country since I was born and privileged to live in it. At a recent speech in Milwaukee, Mrs. Obama remarked, 'For the first time in my adult lifetime, I am really proud of my country, and not just because Barack has done well, but because I think people are hungry for change.'

''Mrs. Obama's statement was met with warm applause from those who also are apparently devoid of pride in their country during their adult lifetimes. Or maybe it was a Pavlovian response to the word 'change.' What a sad, empty, narcissistic, ungrateful, unthinking lot.

''I am just 7 years younger than Ms. Obama. We have grown up and lived in the same era. And yet, her self-absorbed attitude is completely foreign to me. What planet is she living on? Since when was now the only time the American people have ever been 'hungry for change'?

''We were both adults when the Berlin Wall fell. That was an earth-shattering change. We lived through two decades of peaceful, if contentious, election cycles under the rule of law, which have brought about change and upheaval, both good and bad. We were adults through several launches of the space shuttle, in case you were snoozing. And as adults, we've witnessed and benefited from dizzyingly rapid advances in technology, communications, science, and medicine pioneered by American entrepreneurs who yearned to change the world and succeeded.

You want 'change'? Go ask the patients whose lives have been improved and extended by American pharmaceutical companies that have flourished under the best economic system in the world.

''If American ingenuity, a robust constitutional republic, and the fall of communism don't do it for you, then how about American heroism and sacrifice? How about every Memorial Day, every Veterans Day, every Independence Day, every medal of honor ceremony? Has she never attended a ''welcome home ceremony'' for the troops? For me, there is a thrill of the Blue Angels roaring over the cloudless skies, and there is the somber awe felt amid the hallowed waters that surround the sunken USS *Arizona* and Pearl Harbor Memorial.

□ 1700

Every naturalization ceremony I've attended where hundreds of new Americans raise their hands to swear an oath of allegiance to this land of liberty has been a moment of pride for me, so has the awesome display of American compassion at home and around the world when millions of Americans rallied to help victims of the 2004 tsunami on Southeast Asia, including members of the USS *Abraham Lincoln* Carrier Strike Group that sped from Hong Kong to assist the survivors. My heart filled with pride. It did again when the citizens of Houston opened their arms to Hurricane Katrina victims and folks across the country rushed to their churches and offices of the Salvation Army and Red Cross to volunteer.

How about American resilience? Does it not make you proud? Only a heart of stone could be unmoved by the strength, the valor and determination displayed by New York, Washington, D.C. and Shanksville, Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001.

I believe it was Michael Kinsley who quipped that a gaffe is when a politician tells the truth. In this case, it's what happens when an elite Democrat politician's wife says what a significant portion of her party's base really believe to be truth: America is more a source of shame than pride.

Michelle Obama has achieved enormous professional success, political influence and personal acclaim in America. Ivy League educated, she's been lauded by Essence magazine as one of the 25 Most Inspiring Women, by Vanity Fair as one of the ten World's Best-Dressed Women, and named one of 'The Harvard 100' most influential alumni. She has an amazingly blessed life, but you wouldn't know it from her campaign rhetoric or her griping about her and her husband's student loans.

For years we've heard liberals get offended by any challenge to their patriotism. And so they are again aggrieved and rising to explain away Ms. Obama's remarks. Lady Michelle and her defenders protest too much.

Madam Speaker, I am proud of America for many reasons, not the least of which is because it helped shape the character of Michelle Malkin.

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

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

COMMENDING ULYSSES BYIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the good works of the students of the Ulysses Byis Elementary School in Roosevelt, Long Island, in my district.

On Tuesday, March 18, I visited the students at the school to honor their hard work in raising awareness and funds for humanitarian efforts helping those suffering from the conflict in Darfur, Sudan. The students worked to help achieve and support the mission of the U.N. Millennium Development goals in bringing aid and awareness to health, education, poverty, and sustainable living needs in Africa.

Under the guidance of educators Ms. Hazelton, Ms. Warfield, and Principal Lillian Coggins-Watson, the students got involved with the national network of O Ambassador's clubs, a part of Oprah's ''Angel Network,'' with the goal of working to find solutions to global challenges through active learning, idea sharing, and taking action.

The students worked diligently and raised $1,100 in just 2 days to benefit relief agencies in the East African Nation of Sudan. These students made an extraordinary effort to help a problem that is very far away from them, and their work and contributions need to be acknowledged.

Considering the volume of money Congress manages every single day, $1,100 might sound like a small amount, but the effort by the children of Ulysses Byis Elementary School was massive, considering that many of the families in the Roosevelt School District face harsh economic challenges of their own.

The fact that these students worked as hard as they did to raise the money that will help save the lives of people thousands of miles away speaks not only of their extraordinary character, but what a terrific job the teachers and parents in the Roosevelt School District are doing in instilling in the children the qualities that make our citizens and Nation great.

The students have not stopped in their efforts to raise money and attention to the difficulties facing the people of Darfur. In fact, since I visited the school just 2 weeks ago, the students have raised over $600 more and have the goal of reaching $5,000 by the end of the school year. They plan to sell scratch-off tickets, hold a walk-a-thon, and continue to collect the pocket change that students bring with them to school. These children will not let any obstacle prevent them from achieving their goal to help the Sudanese people.

Some of the money raised by the students will go towards the purchase of mosquito bed nets, which have been shown to dramatically lessen the spread of malaria. The seemingly simple technology of insecticide treated

bed nets has proven to be remarkably effective and can save thousands of lives a year by minimizing one of the region's most deadly diseases.

As has been mentioned many times here on the House floor, the situation in Darfur is dire, and financial aid is crucial in helping to manage the humanitarian crisis that is being faced there every day.

While we are still working to find ways to help eliminate the violence and brutality of genocide that has become synonymous with Darfur, we need to take a lesson from the students and work to help them manage the health and well-being of the country's population. Each year, thousands of Sudanese will fall victim to disease and famine. What makes these deaths even more tragic is that so many could have been prevented by the use of the kind of bed netting that the money raised by the students will go towards purchasing.

Additionally, this week we will vote on H.R. 5510, the Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hide United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008. The bill will provide much-needed funds that will be useful in advancing the causes that the children are working toward. This bill will help impact one of the most important issues of our time, helping to stem the spread of deadly and potentially preventable diseases.

It is absolutely vital that the United States Government and Members of this Congress continue to decry the outrageous horrors of genocide and Darfur. And we must continue to find ways, as the children have, to help the Sudanese people survive.

I would like to extend my congratulations and deepest gratitude to the students of the Ulysses Byis Elementary School, and their teachers, principals and parents for their tremendous efforts and their spirit of giving and generosity.

I would also like to thank and recognize the efforts of Oprah Winfrey for offering the tools and inspiration for the children at the Ulysses Byis School and students throughout the Nation through her Angel Network and O Ambassadors program to take action and to do the hard work necessary to help those less fortunate.

Finally, I would just like to tell the students of the Ulysses Byis School to keep up their good work. Don't quit. I know that you will reach and exceed your goals. The people of Darfur need your help, and we are all behind you. I thank the students for the work they have done.

SARAH TERRY/RELAY FOR LIFE

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

Mr. GOODE. I rise to salute the Prince Edward County and Longwood University Relay for Life for their fundraising efforts for the American Cancer Society.

Cancer affects millions of families across the United States each year. The 2008 Prince Edward/Longwood Relay for Life is particularly special because this year's walk will honor Sarah Terry, a long-time community activist and a manager of my Farmville office. Sarah served on the Virginia Board of Corrections, the Longwood University Board of Visitors, and as Executive Director of the Farmville Area Chamber of Commerce.

Sarah battled breast cancer for almost a decade before succumbing to the illness on December 1, 2007. Even while ill, Sarah continued to fight diligently for the Farmville/Prince Edward community in many capacities to promote the local economy, outdoor recreation and tourism.

I commend the Relay for Life for honoring an inspirational figure and community leader in Sarah Terry.

NAME DISPUTE BETWEEN GREECE AND FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the name dispute between Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). We call it FYROM for short. FYROM is located just north of present day Greece, and its capital is Skopje. It is one of the countries formed from the breakup of the former Yugoslav Republic, Yugoslavia.

FYROM is an interim name. The U.N. oversees a framework where Greece and FYROM have agreed to negotiate a mutually agreeable permanent name for this new nation. As the founder and cofounder of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues, this is an issue of tremendous importance to Greece and the Caucus.

All historical and archaeological evidence demonstrates that the ancient Macedonians were Greek. Macedonia is a Greek name that was designated in the northern area of Greece for 2,500 years.

In 1944, the name of Skopje region was changed to Macedonia as part of Tito's imperialistic campaign to gain control of the Greek province of Macedonia. The United States opposed Tito's use of the name Macedonia at that time, but in November 2004, unilaterally and without warning, this present administration decided to recognize the former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia as Macedonia, using the Greek name. It was a shock and a disappointment to the Greek American community, and myself and many others, that the White House went against prior U.S. policy to recognize FYROM as Macedonia just 2 days after the 2004 presidential election, and before talks were completed among the nations most directly affected by the outcome.

Along with former Representative Bilirakis and 68 of our colleagues, we sent a letter to the former Secretary of State, Colin Powell, expressing our concerns about this decision. We also organized meetings with the American Ambassador and other officials in the State Department. We believe that the name ''Macedonia'' properly belongs to Greek culture and, therefore, should not be used by any other country. Greek Macedonia is one of the oldest civilizations known to man, and the history of this name should be recognized and respected.

Along with my colleagues, BILIRAKIS, SARBANES and SPACE, we have introduced legislation, H.R. 356, which expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that the FYROM should stop the utilization of materials that violate provisions of the U.N.-brokered interim agreement between FYROM and Greece regarding hostile activities or propaganda, and should work with the U.N. and Greece to achieve longstanding U.S. and U.N. policy goals of finding a mutually acceptable name. Our bipartisan resolution now has over 114 cosponsors.

I just want to say that, in a major good will gesture, Greece has already agreed with the word Macedonia in the name. And they say it would be acceptable as long as it is combined with some type of qualifier to make clear that there are no designs on the historical boundaries of the provinces of Macedonia. But Skopje keeps doing sort of antagonistic things. This week, they erected a billboard in Skopje that depicts the Greek flag, but in the area where the cross is, they have put in a swastika. I would like to say to my colleagues, if someone erected billboards with the American flag and put a swastika where our stars are, we would be somewhat upset.

Also, in their textbooks, and I have examples here, they print maps that show that Skopje includes territories of Greece. They have also printed on their currency the symbol of Greece; the white tower was on their currency. We have since had them remove it. But I would say to my colleagues, if at the height of the power of the USSR, if they started printing maps that showed their boundaries, including Alaska, and decided to take our Statue of Liberty and put it on their flag, I think we would be a little upset that our symbols and our territory had been used in such a way.

I bring this to my colleagues today because just this week the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will hold a Heads of State and Government summit in Bucharest, Romania. One of the major issues considered will be the expansion of NATO and the possible extension of membership invitations to Albania, Croatia and to the FYROM. In this context, I will submit for the record the March 27th article in the Huffington Post entitled, ''NATO Enlargement—the View from Athens,''

written by Greece's Ambassador to the U.N., Alexandros Mallias.

NATO ENLARGEMENT—THE VIEW FROM ATHENS

An important NATO summit will take place next week in Bucharest, Romania. Our discussion will focus on two main issues: the first, NATO enlargement and developments in the Western Balkans; the second, an evaluation of the Alliance's operations in Afghanistan (ISAF) and Kosovo (KFOR). In both of these U.N. mandated operations, there is an important Greek contribution of 2,000 men.

Greece, for over 15 years now, has held the position that the future of Southeastern Europe lies in its integration into the Euroatlantic Institutions. On the basis of this strategic choice, we support NATO's ''open door'' policy. An open door policy, however, must be based on the principles of good neighborly relations and allied solidarity.

Greece supports the enlargement of NATO in the Western Balkans, with the invitations to Croatia and Albania. It is ready also to welcome the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), provided that our northern neighbor shifts from their nationalistic logic and agree to a mutually agreeable name for international use that differentiates the new Balkan state from the Greek province of Macedonia; a name that will not be a vehicle for propaganda and irredentism against a neighboring NATO member.

Athens has shown its good will towards Skopje in many ways. It has supported its neighbor, both politically and economically, ranking as the number one foreign investor in that country, with $1 billion invested capital that has generated 30,000 new jobs. Most recently, we went the extra mile, or rather the most important mile, when we expressed our readiness to agree to a composite name with a geographic qualifier. This is a major shift from Greece's initial position, which excluded any use of the term ''Macedonia'', in the name of our neighbor.

Some have questioned our stance on the name issue and the possibility of a Greek veto at the NATO summit, if the name issue is not resolved by then. Some are suggesting that we are re-fighting old battles, not seeing the ''big picture'', that we are drawn into the past.

My answer to these claims is that the name issue is not a bilateral one. It is an international issue, which concerns our broader region. Directly, or indirectly, it concerns NATO and the U.N. And, if not resolved now, it may fester to poison future generations, undermining stability and cooperation in the 21st century.

We hope that with active U.N. mediation and U.S. involvement, a resolution of this issue will be achieved before the Bucharest summit.

On this issue, we are not alone. 115 members of the U.S. Congress, from both parties, support House Resolution 356, expressing the ''sense of the House of Representatives that FYROM should stop hostile activities and propaganda against Greece, and should work with the United Nations and Greece to find a mutually acceptable official name''.

A similar resolution, S.R. 300, was introduced in the Senate by Senators Menendez, Obama, Snowe.

The immediate settlement of the name issue before the NATO Summit in a mutually agreeable way, will allow Greece, the U.S.'s strongest ally in the Balkans, to support FYROM's membership to NATO and ultimately to the European Union, a strategic goal also shared by the U.S.

A prerequisite for a proper relationship as allies and partners is that of good neighborliness. We have lived together through good and bad times, we have shared tragedy, but also share hope for a bright future. Let's leave behind the former and invest in the latter.

Greece has called upon FYROM's leadership to act responsibly and show political courage and meet Greece half way. It will be a responsible move on the part of an aspiring candidate, a move that will win them a European future, a future of stability, peace and economic prosperity, based on the principles upon which NATO and the European Union are founded.

Alexandros P. Mallias is Ambassador of Greece to the United States.

Greece has consistently stated its desire to have the FYROM admitted into NATO provided that they cease the use of the name ''Republic of Macedonia'' and adopt a mutually acceptable name for both parties. Along with the 114 cosponsors, we urge them to take this into consideration.

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HUGE COST OVERRUNS AT PENTAGON

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, the front page of the Washington Post today carries a story about $295 billion in cost overruns at the Pentagon; $295 billion. That is a mind-boggling, almost incomprehensible figure to anyone who stops to think about it. The headline reads, ''GAO Blasts Weapons Budget.''

Listen to this story. Government auditors issued a scathing review yesterday of dozens of the Pentagon's biggest weapons systems, saying ships, aircraft and satellites are billions of dollars over budget and years behind schedule. The story continues, ''The Government Accountability Office found that 95 major systems have exceeded their original budgets by a total of $295 billion, bringing their total cost to $1.6 trillion and are delivered almost 2 years late, on average.

□ 1715

Apparently, there are no fiscal conservatives at the Pentagon. Apparently they believe that the Congress will just keep giving them more money, no matter how wasteful or inefficient they become. Of course, almost all the defense contractors hire plenty of admirals and generals, so almost all of these contracts are sweetheart deals anyway.

It is what the International Herald Tribune a few years ago called the ''revolving door'' at the Pentagon. $1.6 trillion in total costs, and $295 billion in cost overruns, and this was just on the major systems. No telling how much more was wasted on the smaller contracts.

$295 billion would run the entire government of Tennessee, schools, health care, roads, prisons, parks, and on and on for the next 11 years.

Then, on top of all this waste, the request for the Iraq War for the coming fiscal year is $189 billion, or over $500 million a day. Apparently we are having so much success over there that we have to give them more money, more troops and more contractors than ever before.

There is nothing fiscally conservative about the war in Iraq. Conservatives, above all, should realize that any gigantic government bureaucracy is always going to ask for more money and always find reasons to justify it.

And Congress is afraid to cut the Defense Department for fear of being seen as unpatriotic. Yet, it is a very false and very blind patriotism that allows the Pentagon to continually waste mega billions and allows the Defense Department to spend like there is no tomorrow.

In a few short years, we will not be able to pay all of our Social Security, Medicare, veterans' pensions, veterans' health care and many other things if we do not bring Federal spending under some type of control.

In a newsletter I sent to my constituents in Tennessee a few weeks ago I wrote these words before I knew about these cost overruns I've spoken about today. ''Jonah Goldberg wrote in a recent issue of National Review that the 'insight that involvement abroad fuels the expansion of the state was central to the formation of the modern conservative and libertarian movements.'

''In other words, perpetual war leads to bigger government and goes very much against traditional conservatism.

''Yet some conservatives have fallen into a trap of never questioning any military expenditure even though there is great waste and overspending in the military just as there is in any giant government bureaucracy.

''Our Constitution is a very conservative document, and our founding fathers felt very strongly that we should have civilian control of the military:

''Service in our military is very honorable and patriotic, but we need strong national defense, not international defense.

''We simply cannot afford to be the policeman of the world, and with the speed of communication and transportation today, we do not need our military in so many countries.

''Conservatives should support an efficient, fiscally conservative military, but it should not believe in turning the Department of Defense into the Department of Foreign Aid as it is in many ways today.''

HONORING DENNIS KING ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM PUBLIC SERVICE

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

Mr. HARE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize my Chief of Staff, Dennis King, who is retiring from the House of Representatives after 33 years of distinguished public service.

Dennis, a native of Miami, Florida, first came to Congress as a Special Assistant to the late Representative Dante Fascell. He then served as Chief of Staff for my friend and predecessor, Representative Lane Evans.

When I asked Dennis to continue in the same role on my staff, he enthusiastically accepted, saying he felt like he had ''unfinished business to take care of.'' Dennis' decision to extend his service shows his dedication, not only to the people of the 17th District of Illinois, but to working families and to veterans everywhere.

Dennis and I have been very close friends for over 25 years. We share the same values. Some might wonder how Dennis, a Duke University graduate with a Georgetown law degree, could form such a close bond with me, a factory worker from West Central Illinois. It's simple. Dennis cares about the people of the 17th District as much as I do.

When Congressman Evans hired me to be his District Director and Dennis was my supervisor, he had faith in me from day 1, serving as a mentor and pulling me from the edge of the cliff during the times I lost my way. I will always be grateful for the chance Dennis gave me.

And Dennis is also a congenial and friendly person. Current and former staff say they will miss sitting in his office talking about everything from politics to family to sports. No matter what time of day or how busy Dennis was, he always put down whatever he was doing the minute someone walked into his office. The care and attention he gave to every single person is one of the major reasons he's so beloved.

Another trait I admire in Dennis is his brilliant political mind. I asked him to be my Chief of Staff because, as a new Member of Congress, I knew I needed someone who understood Capitol Hill inside and out, and whom I could trust to keep me on the right path. Dennis has amazed me with his intuitions, decision-making and loyalty, always choosing the right course for the people of my district and this Nation.

It cannot go without saying that when one thinks of Dennis King, one thinks of Lane Evans and vice versa. The two men were like brothers, a friendship that started when they attended law school at Georgetown University. And together they made history fighting for veterans and working families across our Nation.

Dennis often mentions how much he learned from Lane, but the truth is that Dennis taught Lane so much as well. He was an integral part of all the great things Lane was able to accomplish.

I want to also acknowledge Dennis' family, his wife, Nancy, and his two sons, Steven and Jeffrey. As most of you know, the job of Chief of Staff can take a toll on one's family. The time commitment is great and the stress can be overwhelming. Nancy has demonstrated remarkable patience over the years and remains an incredible source of support for Dennis. Next year Dennis and Nancy will celebrate their silver wedding anniversary, a true testament to their love and respect for each other. I wish them both the best in whatever life brings them.

And Dennis, although I say this with a heavy heart, congratulations on your retirement. Thank you for your service, your laughs, your hard work. Your efforts and advice have allowed us to accomplish many great things in my first term and have ultimately made me a much better Member of this body. Your spirit, humor, intelligence and the ease by which you led the Hare team will be missed.

Best of luck, and please keep in touch.

God bless.

COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

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

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I submit for the RECORD an editorial from yesterday's Washington Post in support of the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement, as well as a column by Edward Schumacher-Matos, a former foreign correspondent for the Times, as well as a visiting professor of Latin American Studies at Harvard, a column that was published in yesterday's New York Times as well.

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 31, 2008]

FREE COLOMBIA: A TRADE PACT EVERYONE CAN LOVE

Sometime after Congress returns from Easter recess this week, President Bush is likely to present the Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement for the approval of the House and Senate. As we have said, the proposed pact is good policy for both Colombia and the United States. Colombia has long enjoyed periodically renewable tariff-free access to the U.S. market; the agreement would make that permanent. In exchange, U.S. producers would, for the first time, get the same tariff-free deal when they export to Colombia. Meanwhile, the agreement contains labor and environmental protections much like those that Congress has already approved in a U.S.-Peru trade pact. A vote for the Colombia deal would show Latin America that a staunch U.S. ally will be rewarded for improving its human rights record and resisting the anti-American populism of Venezuela's Hugo Chávez.

Sending the agreement to the House of Representatives without the prior approval of Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D–Calif.) would be risky for the president; usually, the executive and legislative branches tee up such votes cooperatively. But months of Democratic resistance to the Colombia deal may have left Mr. Bush no choice. The agreement is being held hostage by members of the House (and Senate) who argue that Colombia—despite a dramatic drop in its overall murder toll under the leadership of President Álvaro Uribe—hasn't done enough to protect trade union activists or to punish past murders of labor leaders. It's a spurious complaint: Actually, in 2006, union members were slightly less likely than the average Colombian to be murdered. But the human rights issue has served as cover for many Democrats whose true objections are to free trade itself.

Once the agreement arrives on the Hill, Congress will have 90 legislative days to vote yes or no—no amendments and no filibusters allowed, because special ''fast track'' rules apply. The Bush administration is betting that enough Democrats would support the pact to ensure its passage in the House, if it ever comes up for a vote. Of course, Ms. Pelosi could make an issue of the president's failure to get her approval to submit the pact and then could have her caucus shoot down the deal. But she could also engage the White House in serious negotiations. The president has signaled a willingness to consider reauthorizing aid for workers displaced by trade, legislation that is dear to the Democrats' labor constituency and that he has heretofore resisted.

Ms. Pelosi recently said that no Colombia deal could pass without trade adjustment assistance—without also mentioning the bogus trade unionists issue. Perhaps she is realizing that talking to Mr. Bush about swapping a Colombia vote for trade adjustment assistance might actually lead to a tangible accomplishment. At least we have to hope so.

KILLING A TRADE PACT

(By Edward Schumacher-Matos)

President Bush has been urging Congress to approve a pending trade agreement with Colombia, an ally that recently almost went to war with Venezuela and Hugo Chávez. Even though the agreement includes the labor and environmental conditions that Congress wanted, many Democrats, including Senators Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, now say that Colombia must first punish whomever has been assassinating the members of the nation's trade unions before the agreement can pass.

An examination of the Democrats' claims, however, finds that their faith in the assertions of human-rights groups is more righteous than right. Union members have been assassinated, but the reported number is highly exaggerated. Even one murder for union organizing is atrocious, but isolated killings do not justify holding up the trade agreement.

All sides agree that trade-union murders in Colombia, like all violence, have declined drastically in recent years. The Colombian unions' own research center says killings dropped to 39 last year from a high of 275 in 1996.

Yet in a report being released next week, the research center says the killings remain ''systematic'' and should be treated by the courts as ''genocide'' designed to ''exterminate'' unionism in Colombia. Most human-rights groups cite the union numbers and conclude, as Human Rights Watch did this year, that ''Colombia has the highest rate of violence against trade unionists in the world.''

Even if that is true, it was far safer to be in a union than to be an ordinary citizen in Colombia last year. The unions report that

they have 1 million members. Thirty-nine killings in 2007 is a murder rate of 4 unionists per 100,000. There were 15,400 homicides in Colombia last year, not counting combat deaths, according to the national police. That is a murder rate of 34 citizens per 100,000.

Many in Congress, moreover, assume that ''assassinations'' means murders that are carried out for union activity. But the union research center says that in 79 percent of the cases going back to 1986, it has no suspect or motive. The government doesn't either.

When the Inter American Press Association several years ago investigated its list of murdered Colombian journalists, it found that more than 40 percent were killed for nonjournalistic reasons. The unions have never done a similar investigation.

There are, however, a growing number of convictions for union murders in Colombia. There were exactly zero convictions for them in the 1990s, Colombia's bloodiest decade, when right-wing paramilitaries and leftist guerrillas were at the height of their strength. Each assassinated the suspected supporters of the others across society, including in unions.

With help from the United States, in 2000 the Colombian military and the judicial system began to reassert themselves. Prosecuting cases referred by the unions themselves, the attorney general's office won its first conviction for the murder of a trade unionist in 2001. Last year, the office won nearly 40.

Of the 87 convictions won in union cases since 2001, almost all for murder, the ruling judges found that union activity was the motive in only 17. Even if you add the 16 cases in which motive was not established, the number doesn't reach half of the cases. The judges found that 15 of the murders were related to common crime, 10 to crimes of passion and 13 to membership in a guerrilla organization.

The unions don't dispute the numbers. Instead, they say the prosecutors and the courts are wasting time and being anti-union by seeking to establish motive—a novel position in legal jurisprudence.

The two main guerrilla groups have an avowed strategy of infiltrating unions, which attracts violence. About a third of the identified murderers of union members are leftist guerrillas. Most of the rest are members of paramilitary groups—presumed to be behind two of the four trade unionist murders this month. The demobilization of most paramilitary groups, along with the prosecutions and government protection of union leaders, has contributed to the great drop in union murders.

President Álvaro Uribe, who has thin skin, can be unwisely provocative when responding to complaints from unions and human rights groups. Still, the level of unionization in Colombia is roughly equal to that in the United States and slightly below the level in the rest of Latin America. The government registered more than 120 new unions in 2006, the last year for which numbers are available. The International Labor Organization says union legal rights in Colombia meet its highest standards. Union leaders have been cabinet members, a governor and the mayor of Bogotá.

Delaying the approval of the trade agreement would be convenient for Democrats in Washington. American labor unions and human-rights groups have made common cause to oppose it this election year. The unions oppose the trade agreement for traditional protectionist reasons. Less understandable are the rights groups.

Human Rights Watch says that it has no position on trade but that it is using the withholding of approval to gain political leverage over the Colombian government. Perversely, they are harming Colombian workers in the process. The trade agreement would stimulate economic growth and help all Colombians.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement. I urge the Speaker of the House to bring this important agreement to the floor for a vote, an agreement that was, where negotiations were completed 2 years ago, where an agreement that was signed 18 months ago and has been waiting for a long time. This agreement is a good agreement for America. It's a good agreement for Illinois. It's also a good agreement for Colombia.

Illinois is a major exporting State. My district is dependent on exports to grow jobs. And last year my State of Illinois exported $214 million worth of Illinois products to Colombia, and that's just the beginning because under the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement, 80 percent of all tariffs, and tariffs are taxes, on U.S. and Illinois products are eliminated immediately when the trade agreement goes into effect.

And I would note today that Colombian products come into the United States duty-free, without taxes. But we suffer taxes when we export to Colombia.

And I would note that the facts have shown that exports grow 50 percent faster with nations like Chile and Peru and Central America, where we have trade agreements, than those where we do not.

Who is Colombia? Well, Colombia is our most reliable partner and best friend in Latin America. Colombia is our most reliable partner in counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism. It's the longest standing democracy in all of Latin America. And they have a popular president, President Uribe. The reason President Uribe has been so popular is he's reduced violence; he's brought security to the entire country.

People today feel secure traveling between cities, where five and 10 years ago they feared to go. In fact, 71 percent of Colombians today say they feel more secure under President Uribe. 37 percent say President Uribe respects human rights. Homicides are down by 40 percent; kidnappings are down by 76 percent. In fact, the murder rate today in Colombia is lower than Baltimore or Washington, D.C.

No wonder President Uribe is the most popular elected official in this entire hemisphere. And compare that 80 percent approval rating President Uribe enjoys with the 18 percent that this Congress suffers and the difference in approval.

Now those who oppose the U.S.-Colombia Trade Agreement say, well, Colombia just hasn't done enough. They need to keep doing more before we'll give them the privilege of having this agreement with the United States. And they say that there's been violence against labor leaders.

Well, let's look at the facts. President Uribe has made major changes in how they prosecute those who commit murder and violent acts. He's added 418 new prosecutors, 545 new investigators, 2,166 new posts overall in the Prosecutor General's office. And he's increased prosecution funding by 75 percent.

A respected labor leader in Colombia said, Carlos Rodriguez, President of the United Workers Confederation said about these new posts and this funding, never in the history of Colombia have we achieved something so important. $39 million was spent this past year providing bodyguards and protection for 1,500 labor leaders and activists. No other group enjoys this special kind of protection. And it's been successful. I would note no labor leader has suffered an attack or lost his life who's participated in this program.

The International Labor Organization has removed Colombia from its labor watch list. Colombia has agreed to a permanent ILO representative in Colombia. That helps explain why 14 major labor leaders in Colombia have endorsed this trade agreement.

Colombia is our best friend in Latin America. It's our most reliable ally. Colombia deserves a vote.

Think about it. 2 years this trade agreement has waited; 18 months since it was signed by the leadership of both countries.

Latin America is undergoing some challenges, and those who are not friends of the United States have made it very clear they want to defeat the U.S.-Colombia Trade Agreement because they think that's in their best interest, and they've also said that if the Congress defeats the trade agreement, it will send a powerful signal to all Latin America that the United States can't be trusted, and that if you're a friend of the United States, in the long run they'll let you down.

Well, President Uribe and the government of Colombia, the democratically elected government of Colombia, are our best friends, our most reliable allies in all Latin America, and all Latin America is watching on how we treat our best friend.

This agreement is good for America. It's good for Illinois. If you're an Illinois worker, an Illinois manufacturer, an Illinois farmer, you win under the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Authority.

Madam Speaker, I urge that this House schedule soon a vote on the U.S.-Colombia Trade Agreement and ratify this agreement so important to democracy, freedom and economic growth in our own hemisphere.

□ 1730

THE CURRENT HOUSING CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, today I rise to express my dismay regarding

the housing crisis. It's a multifaceted housing crisis. It's a mortgage crisis for home buyers. It's an inventory crisis for the affordable rentals. It is an investment crisis for public housing.

Two top executives at Countrywide Financial are expected to receive a combined golden parachute totaling $19 million, and while these top executives cash out their stock options, hardworking Americans are left struggling, trying to prevent the loss of their homes and ultimately their financial ruin.

It is truly incredible how the Bush administration, SEC Chairman Cox, Treasury Secretary Paulson, and Federal Reserve Chairman Bernanke have seen fit to extend billions of dollars for a Wall Street bailout but won't provide additional, adequate aid to borrowers fighting every day to save their properties.

Today, we are looking at one of the biggest financial catastrophes since the Great Depression.

Brooklyn, New York, has five of the top 10 neighborhoods with the highest subprime lending rates, including East Flatbush, which is located in my district.

Madam Speaker, after analysis and examination, the sharp increases in foreclosures are connected to predatory lending practices from abusive lending institutions. New York City will likely see more than 10,000 foreclosures this year, which is roughly double the number of foreclosures in 2004.

But while Washington is concerned about the impact of the subprime mortgage crisis on Wall Street, on Main Street many hardworking people are getting left behind. Hardworking families and individuals like those I represent in central Brooklyn have for far too long been targets of predatory lending practices; yet this administration comes to the rescue of the high-profile executives and leaves the very people who they are sworn to serve, defend, and protect to fend for themselves.

We must not forget that there is another dimension to the housing crisis occurring in communities less traveled by many, in the community where many are suffering from the affordable rental housing crisis. These families are being squeezed out of their homes as landlords convert their apartments to high-priced condominiums, earning double-digit rent increases or opting out of Federal subsidy programs such as Mitchell-Lama or project-based section 8 as more affordable rental apartments are being lost while the demand increases.

Let's not forget as well public housing's vital role in this housing crisis. Public housing is home to more than 400,000 New Yorkers. The New York City Housing Authority, which has a running deficit of more than $200 million every year, has been severely reducing their spending on security, maintenance, sanitation, and repairs, leaving many residents living in uninhabitable conditions.

NYCHA had to lay off employees and close youth centers in an attempt to preserve its core services, and in housing projects located in neighborhoods such as Brownsville, Brooklyn, crime continues to reach into the lives of our families.

Public housing is essential to New York City, and this negligence simply cannot continue.

So, in conclusion, Madam Speaker, the Bush administration's actions, or lack thereof, clearly demonstrates that instead of preventing the devastating loss to our communities by providing financial assistance to homeowners, providing full funding to reduce the affordable housing stock from dwindling, and preventing public housing units from deteriorating, our President has taken the path of least resistance by bailing out corporate fat cats and turning a blind eye and a deaf ear to the hard-working families of my district and of our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues to turn this devastating condition around and restoring the pride and dignity of responsible, thriving communities.

THE MURDER OF TWO TEENAGE GIRLS

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, the year was 1993, 15 years ago, when two teenage girls, Jennifer Ertman and Elizabeth Pena, 14 years of age and 16 years of age, were walking home one evening. Unfortunately for them, when they took a shortcut, they came across a gang by the name of the Black and Whites. Their gang leader was Jose Ernesto Medellin.

He and his fellow gangsters kidnapped these two teenage girls, brutally assaulted them, taunted them, raped them for over an hour, and then with the shoelaces from the tennis shoes of these two girls, they made a noose and strangled both of these girls.

The brutal killing that took place, Madam Speaker, as you are aware being from Houston, incensed the people of the Houston area, especially the way in which these two girls met their death. But 5 days later, Jose Medellin was arrested, and in his possession, he had on his wrist a Mickey Mouse watch that he had stolen from Jennifer Ertman, his token of the murder of a little girl. He was proud of what he had done. He was so proud of it he even bragged about it and confessed to the Houston Police Department of raping and killing these two girls after he was properly warned.

He was tried for capital murder. The State was seeking the death penalty, and 12 jurors in a court in Houston, Texas, convicted him and gave him the death penalty, which he earned and deserved for what he did to these two teenage girls. He appealed his case all the way to Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court of the United States upheld his conviction saying it was lawful. But that was not the end of the story.

Because, you see, 15 years later Jose Ernesto Medellin is still alive. And back when this trial occurred 15 years ago, I met the families of these two teenage girls, and they to this day continue to suffer and wonder if justice will ever be served. And the reason that he has not met his just reward is because he appealed his case again to the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court right down the street last week upheld the conviction for a second time.

His second appeal was somewhat unique because, you see, it turns out Jose Ernesto Medellin, who was fluent in English, apparently is illegally from the nation of Mexico, and he was an illegal immigrant when he committed this homicide. Back in the days of 1993, the Houston Police Department didn't even ask people what nationality they were when they arrested them, but be that as it may, the Mexican Government then decided to sue the United States of America in the World Court, claiming that the State of Texas should have told Jose Ernesto Medellin that he had the right to consult with the Mexican consulate before he confessed. Of course, the Houston Police Department never told him he couldn't consult with the Mexican consulate. He was warned properly under Federal law and under State law.

But the Mexican Government was not satisfied with that after the conviction was upheld, and 10 years later, they filed this lawsuit in the World Court. And the World Court ruled that the State of Texas had to retry Jose Ernesto Medellin for capital murder because he was not told he should have been allowed to talk to his Mexican consulate.

Of course, this gets more complicated because, you see, the President of the United States intervened on behalf of the nation of Mexico. After this decision was made in the World Court, the President of the United States told the courts in Texas to follow the World Court order, retry Jose Ernesto Medellin for capital murder, and the Texas courts, in all due respect to the administration, ignored the President's request because, as they said, the judicial branch is independent of the executive branch, and the President has no jurisdiction over telling any court, much less Texas courts, what to do.

It turns out that Jose Ernesto Medellin is not the only Mexican national on death row in the United States. There are 54 others who have been tried throughout the country, most of them in Texas, and have been given the death penalty for heinous crimes committed against people in the United States.

So, after that second case came before the Supreme Court, the issue was, after being sued in the World Court by

Mexico, whether or not the State of Texas must abide by a World Court decision telling them to retry a case. And the second issue was, does the President, any President, have the authority, as the executive branch of government, to order a State court to do anything, including retry somebody for a case where they have been found convicted.

Well, the Supreme Court ruled 6–3 that the World Court opinion has no bearing in Texas courts and that the President of the United States, the executive branch, has no jurisdiction over Texas courts to tell them what to do. The International Court of Justice, as the World Court is called, lacks jurisdiction in this case to order the courts of Texas to do anything because, you see, part of the problem was Jose Ernesto Medellin never complained for over 10 years that he didn't have the chance to talk to his Mexican consulate, and as most lawyers know in the legal profession, and as a former trial judge, if you don't object at the trial, you've waived that right indefinitely.

So, Madam Speaker, maybe justice will be served in this case if Jose Ernesto Medellin will meet the fate he deserves, and maybe our Federal Government will stop taking the wrong side of this issue of supporting illegal immigrants over people in the United States, like little girls who are murdered.

And that's just the way it is.

IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES DEBATED IN SUSPENSIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. CLARKE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, as we debate various issues here in the United States Congress and in this House, it is sometimes important to remind Members of the history of this Nation and the importance of matters that Members discuss. They are called suspensions, but they're no less important and speak eloquently to the history and the diversity of this Nation.

I would quickly like to acknowledge my support for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 commemorative coin and support my colleague JOHN LEWIS for offering this very important initiative, for a country that does not remember its history is doomed to repeat the past. We've gained much from the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and I support the legislation.

As we speak today about honoring our history, I am also reminded that this is the week of the 40th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. This past Friday, I was able to stand in front of the hotel in which he was assassinated, walk out on to the balcony and be reminded of this peaceful giant. And so it is important for us to take a moment, of which we will do on this coming Thursday, to remember not so much his death and the violence of his death, but his love for humanity and the ability to bring people together. He truly was a leader of a movement.

Today, I stood with my colleagues, Congressman BACA and others, to support the national holiday for Cesar Chavez because they were brothers, Martin King and Cesar Chavez.

I think it is important as we look at Women's History Month that we recount not only our national figures as I support the debate that reminded us this past month, March 2008 was Women's History Month, how exciting it is to see the historic opportunities that women have had and are increasingly having, knowing that they just gained a vote in 1920.

I was very honored to be able to bring to the attention of my colleagues Ramona Tolliver, a champion and a fighter for empowerment of those in the Fifth Ward area; Nellie Joyce Punch, again from Houston, a fighter for those in the Fifth Ward area and educator and a lover of providing equal opportunity to young people; Dr. Deason, a long-standing principal in Houston of the High School for Health Professions. There is certainly no greater lover of education and helping our children than Dr. Deason. And certainly I think it is important to acknowledge Commissioner Sylvia Garcia in Houston who has turned the corner as the first woman commissioner in Harris County. Then, of course, I salute Shirley Chisholm and Carole Mosley Braun, women who ran for President, and my former predecessor Barbara Jordan.

Women are on the move, and it is certainly important to acknowledge their history in this country, and it should not be ignored that women have struggled to overcome, and that is, of course, the women who get up every morning and ride the buses and teach the schools and work for us in restaurants and in hospitals and are doctors and lawyers and others. Women deserve the honoring of this month.

□ 1745

And one who certainly deserves it is a Civil Cross winner, a young 19-year-old from Texas, Monica L. Brown.

Which brings me to the upcoming testimony of General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker. Having just come back from Iraq, let me simply say that the legislation that I have offered, which I will discuss over the next couple of days into the testimony of the two individuals that will be coming, first of all, let me thank them for all of their service and offer my concern for the public servants and U.S. personnel in the Green Zone, of which we have stayed, who have been bombed in the last couple of days. It is the very clarity of what I saw that says to me it is time to bring our troops home. We serve no large purpose to engage in, if you will, the civil war that may be going on in Iraq. We can serve as technical advisers and counselors, and we can bring other nations together to assist in a peaceful transition. We can, as my bill says, bring our soldiers home in honor and begin a diplomatic surge; make the Maliki government engage in nonsectarianism, as the Sunnis told me face to face; eliminate the sectarianism, Shiite and Shiite, Kurds and Sunnis; and begin to talk about a stable Iraq. That is not America's task; it is a task of the Iraqi government, the Iraqi people. And it certainly is a task that we must charge Iran for them to stop sending mortars and ammunition to create the havoc that is going on. But that is not the war. That is not the resolution. That is not the war of America. It is clearly a time to transition.

Those are the hard questions that we will pose to our heroes, Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus. We appreciate that they have been trying to serve America in the best way possible, but it is now time to serve not only America and our sons and daughters but the American people who deserve an investment in their country, a rebuilding of the military, and an acknowledgment and celebration of the heroes of the Iraq War and certainly a recognition of those who still fight in Afghanistan for it is time now to focus our attention there.

With that, Madam Speaker, we look forward to saving America.

THE NATIONAL RAMIFICATIONS OF U.S. AIR FORCE'S DECISION TO AWARD TANKER CONTRACT TO EUROPEAN AEROSPACE CONSORTIUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, Mr. TIAHRT of Kansas and I, and others may join us later, have come tonight to talk about an important issue with large national ramifications, and that is the decision by the United States Air Force to decline a contract for our next extremely important tanker and to give it to a consortium, a very significant portion of which will be manufactured in Europe through a consortium in part with EADS and the Airbus company in Europe.

I represent an area north of Seattle with thousands of Boeing workers; so obviously this is an important issue in my district. Certainly the hometown team is Boeing.

But our discussion tonight will be about why all America ought to be very concerned about this decision for several reasons. And it is an obvious situation where there is very significant employment in my district that any Congress person would be concerned about that, but what we want to

talk about tonight are the national ramifications and why we believe this is a very, very injurious decision that needs to be reversed one way or another.

For background in this regard, the very able and really spectacularly performing aircraft, the KC–135, that for decades have provided the very backbone of our United States Air Force capability, will soon be at some point entering their obsolescence. Herculean efforts have been put forward to keep those great airplanes in the air, but at some point we've got to have a new airplane, and we know that that is the case.

So we have been engaged in an effort to provide another replacement. A good United States product, Boeing, competed with subcontractors across the United States for a 767 airframe that we believed was perfect for the task, and by all information provided, the Air Force would provide the capability that was needed by the Air Force.

Unfortunately, the Air Force has decided to reject an American contractor on this extremely important contract. And obviously it's important for dollars. It's a $40 billion contract, with a ''b.'' That is a significant contract. But of more importance to Americans are the job and employment prospects, and obviously that's important in the aircraft industry. If we see what has happened recently in the last decade, we know why it's important to think about this issue.

If I can refer to a chart showing the decline in teal or blue, this shows United States aerospace industry employment from 1979 to 2007. We have suffered a very, very significant decline, just about 50 percent of employment jobs in the United States compared to what we had in 1983, a peak year. Now, that has corresponded with the rise of the Airbus aircraft deliveries that have gone up, as indicated in these red bars, pretty much every year since about 1979. So we have had a significant loss of employment in the United States already in our aerospace industry. It has been in sync with the rise of Airbus sales. And we respect competition in America and should not decry or shrink from competition, and we would congratulate Airbus in a legitimate competition in any of these sales. But we point this out to show that we have already suffered a significant decline of thousands of jobs in the United States. So now we have a situation where that loss will be exacerbated by this decision should it stand.

Now, what is at stake here potentially could be 44,000 American jobs. Predictions are in that range of jobs that would have been involved in this contract. We know that we get different stories about where the Airbus employment will be. I want to point out one of the curious things, if I can. We get certain different viewpoints about where the jobs would be if, in fact, this contract is ultimately granted to Airbus. I note a newspaper article here in Les Echos, and I may mispronounce that, in Europe when Airbus talked about the employment on this contract. The article says that 76 percent of the employment associated with this tanker contract would be European and only 21 percent would be combined United States and Canadian content. That's in the article as publicized in France. In the United States, the rather large public relations effort that has gone on through Airbus, in fact, says it will be 50 percent in the United States. So it appears, at least in one instance, Airbus suggests that only 21 percent of the product in this tanker will be in the United States, and in America they suggest it will be about 50 percent. Some could chalk that up to hyperbole, salesmanship, but it means tens of thousands of jobs to Americans across this country, not just in the Seattle area where I reside but contracts across this country. We think that's significant and it's unfortunate. So this is a very significant thing that we are here to talk about tonight. It's not only employment but it's capability as well.

So we are going to talk tonight about the ramifications of this decision, why we think it was inappropriately made, and what we may consider to reverse this decision.

And with that I would like to yield to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT), who been a stalwart and a champion on educating our colleagues about the importance of this, something we are going to talk about tonight at some length, which is the favorable treatment of Airbus by the European governments and why this has skewed this particular contract.

Mr. TIAHRT. I thank the gentleman from Washington for yielding. And I also want to thank Mr. INSLEE for his leadership in trying to bring some common sense to the procurement process down at the Department of Defense.

Madam Speaker, Americans are outraged by the Air Force outsourcing our national security to the French. This contract award to a foreign manufacturer is wrong, and it makes us less, not more, secure.

As my chart to the left here shows, we should have known that we had a problem when the President's helicopter replacement, the VH–71, went to a foreign manufacturer. We should have suspected it again when the light utility helicopter went to a foreign manufacturer. And now with the KC-X program going to be a manufacturer, it's as plain as the nose on your face. We have three of the last four major contract awards now going to foreign suppliers.

Here's how this works: The Department of Defense and the Air Force really have bent over backwards to give this contract to the French, but they've been very sly. They first, as a foreign supplier, find an American front company, and then they employ tactics like waiving regulations that our Department of Defense gladly awards them. They use illegal subsidies. They employ illegal subsidies. And then they buy into defense contracts, knowing that further on down the line, there won't be the ability to have an American manufacturer beat them out in any competitive bid. And then further, as was pointed out by Mr. INSLEE, they make promises in their proposals, and then the contracts are awarded by the Department of Defense, but they change their mind about the work content and they keep the work in Europe.

Let me just talk for a brief minute about why this was such a shock when this contract went to a foreign supplier. The Air Force tanker roadmap is a chart that was given to us by the Air Force. I sit on the Defense Subcommittee of Appropriations, and in December of last year, December of 2007, this was the chart that they said was their roadmap to replacing the tankers. On the left-hand side here, we have 2006. This is where this chart begins, fiscal year 2006, and it runs out to fiscal year 2007.

They have two tankers in our stock now. They have two versions of the KC–135. They have the older KC–135Es, which are the first ones to go out of the inventory. Next we're going to replace the KC–135Rs. ''R'' stands for the re-engine version of the KC–135. And at the bottom, we have our very largest tankers, the KC–10s, built on a DC–10 airframe, almost as large as a 747. But that's the larger airframe. This is the medium-range tankers, according to the Air Force.

The KC–135s, as you can see, in 2006 we started to take them out of the inventory. And as time goes on, you can see this little yellow triangle getting smaller and smaller. That means the KC–135s are going to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base into what we call the ''bone yard.'' They're no longer flying.

We're still flying the KC–135s. The average age is about 45 years of age, and they need to be replaced. We have then the KC–10s. They're the newer version and the larger tanker.

So what the Air Force told us is that they were going to replace this KC–135 medium-sized tanker over the next 15 years. Actually, it's going to run about 20 years with all that's said and done on the current schedule. But we were supposed to start out here in 2011 by having them first delivered.

So when the contract was awarded, did we get a replacement for the KC–135? No. The Air Force bought an airplane larger than the KC–10. So, naturally, everybody was shocked all across America. And then when they found out that the KC–10 replacement is the KC–30, a variation of the Airbus A330, a French airplane, they were shocked and outraged. We're outsourcing our national security to the French.

So what is behind this decision? How could this possibly have happened? Well, if you look at the contract scenario, we find out that there were waived regulations, waived regulations

by our own Department of Defense. They waive them for our NATO allies. And if you go to the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations, paragraph 225, it will tell you which of the 20 nations have waived regulations when they bid on defense contracts. Those 20 nations include the four ownership nations of Airbus and the parent company of EADS. They include the United Kingdom. They include Spain. They include France, and they include Germany. These are the regulations that are waived, and they're very costly, very expensive.

Let's just look at the first one on the list here: Cost Accounting Standards. Now, Cost Accounting Standards say basically that you have to include all the costs that it takes to make a product that you're going to supply to the Department of Defense. And if you miss a cost or shift costs in and out of a contract, it could be a violation of the Cost Accounting Standards with very high penalties. It could be determined that it was fraud, and people could go to jail. Or it could be determined that you tried to give the government the slip on some data, and you would be barred from doing business with the Federal Government.

□ 1800

You can't shift cost on cost accounting standards. They are very costly to comply with. You have to have people hired to keep track of all costs. They must track them, compare them, report them as far as their relationship with schedules. If you don't have to do it, like EADS, in the case of this tanker, then it's much cheaper as far as your proposal. So cost accounting standards were waived by the Department of Defense for EADS, but they were required by the Boeing Company.

Now what does this mean for the Boeing Company? It means they have to include all their costs, including health care costs. Health care costs that they pay for their employees, workmen's compensation costs that they pay to cover the employees are all included in these costs. They have to be included in their proposal. If you don't do it, it is a violation of the cost accounting standards.

But those costs are not in the EADS proposal. Health care costs, workmen's compensation costs are picked up by the government, so they don't have to pay for those. Again, that gives a lower bid to EADS for this kind of a cost.

Mr. INSLEE. Will the gentleman yield just for a minute?

Mr. TIAHRT. I would be glad to yield.

Mr. INSLEE. I want to point out about this cost. Even under the Air Force's own accounting, even with these what you may consider rigged accounting standards that Mr. TIAHRT talked about, even under the Air Force's accounting standards, they concluded that the 767 is about 24 percent more fuel efficient than the Airbus product. You're going to save massive amounts on fuel over the lifetime. In fact, the Air Force estimated the Airbus product will burn $30 billion more fuel over the lifetime, even under the rigged accounting standards.

So the point is that we need the Air Force from a taxpayer standpoint to be looking at the operational cost. We just had the executives of the five biggest oil companies today. Those oil prices are not going down any time soon. If anywhere, they are going up.

So this is why we are saying that the country, not just the place these planes are made, but the whole country has a stake in this to really look at the operational costs on that.

Thanks for yielding, Mr. TIAHRT.

Mr. TIAHRT. You make a very good point about the net cost to the taxpayer. Getting back to these accounting standards which you are pointing out, the net cost is very high to the taxpayer. If EADS violates the cost accounting standards, we will never know it because they don't have to report it. And the cost of reporting this, the Boeing Company had to include. So it's really a difficult time for any American company to compete with a European company when you waive this first standard.

The next standard is a specialty metal standard, called the Berry amendment. This is where our manufacturers are required to track from the time a metal is mined from the ground and processed, until it's riveted onto an airplane. Tracking. That means people are sitting somewhere at a desk and they are spending time trying to keep track of who is processing this and what procedures were put in place. It's very costly. But it was waived for the European manufacturers by our Department of Defense in DFARS 225, that's the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations again.

The next one that was waived by the Buy American provisions. Buy American provisions basically say 50 percent of this product has to be made in America. Now the goal in this proposal for Northrop Grumman, the EADS proposal, said 58 percent was their goal. If you look at previous contracts with the Department of Defense, like the light utility helicopter, which EADS also won, their goal there was 65 percent. But they had some American suppliers in there that were included in the bid, and as a second thought EADS said, well, we have got a production line in Europe. Things are going pretty well. We think we will just keep this work here.

So there are companies in Kansas that were cheated by this. There was a Spirit Aerospace Manufacturing, which lost the fuselage of the helicopter. There was Command Aerospace, which lost the floor board of the helicopter. Then there was ICE, Incorporated, which lost the wire harnesses for the helicopter. All American work content in the proposal that was then awarded as a contract and then that work was pulled back to Europe.

When I asked the Army about this in an open hearing, their response was, well, we have no enforcement mechanism to make sure that these jobs remain in America. No enforcement mechanism. So we waive these kind of standards and regulations that would allow us the knowledge of where these jobs are actually going. And we will never know.

Mr. INSLEE. If the gentleman will yield.

So do I take it that in the current situation we would be issuing a contract for up to $40 billion with no enforcement mechanism to enforce the American content situation. Is that a fair statement?

Mr. TIAHRT. That is exactly right. This is a question that has been put directly to not only the Army, but also the Secretary of Air Force and the head of procurement for the Air Force. It's common knowledge over in the Pentagon they tell us these things and we evaluate them based on these jobs being in America, and low risk, but then there is really no way of enforcing if these companies decide to keep the jobs in Europe.

If you look at this very same contract, the air refueling tanker contract, the first five airplanes are currently planned to be built in Toulouse, France. Then they are going to change the manufacturing procedure and start taking parts and shipping them to Mobile, Alabama, to assemble them. This is a similar scenario to the light utility helicopter. When it came time to ship those jobs to America, they decided to keep them in Europe.

There's no guarantee in this contract that has been awarded by the Air Force that says, yes, you plan on doing this in Mobile, Alabama, but there's no enforcement mechanism to make sure the jobs actually come to America.

Mr. INSLEE. That's most disturbing because of that experience and because of reading that in France, they tell the French they are going to have 76 percent of the jobs in Europe. Then they come over in America and tell us they will maybe have 50 percent. This is one reason, just one of the reasons this contract has to be reviewed.

I want to mention one now just before I yield to Mr. LOEBSACK for a moment. There is another aspect of this that is outraging Americans, and certainly is in my State, and that is that we are issuing this $40 billion contract to a company that essentially one of the partners that the American Government itself says is acting illegally. Because according to our U.S. Trade Representative, who has initiated a legal action against these companies for receiving illegal subsidies, illegal subsidies that violate international law, and by extension, violate United States law, at the same time we have taken this almost unprecedented action to bring a case in the world courts, the World Trade Organization, against their illegal subsidies. That is one agency of the United States Government. Sort of the ''cop on the beat''

blowing the whistle. And at the same time, another agency, the Air Force of the United States Federal Government is bailing them out of jail and giving them a $40 billion contract.

That is hard to explain to any American, particularly those in the 300 companies around this country in 40 States that are going to be losing jobs as a result of this. If this isn't a case of the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing, one hand attempting to sanction these illegal subsidies, and I think anybody who reviews this would conclude there would have been billions of dollars of illegal subsidies to Airbus over the years, we will talk about those in detail, and then to turn around and reward them with $40 billion. They ought to be receiving a sanction from America, a punishment from America, some type of slap on the wrist, at least. Instead, they get $40 billion of taxpayer money. This is wrong by any sense, the code of the West, international trade treaties. This is something we all ought to be united about.

With this, I would like to yield to Mr. LOEBSACK from the great State of Iowa, who has a concern about this.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Thank you very much. I would like to thank the gentleman from Washington for organizing this Special Order hour on the award for the contract to build the next generation of air refueling tankers. I want to thank everyone who's here at this point speaking on this issue.

Needless to say, I was deeply disappointed that the KCX refueling tanker contract was not awarded to the Boeing team. Rockwell Collins of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is a part of the Boeing bid and would supply the aviation and electronic sub systems on the KC–767 advanced tanker. The State of Iowa has a well-earned reputation, I believe, as a leader in innovation, and Rockwell Collins is at the forefront of the cutting edge technological development for which our State is known.

With 9,200 employees in the Cedar Rapids-Iowa City corridor, Rockwell Collins is the largest employer in the Second Congressional District in Iowa. The Boeing bid would bring 1,600 high-paying jobs to Iowa, most of them in the Second Congressional District, and would invest over $60 million annually in the State.

Equally important, it would put a program that is absolutely vital to our national security and the readiness of our armed forces in the hands of highly skilled Iowans and American innovators and manufacturers. I think that is an absolutely critical point to make.

Rockwell Collins employees are hard-working, they are dedicated, and they are highly qualified workers. They work each day to provide the men and women who wear our country's uniform with the equipment and the tools they need to safely carry out their mission. I am a member of the Armed Services Committee and I know the importance of the aerial refueling tanker to our ability to support, equip and provide medical care to our deployed men and women in uniform.

As the Representative of Iowa's Second Congressional District, I know firsthand the impact of putting thousands of jobs and tens of millions of dollars into Iowa. In light of this and our country's current economic state, I find it difficult to believe that the Air Force has elected to ship thousands of jobs overseas by awarding a key component of the United States Air Force to a heavily subsidized European industry.

The aerial refueling tanker contract award must serve the interests of the American people and American national security. I repeat that. It must serve the interests of the American people and American national security. The awarding of the tanker contract to Northrop Grumman and EADS will force the Iowa Air National Guard to use scarce resources to construct new hangars in order to accommodate the larger size of the EADS planes. The estimated cost for the construction of the new hangars would be roughly $45 million.

Moreover, the runways currently used by the Iowa Air National Guard are not able to withstand the weight of a fully loaded EADS tanker. Thus, new ramps and runways would have to be constructed. The total cost incurred by the Iowa Air National Guard to house the Northrop Grumman EADS plane would be roughly $50 million to $60 million.

I fear that the awarding of this contract to a non-U.S.-based company would not only send tens of thousands of American manufacturing jobs to Europe, it would put important defense manufacturing expertise in foreign hands. I am especially concerned that this would leave our country perilously dependent on foreign contractors for our most important national security needs. And this is unacceptable.

The aerial refueling tanker is critical to our national security. We all know that. I strongly believe that American defense should be in the hands of American workers. I urge the GAO to carefully evaluate Boeing's petition and to assure that our men and women in uniform have the best value and the best performing equipment.

I thank the gentleman from Washington for allowing me to speak.

Mr. INSLEE. We thank the voice of Iowa. This is important across the country. The jobs that Mr. LOEBSACK is talking about losing would not have been lost if the Air Force had considered the fact that these companies are receiving these illegal subsidies. And it's not just we three Congressmen talking about it, it is the executive branch of the United States, which has fully evaluated this and come to the conclusion these were illegal subsidies.

These were not just small. They received $1.7 billion in launch aid to develop the new A–350. They received $3.7 billion in launch aid for the A–380. That is why our U.S. Trade Representative has started this enforcement action, blown the whistle on these illegal subsidies. Frankly, it has been years later than it should have been. But we have finally done it. It's one of these great sort of black comedies to think in the year period when we finally blew the whistle after all of these years of abuse of these illegal subsidies that disadvantage American workers, that that same year the Air Force ends up giving a contract for $40 billion.

These subsidies are not just an issue of dollars, they are jobs in Iowa as well. I want to thank Mr. LOEBSACK. I would like to yield to Mr. TIAHRT.

Mr. TIAHRT. I thank the gentleman from Washington and the gentleman from Iowa. He is representing one of the 42 States that is impacted by this decision. Getting back to the statement that the gentleman from Washington, Mr. INSLEE, said about cleaning up the act, there is a report that really highlights why it is so important that it is such a travesty that foreign corrupt practices is one of the regulations that is waived.

We can't track what EADS is doing when it comes to their interface with foreign suppliers and foreign countries. But there is a report that was put out by the Center for Security Policy in April 2007. The name of the report is: ''EADS is Welcome to Compete for U.S. Defense Contracts—But First It Must Clean Up Its Act.'' Then it goes through and highlights some of the corrupt practices that EADS has been known for across the globe, and their problematic issues.

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Issue number one, espionage, bribery and other dirty practices; issue number two, Russian ownership and influence of EADS; issue number three, trying to supply America's adversaries with weapons.

The report goes on, but in the section called ''Bottom Line,'' it says the six things that EADS must do before they should be allowed to bid on government contracts.

Madam Speaker, those six issues are: Number one, resolve espionage problems; number two, correct the bribery problem; number three, remove the Kremlin from the company; number four, prevent other ambiguous or known bad actors from owning EADS stakes; number five, resolve the proliferation problem; and, number six, resolve anti-American workforce problems.

This is what the Center For Security Policy suggests to the Department of Defense and to Congress, it is a public document, that we should do before we should allow this European manufacturer to supply products for our defense. And we won't ever know what they are doing right, because the foreign corrupt practices regulations are waived by our own Department of Defense. That is another reason why this is such an outrageous practice.

Mr. INSLEE. We should point out that this law, this international law against subsidization, has not been waived by Congress. This is sort of a backdoor way to waive an international agreement.

We have an agreement that now we are attempting to enforce that would prohibit this illegal launching. ''Launching'' basically is a situation where a European government assists the private manufacturer, in this case Airbus, by giving them essentially loan guarantees or essentially free money. You give them a loan that they don't have to pay back if the airplane doesn't do well. That is an enormous subsidy, to give free capital, in essence, or low cost capital, when you are manufacturing an airplane. Of course, when you develop an airplane, there are billions of dollars in development costs. Well, if a company like Airbus can go to their governments in Europe and say give us a loan we don't have to repay if the airplane doesn't perform as expected, we don't make money on it, that is an enormous subsidy.

Europeans with Airbus have been doing this for years. We have international laws against that, and those laws are in effect national laws in America. But somehow it is just like we ignored these. It is like they didn't exist.

Congress certainly never waived those laws, the courts have never waived those laws, the President has never waived those laws, the American people have never waived those laws. But somehow the Air Force did not take into consideration these enormous subsidies, and that is why this thing, this contract, has an odor about it, where we don't take into consideration that violation of international and American law.

But I want to talk, if I can, about the capability of these aircraft too, because obviously we want the best possible airplane for the job. There is possibly no more critical infrastructure, certainly to our Air Force, than the ability to refuel our planes. This is the absolute spine of the whole skeleton of the Air Force, to have this refueling capability.

There has been sort of a propaganda war that has been waged by the Airbus folks to sort of suggest that the Boeing airplane wasn't up to the job, and I just want to point out some of the facts about this aircraft that I think it is important to realize.

First off, if you want to look at the only company in this bidding that has essentially ever built an air tanker and has been building them for 50 years for America, it is Boeing. This is the hometown team that has been doing it for decades successfully, and I think we should maybe start the discussion from that point.

Second, the airplane that Boeing bid has some very distinct advantages that somehow were not considered, one of which is that the Boeing airplane can service about twice as many airfields as the competitor. The reason is it can land in shorter, not quite as equipped airfields. It can land fully loaded in 811 airfields around the world, compared to the competitor at 408. This is a distinct advantage, considering we don't know why where the next conflict is going to be. We don't know what sort of developing world airfield we are going to use. The airplane that Boeing proposes can be serviced and can essentially use twice the number of airfields.

Second, and this is critically important, the Boeing 767 is 24 percent more fuel efficient. In these days of a crunch with fuel and global warming we have to be concerned with and the enormous increase in costs that the Air Force is experiencing, this ought to be taken into consideration. That adds up to $30 billion, a distinct advantage.

Third, and this is one that I think is worth mentioning, this sort of propaganda effort that was started by the Airbus folks to suggest that the Boeing Company didn't score well just simply doesn't comport with the facts.

There were several factors, the first of which is called mission capability. When they compete these, there is a very sophisticated way of evaluating these. On mission capability, the Boeing airplane scored blue, which means exceptional, and low risk in the area of mission capability. That is the highest possible rating and I think can be considered the most critical factor in the whole competition. The Air Force concluded that the Boeing airplane met or exceeded all key performance parameters, which are also called thresholds and objectives. The Air Force concluded that the Boeing product actually had significantly more strengths, also called discriminators, than the competitor.

So you had Boeing receiving the highest rating possible for mission capability, it met or exceeded all of what is called KPP thresholds and objectives, and it was graded as having significantly more strengths than the competition, and somehow came up on the short end of the stick.

This deserves not only GAO review, but it deserves Congress reviewing this. As folks know, this is being evaluated now under the protest consideration, and we know it will be looked at carefully. But, frankly, if this does not get the thorough review we want, Congress is going to be looking at this, because these numbers just don't add up to say this was the right decision.

On factor two, proposal risk, just kind of from a commonsense standpoint perhaps we can look at the fact that we have one bidder, Boeing, that has been doing this for decades. They have an airplane, the 767, in the air, providing tanker services, ready to go, against a product that is going to be manufactured in this multi-nation system. To me, that would create significant confidence in the folks that have been doing it and have a plane that is in the air. In fact, the Air Force rated Boeing's risk as low, as it should be.

Surprisingly, the competitor was also rated as low, despite to me obvious risk where you have a multi-country, multi-facility, multi-build approach, contrasted with Boeing's integrated approach to design, build and certify with the existing facilities. So, at worst it seems to me that there is certainly no advantage of the competitors in that regard.

I would like to yield to Mr. TIAHRT. I have several more factors, but I want to yield to Mr. TIAHRT because I know he has a great idea.

Mr. TIAHRT. I thank the gentleman from Washington.

When talking about risk, the Air Force has done studies as to what is the best manufacturing technology that we have when we are building a complex, single point of failure system like the tanker. They say the best way to do it is to have an integrated production line, where you build your commercial off-the-shelf item and integrate in that very same production line those things that you need to make this a unique product for the Department of Defense. That was what was employed by the Boeing company in their proposal to the Air Force for the KC–767 tanker.

What we find out after looking at and listening to the Airbus or the EADS proposal is that they had this disjointed thing, as the gentleman from Washington pointed out very well, multi-country, multi-manufacturing sites, starting four new facilities that have to be FAA certified and they have to find qualified workers for. This develops a tremendous amount of risk in the proposal that the EADS company was putting forward, as compared to what the Air Force actually asked for in their own studies.

Somehow in this convoluted process of trying to decide which product to buy, they overlooked the fact that the Air Force said this is what we wanted, an integrated production line. We didn't want a multi-facility operation in multi-countries. We wanted it all to happen in one place, where we could keep track of the product and the quality. And yet when it came time to risk, they gave an equal amount of risk to both companies. It just doesn't make any sense.

The other point that the gentleman from Washington made that I would like to add to is what is the net cost to taxpayers? There are some things that the Air Force follows in their Federal acquisition regulations as part of their cost evaluation process, but there are some things they don't consider. For example, they didn't consider outsourcing our national security. They are just based on their rules and regulations. They look at cost and their key performance characteristics, et cetera.

But if you look at other things that need to be taken into consideration in Congress, like how do we secure the national defense industry, the defense base, well, we have to take these things into consideration.

If you look at the $35 billion contract and say what is the real net cost to the taxpayers, the $35 billion contract we know is what was awarded. But if you looked at the fuel savings that was pointed out by the gentleman from Washington, the KC–767 is 24 percent more fuel efficient, and that saves taxpayers $30 over the life of this program. So you take your $35 billion contract and you have to subtract that from the Boeing bid. So what is the net cost to taxpayers? It is $5 billion.

Then you take the comparison of American jobs versus French jobs. One thing unique about French jobs is they don't pay any American income taxes, but American workers do. So you take the 19,000 lost aerospace jobs in America and say what would they have paid the Federal Government over the life of this program in the form of income taxes? Well, 19,000 workers, which is the difference between the two proposals, times about $11,000 a year, which is the average that an aerospace worker pays in federal income taxes, and you take that over the life of this program, it comes out to $8 billion.

So you have got $35 billion. You take away $30 billion worth of savings on the fuel and you get down to a $5 billion net cost to the taxpayer. Then you add back what you would get from the lost American jobs paying taxes if they were employed with the American contract than they would have gotten to pay these taxes. That is $8 billion. So the net cost is actually a $3 billion advantage.

In other words, if we would have issued this to a American company with American workers paying American Federal income taxes, and you take into consideration the fuel savings, it would have actually brought in $3 billion more in revenue in the net cost to the taxpayer than what it had under the circumstances that they had given it to the foreign supplier. Then you look at the lost revenue from corporate tax by having 90 percent of this airplane built in France instead of built in America, and you get another $1 billion.

So what is the true cost to the taxpayers? It is positive $4 billion for the American company employing American workers to make an American tanker, versus $74 billion if you add all these costs up to the foreign supplier using foreign manufacturing workers.

So what would you do if you were a taxpayer? For me, a $74 billion cost or a $4 billion savings, I would take the $4 billion savings, and that says we buy an American tanker made by an American company with American workers. So this decision doesn't make sense just on the net cost to taxpayers, let alone all these other things that we are talking about.

Mr. INSLEE. Coming back, it is not just cost, it is capability. Bigger is not always better, and I am very concerned here that the Air Force has been lulled into the sense that bigger is always going to be better.

Frankly, when I found out that the Boeing tanker can serve in twice as many airfields, it can refuel the V–22, which is our tilt rotor aircraft, this aircraft they have can't refuel one of our aircraft, we are going with a company that has no boom experience, they have never built an airplane commercially with a boom.

We have decided to reject a company, Boeing, that delivered a 767 to Japan, one February 19, 2008, a second one March 5, 2008, they are flying, they are in the air, they are a known quantity. And we are taking this risk, an uncertain risk, just for this apparent decision that all of a sudden bigger became better, which is very interesting, because Boeing could have competed a larger airplane, an airframe of the Boeing 777, and didn't, essentially because they understood that this was a satisfactory size component to deliver.

It made sense when Boeing made that decision and when Air Force led them to that decision, because when you look at the loading, the range of loading and what it has done historically, the Boeing 767 is a perfect fit. If you look at the offloading potential, the Boeing 767 is significantly greater than the average offloading in any of either the Vietnam, the Iraqi Freedom or the Southwest Asia conflicts.

So we are concerned that this decision of this deciding bigger was better was, A, not fair to a bidder, Boeing, which was not told that that apparently was now the Air Force's brand new criteria; B, exposes American taxpayers to greater risk with an uncertain contractor, with an uncertain plan in multiple locations; C, causes significant loss of jobs; and, D, violates international law, or at least awards folks who are receiving illegal subsidies violating international law.

This is not a good thing for the American warfighter, the American taxpayer or the American worker, and that is why we are here tonight suggesting that this contract has to be redone one way or another, and we are going to be talking about ways to do that.

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Mr. TIAHRT. Another thing Congress must consider in this whole scenario is, looking back over history and saying, when we do have a difference of opinion between our European allies and our own country and we employ our young men and women to carry out the will of this country, will our foreign suppliers be there to supply us in our time of need?

During the Gulf War, we had allies that disagreed with what we were doing and they failed to supply the parts that we needed to keep our young men and women safe while they carried out the will of this Nation so they could come home safely to their families. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, again, our European allies failed to support us when, in our time of need and through great diplomatic strains and a lot of harsh words, finally we were able to find suppliers that were going to give us the parts that we needed so that our young men and women could carry out the will of this country and come home safely to their families.

Once again, in this system, it is a single point of failure system. It is a system that, if it is down, everything does not function. We cannot transport aircraft from the East Coast to the West Coast for our military without tankers. We cannot supply our troops or carry our troops anywhere outside the continental United States without aerial refueling tankers. If we are going to respond to a natural disaster like the tsunami in southeast Asia, we have to have air refueling tankers. So, we cannot have such a critical item that is so vulnerable to our foreign suppliers when they may disagree with us politically and withhold the parts we need to have this very critical, single point of failure weapons system.

So if you look at our ability to protect our families, like my chart has here, it is an immeasurable cost. What is the dollar value when we have to protect our families and our military doesn't have the supplies they need to carry out that task? What about the loss of defense workers? That is another immeasurable cost. Once we lose part of our national defense industry base, it is gone apparently forever.

For example, if this contract goes through, never again in America will we rebuild an air refueling tanker. I can give you the technical reasons why, but basically aircraft are built on an improvement curve. And the thought of an improvement curve is a theory, which is reality, is that the second unit costs less time to build than the first unit; the fourth unit costs less time than the second unit; and the eighth unit costs less time than the fourth unit, and on down. Every time it doubles, there is less time to build that next aircraft. After you build 179 aircraft, like in this air refueling tanker contract, you are bidding for the follow-on procurement at unit 180. In other words, you are 180 units down the improvement curve. It is a lot cheaper than if you are building the first unit. An American manufacturer bidding on the follow-on contract would have to bid a number one unit. They cannot keep up, once again, with our foreign suppliers because they are bidding a number one unit and our foreign would be bidding the 180th unit. So we never again will build air refueling tankers here in America if this contract goes forward.

And what does that do? It is a loss to defense workers; it compromises our ability to protect our families; and, it is a loss of defense manufacturing capability. Those are things that are immeasurable in cost, but it is something that Congress must consider when we vote on whether this contract should go forward or not.

Mr. INSLEE. And I hope we don't have to vote. I hope this protest is successful. But we will be looking at the

right ways for Congress to exercise the will of the American people through the appropriation or authorization process. And the reason we intend to do that is that we think there were several mistakes made in this contract that essentially resulted in the Air Force selecting a larger, more expensive, and more operationally limited tanker, despite the fact that the domestic Boeing tanker met the requirements of the Air Force.

So, we intend to go forward. We hope that our colleagues will join us in this effort. It is the right thing to do. It may take some time to do, we regret that, but America deserves this and deserves better than what happened here.

Mr. TIAHRT. If you look at all the data involved, from the employment of illegal subsidies that you pointed out so clearly and how our United States trade representative is taking the European companies to task for these illegal subsidies, when you take into consideration the lost tax revenue, when you consider the costly one-sided regulations that are granted by our own Department of Defense and the loss of our industrial base and the loss of our national security, this is a bad decision, and it appears that the Air Force had to bend over backwards to give this work to the French company EADS. And it is heartbreaking in one sense, outrageous in another. But, for me, it came in the form of outrage.

I know that one of the Senators from Washington State has set up a Web site where you can fill out a survey. I know, on my own Web site at www.house.gov/tiarht, you can get on my Web site and fill out a survey about your feelings on us outsourcing our national security to the French. It is I think a bad decision. It is one that needs to be reviewed by Congress. I am hopeful that the Government Accountability Office will look at these inequities, these disparities, this unlevel playing field, and correct this before we have to take action on the floor of the House.

But I think it is clear from the people that we have spoken with here in the 42 States that have lost workers because of this contract going awry, that there will be something happening on this contract this year, either through the Government Accountability Office or through actions of the Congress, because it is too outrageous to allow our national security to be outsourced to the French.

Mr. INSLEE. I want to thank Mr. TIAHRT and Mr. LOEBSACK.

Madam Speaker, we yield back the balance of our time.

THE WAR IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. TSONGAS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentlelady for taking her time to allow me and my colleagues to be able to address the chamber. Thank you very much. And I appreciate her husband's service to this country both in Congress and in the Senate.

I am taking this opportunity to talk about the conflict in Iraq, the war in Iraq, and I want to do it based on my 20 visits to Iraq when I first was there in April of 2003 to the trip that just concluded last week. I want to speak very frankly about this war and our presence there and what I think we should do and why I think we should do what we need to do.

September 11 clearly was a wakeup call, from hell, that forced us to address the fact that for such a long time we had a blind eye to what was happening in the Middle East and what was happening particularly as it related to the extreme Islamists who were seeking to get the world's attention by attacking our troops in Lebanon, our Marines, our Soldiers, and Air Force men and women in Saudi Arabia attacked three times, our embassy employees in two countries in Africa, the Cole where we lost 17 Navy personnel and 33 injured.

I was somewhat surprised that, in spite of all this, that we would keep turning the other cheek and ignoring what was confronting us. So when September 11 happened, it was a huge wakeup call. And the issue is, did we respond in the right way?

We created a Department of Homeland Security. Before September 11, when we talked about such a department, people said, ''What are we, Great Britain?'' It was difficult for Americans to conceive that we should do that. We passed the Patriot Act; and clearly we could have given it some other name, but we wanted to make sure that we had modernized our capability to infiltrate cells that needed to be infiltrated. We created a much stronger intelligence structure by establishing a Director of Intelligence that would coordinate these 16 agencies. And we also went into Afghanistan, where there was uniformed consensus that we should do it. But we also went into Iraq, and that obviously was very controversial.

I remember, as I tried to debate whether we should do this, visiting with the Brits, the French, the Turks, the Israelis, and the Jordanians. They all said Saddam had weapons of mass destruction. But the French said, he has them, but won't use them. And we discounted the French because we knew even then, about the Oil for Food Program, that they had been pretty much bought off, and we knew that they would probably not support using the U.N. as the instrument to remove Saddam from power. So we went in. And, we made sure our troops had the one thing that we felt they needed: Protective chemical gear. We really believed that Saddam had both a nuclear program and a chemical program, and we were very adamant that we shouldn't go in before our troops had that protective chemical gear.

But it became very clear early on that Saddam not only didn't have an active chemical weapons program that he could readily use, and there was no nuclear program. So, the very basis for going into Iraq proved to be false.

I voted to go into Iraq based on what I believed was the right thing to do. I am struck by some Members who somehow blame their decision on someone else. I did what I thought was due diligence. I was impressed by Iraq's neighbors. I was impressed by, frankly, Bill Clinton and HILLARY CLINTON and others who had reason to be skeptical but believed as well that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction.

But what surprises me most, and I want to make this point. I remember when George Romney, the former governor of Michigan, not Massachusetts, Governor Romney from Massachusetts's dad, said: I believed we needed to go into Vietnam, but I was brainwashed by the generals. And there was instant ridicule, and he was forced to drop out of the race for President because he wasn't taking ownership for his own decision, and was blaming someone else.

I blame no one for my vote. It was my vote based on my best conclusions. And I would like to think that every Member would own up to their own vote, but somehow some who voted to go into Iraq now act like they didn't, and blame others for their vote. And I think that is wrong. So the question is, we are there, and we were there under false pretenses but very much believed to be true. So what do we do now?

When you go to Israel, Israel had the best intelligence in the region, and they were wrong and they empanelled a commission to try to determine how they could be wrong. They didn't blame their political leaders, they didn't say people lied. What they concluded was that, based on the knowledge that they had, it was reasonable to assume that Saddam had these weapons. That was their conclusion.

It is a fact that even his own troops, his generals, in December were stunned, as we learned from the debriefing of Tariq Aziz and others of the Iraqi politicians, that Saddam told his own generals in December of 2002: We don't have a nuclear program and we don't have a viable chemical program. And they were stunned.

I was so troubled by this that I went to see Hans Blix in Stockholm and I said, ''Why would Saddam want us to think he had weapons of mass destruction?'' And he said, because Saddam thought it was a deterrent to his neighbors, and that he believed there was no consequence because he thought there would be no way the United States would seek to remove him from power if the French and the Russians and the Chinese would not allow the U.N. to be involved.

Well, the fact is that Saddam misread us the first time in Kuwait. Because of Vietnam, he thought we would never go in because of that experience,

and we did, and he misunderstood our intentions a second time, which is an incredible lesson about making sure that our adversaries know our true intent and believe our true intent.

We were wrong. But being wrong does not mean we need to get out, get out right away because of our original purpose for being there.

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The fact is once we disbanded the Army, the police and the border patrol, we owned Iraq; and there is no way of getting around it. There is no way to say that we can get rid of all Iraqi police, border patrol and Army, and then say, well, you know, we achieved our objective, good-bye. That would be a cruelty to the Iraqis that they don't deserve, and it would be a huge invitation to the Iranians to just walk right in. We can't allow that to happen.

In my first visit to Iraq, I went just as the war was ending. I actually had to get in with the help of the State Department because the Defense Department said I couldn't go in. I remember speaking to Muhammed Abdul-Assan. He was telling me the things that we were doing that troubled him, like throwing candy on the ground. He said, Our children are not chickens; they are not animals.

He talked about how our troops seemed to be offended when they extended a hand, and an Iraqi woman put her hand to her heart and would not shake the soldier's hand. She was saying, thank you for honoring me, but we don't shake hands with strangers.

He basically put his hands on my shoulders and said, You don't know us, and we don't know you. He told me an incredible story. He told me a story that he had been in an Iranian prison and hadn't made the first exchange of prisoners because the Iranians had more Iraqis than the Iraqis had Iranians in their war with each other. I said to him, You have had an incredibly difficult life, and I started to go on. And he looked at me and said, No different than any other Iraqi.

Well, after my first visit I couldn't get back soon enough to say we need Arabic speakers and we need to understand their culture. These are tough people.

The second time I went in, I went to Basra and I went again outside the umbrella of the military and spent two nights in Basra with Save the Children. I began to hear things like why are you putting my son, my uncle, my brother, my cousin, my nephew, my husband, my father, out of work? Why can't they at least guard the hospitals? He was talking about the fact that we put a half a million men out of work, and basically said you have no future in this new government.

And so I couldn't wait to get back home and say: Why are we doing this? And the poignant thing to this is the very first death in the 4th Congressional District Connecticut was Wilfredo Perez. He was guarding a hospital.

Try to imagine what we did when we disbanded their Army, their police and their border patrol. We left them totally and completely defenseless. It is a country of 24-plus million people left with no security.

Let's take New York State. New York State has 19 million people. It is two-thirds the size of Iraq or maybe even smaller. It has 19 million versus 24 million. Imagine New York State with no police, no police in New York City, no police in the subways, no police in Albany, Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse, no police in any of the towns in between, no security whatsoever. Oh, and by the way, to be consistent with what Saddam Hussein did, he released all his prisoners. We are going to release the prisoners from Attica and Riker's Island and make sure that they are in the community, and then say don't worry, we are going to bring 150,000 Iraqis who speak Arabic to keep the peace throughout all of New York State.

Well, you don't have to be a genius to realize we had created a huge problem. We were basically saying we would provide all of the security in Iraq, but we didn't have enough men and women to do it. We didn't speak their language or know their culture. Are we surprised that militias were formed? Are we surprised that when we put half a million people out of work, that they would go to the other side?

And then there is the looting. They were dumbfounded. Iraqis love their antiquities. They love their history. If you go to an Iraqi and somehow suggest it is not a real country, they will look at you and say, Let me get this straight. You did not learn in your school, about the Fertile Crescent where the two rivers met, the cradle of civilization? You never studied about us Iraqis? They are stunned that we would think them not a country, and they were particularly stunned, when the Senate voted to divide Iraq into three parts, they said aha, it just goes to show what we have been saying. You want to divide and conquer us, and then take our oil.

We made huge mistakes and we didn't correct them and we didn't deal with the reality on the ground. The reality is that we needed to train more Iraqi troops than we were, and we needed to have more American troops there given we had gotten rid of a half million security forces for all of Iraq.

When you go to an Iraqi and you ask, Are you a Sunni? They will say, I am a Sunni but I am married to a Shia.

I will go to a Shia and say are you a Shia, to try to understand their perspective, and they will say, I am a Shia, but my tribe is Sunni.

I will go to someone I suspect to be a Kurd, and ask, Are you a Kurd? They will say, Yes, I am a Kurd; but you do know Kurds are Sunnis? They are constantly lecturing me about understanding what they are and the significance of what they are.

We have the fear of sectarian violence in Iraq, and it is often compared to Bosnia. In Bosnia, you had fathers who literally raped their child's best friend. So a father is raping a 14- or 12-year-old child because she happens to be Christian and he is Muslim or she is Muslim and he is a Christian. I remember going to Bosnia and seeing a house filled with garbage, garbage filled all of the way to the top. It was a message, don't come back to your home, you are not wanted.

That kind of violence is not what has happened in Iraq. What has happened in Iraq is when there were Sunnis and Shias living together, they were not kicked out by their neighbors, they were kicked out by outsiders who came in and tried to have it be one ethnic group, which is very different than Bosnia.

Now that is not to suggest that Sunnis and Shias will agree on everything. But again, it is not like Saudi Arabia where Sunnis there don't like Sunnis in other countries if they are not Wahhabbis. We sometimes tend to judge the Middle East, I think, on what we see in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is another issue we are going to have to have a frank conversation about. It is not Iraq.

When I go to Turkey, the Turks say to me, We used to run this place for 402 years; why don't you pay attention to us?

When I go to Egypt, they say, We have been a country for 4,000 years, why don't you pay attention to us?

When I go to Jordan they say, We are direct descendants of Mohammed, why don't you pay attention to us?

When I go to Iraq, they say, We are the cradle of civilization, why don't you pay attention to us?

So we are starting to. We are starting to pay more attention to them. We are certainly paying attention to the ambassadors that come from countries near Iraq. And they say, we may not have wanted you to go in, are there, for you to leave now would be an outrage. And they are right.

Now that we stirred everything up and we created significant dislocation in Iraq, we have a moral obligation to set Iraqis in a place where they can govern themselves; or failing to govern themselves, it will be their failure. But they need the security to do it.

So what do I see and what have I seen over the course of 20 times in Iraq?

If this is April 2003, we could have gone in an upward direction. It could have been an amazing experience. We could have kept their military. We could have listened to them. We could have had Arabic speakers. We could have found that rather than digging a deep ditch, we could have gone in the other direction. But as soon as we allowed the looting, as I made reference to earlier, they really believed that was our message to them that we had only contempt for them. That is what they believed. They thought, You could have stopped it and you didn't. The thing we cherished the most, our antiquities, you allowed those looters to

just desecrate, and you were the security.

We then put them out of work and left them with no security. We dug a deep hole.

I began to feel, though, that we were turning the situation around when we transferred power in June of 2004. Mr. Bremer left, and Iraqis were being invited to make some major decisions. And they did something extraordinary. I was there for the first election. They put our elections to shame.

What did they do? They had far more people who voted, and they were honest votes. The U.N. will tell you, these elections were very well run. I was in Arbil for the first election, and I saw men following their wives because their wives were determined to vote, dressed up with their kids in their arms or following them. I was there as an observer, and I saw them come and vote for local, regional and national elections. They came and got all three ballots and filled them out in a protected area, and then they came and put them in the ballot box. But before they could do that, they had to stick their finger in the ink jar. I watched that for awhile, and then I went and quietly asked, as an observer, Do you mind if I put my finger in that ink jar? I wanted to bond with them; and I, frankly, wanted to come home and show people that there was something pretty monumental going on in Iraq.

The woman looked up at me, looked down, and then she said, No! you're not an Iraqi! Everybody looked at me. I clearly wasn't an Iraqi. I was first embarrassed, and then I thought this was amazing. I was in a Kurdish area. And she didn't say, No, you're not a Kurd. She said, You're not an Iraqi.

Well, that election established a government that then created a constitution. And in October of 2005, they voted on that constitution. And more people came out to vote, including Sunnis that had not participated the first time. They had establish a constitution, and then they had an election in December of 2005. I thought in 2003 we had dug a deep hole, but now we and the Iraq's were getting back up there. Things are looking much better.

And they had an election in December, and then nothing happened. January, no leader was chosen. February, no leader was chosen. March, no leader was chosen. By April they had decided on a very slim vote that Mr. Maliki would be the prime minister.

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And so, they had literally delayed for 4 months choosing a leader. And when you're swimming upstream and you stop swimming, you go way downstream. And they dug a deep hole again. You had the Samarra bombings; that was horrific. That was a Shi'a Mosque that was bombed and destroyed, intended to bring out the Shi'as in a total civil war with Sunnis. That almost happened, but didn't happen.

When I came back to Iraq and met with Mr. Maliki after 6 weeks in office, there was a sense on my part that he wasn't going to do any heavy lifting. And so I decided, rather than come back 3 months from now as I usually did, I came back 6 weeks later. And one ambassador told me then, it was in June, he said to me, ''I fear that Prime Minister Maliki does not have the political will to do what he needs to do.''

So, I went back in August. There were 6 more weeks that had passed. Now he had been in office about 12 weeks, and I didn't see hardly any positive change. I concluded that the only thing that would get him to move was to have a timeline. And I demanded to see him. I said, I've been here more than anyone else, I want to meet with Mr. Maliki. And I said it can be a stand-up meeting, but I want to meet him. I want him to look me in the face and tell him what I believe after being in Iraq so often.

So, a meeting was set up. He was meeting with others and we went to a side of the room, and I said, take a good look at me, you're not going to see me after November, and you're not going to see a majority of Republicans that had been supporting our presence in Iraq. You're going to see a change in government because you aren't doing the heavy lifting you need to. You need timelines like you had in '05, where you had one election, then the constitution, then another election, to select a government. He said, no, we moved too quickly; we can't move that quickly.

I came home believing we need a timeline, and I believe that to this day. But it's a timeline that doesn't say we get out tomorrow. It's a timeline that says we leave when the Iraqis can be ready, and we can pretty much predict when that is. And we know it's going to take more Iraqis troops to do it. We know they have to be trained.

With all due respect to my colleagues in the majority who sincerely believe this was a mistake and we need to get out, a timeline that gets us out sooner than we can replace their army, police and border patrol and leaves them in a place where they can protect themselves is a timeline that makes no sense. But a timeline that says we're there forever in this capacity makes no sense either. We need a logical timeline.

Now, one thing I never argued for that turned out to be very important, I never argued that we needed a surge. That was the one area where I didn't feel I had the expertise. So, after that election, I went to Iraq in December of 2006, and frankly, things were worse than ever. The generals told me that they had given up on Anbar Province, the largest Sunni province. In fact, they said it's almost like a mini Afghanistan within Iraq, no one is in charge except al Qaeda. And that was a pretty disappointing bit of news to be told.

When I went back in April of '07 they said we're winning Anbar Province. Now, this was after we started to begin the surge, but that hadn't really taken effect yet. They were doing something that I had argued for for a long time, and that was, we were engaging the Iraqi tribes. The Sunni Iraqi tribes had become totally fed up with al Qaeda for all the reasons that most people know. They wanted to set up the kind of shari'a government that Iraqis want no part of, and they were killing the young Sunni tribal leaders who were not cooperating. And so, the leaders came to us and said, we want to be with you.

So, I went in April, and we're winning Anbar Province. I go back 2 months later and they say, we've really won Anbar Province. I go back in August, and we're starting to win other areas. We're starting to clean out other areas.

And we've started to have al Qaeda be in small little enclaves. And why? Because before the surge they struck us at will. After the surge, they can't get above the water line to take a breath because our daytime troops went after them, and our nighttime troops went after them, and then our daytime troops went after them. They never have a chance to regroup. The surge has enabled us to clean out areas and bring the Iraqi police, which aren't the best of Iraq, but they are good enough to do what police do, and that is, once an area is clean, keep the peace.

This past year, I've been able to go without armor into so many different marketplaces, places they would never have taken me before. And I come back and I say things are getting better, and then people say yes, but there were the rockets on the Green Zone. Well, there are going to be rockets on the Green Zone and there are going to be men and women who wear vests that basically are filled with explosives and they're going to blow themselves up. There are women who have lost their husbands who see no future. There is obviously al Qaeda, that still has some influence. There will be those kinds of attacks, but there are going to be different kinds of attacks than has existed in the past.

So, I have seen the surge is working. The tribal leaders have made a huge difference. We are now going into other areas. We've cleaned up our two-thirds of Iraq. Mosul is going to be a very difficult area. It's a very mixed community of Sunnis, Shias, Turkmen, and others.

The other reason why we're seeing an improvement beside the surge and support of tribal leaders is the Iraqi troops have become competent, in some cases very competent. And I'm sure there may be some who will criticize me for saying it, but I believe the Iraqis are actually beginning to like us, or at least respect us, and in some cases trust us. And why would that be? Well, they were raised for 30 years to hate Americans and love the Russians. So, in comes this government, Americans,

and we attack them, and we put a lot of their loved ones out of work. And they were convinced that we would take their oil. But it's been 5 years, and they've come to realize that there is a country so good that it would spend nearly a half a trillion dollars, have more than 20,000 of its American forces wounded, some very severely, have 4,000 of its troops killed and not take a drop of its oil, not a drop of its oil. We're beginning to gain credibility that we actually meant what we said and that there is a country so good in the world that it would do that for something far more important.

We want a world of peace. We want a world where people can live their lives as they want to. We want a world where commerce can flow back and forth freely. And we're willing to give a lot and spend a lot to do that.

Now, I want to say something to my colleagues that may not believe we should ever have been in Iraq. I fear that there are some in this Chamber who fear that if we ultimately win in Iraq, and by winning, I mean restore a security force of Iraqis that can fend for themselves and where they can govern for themselves and where there is a significant movement towards a more democratic form of government, and a government that, unlike its neighbors, allows its women to be educated, allows its women to be part of commerce, if we do that, it justifies the war.

We may say at the end, we spent a trillion dollars, we lost 4,000 to 5,000 men and women, and we have this result which is pretty spectacular, but in the end, it may not justify what we have done. But where we all should be united, it seems to me, is that we leave Iraq in a place that the void is not filled up by the Iranians.

Now, we haven't taken a drop of their oil, but one thing is very clear, Iraq has a lot of oil and gas. In fact, Bunker Hunt came to my office, rolled out a map that would cover this desk, and he said, I believe Iraq has more energy than exists in Saudi Arabia. The world says it has 10 percent. He told, I believe it may have as much as 20 percent of the world's reserves. And then he showed me this map with markings throughout Iraq indicated a real potential for either gas or oil. He said, to an oil man, this is a candy store of opportunity. Well, it belongs to the Iraqis. And my hope and prayer is that they will someday be able to enjoy it and share it with the rest of the world.

And the thing that's stunning is, it's not just in Sunni areas, it's not just in Shi'a areas and it's not just in Kurdish areas, it's throughout Iraq. This is a nation that doesn't believe in shari'a law. It's a nation that is very secular. It's a nation where Sunni and Shi'as have, in particular, gotten along with each other. It's a nation that has so much oil as a resource, and gas, but almost as importantly, it has so much water. When I fly over it, you see these magnificent rivers, not just the Tigris and Euphrates, but the others that join it, but all the canals and the irrigation that exists. This is a country that will be able to export and feed parts of the world.

This is a country that will educate both its men and women. This is a country that has significant resources. This is a country we hope to be friends with for a long, long time. And this is a country that deserves some patience from Americans. We need to understand that they didn't have the head start we had in the United States. And even then, think about it, we knew democracy before we became these United States. We had democracy in our colonies.

We had the Declaration of Independence in 1776. And it took us 13 years to have the Constitution of the United States, 13 years. And even then, as perfect as we would like to think our Constitution is, but in our Constitution as Condoleezza Rice points out, she was three-fifths a person, and a slave. So, we certainly didn't get it all right.

I'll conclude by saying, we've seen the most progress on the part of the military. We've seen not the kind of progress we want to see from the politicians. But even then, we need to give them credit. They have voted out retirement for ba'athists, Saddamists. That was hugely important. While they don't have an oil law that formally distributes the oil to the different regions of Iraq, they are doing it in spite of that without the formal agreement.

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They have a de-Baathification law that's coming into place so that they're hiring people that, in the past were told they couldn't be part of this new Iraqi government.

And they're going to have provincial elections. The significance of that is the local elections were the first of the three elections, and Sunnis didn't participate, so we have some Shiias who run Sunni areas. This means that these leaders are willing, and know that they have to give up power to the predominant group within their regime of Iraq.

No one knows how history is going to judge our involvement in Iraq. But the one thing I do know is that we finally have the kind of leadership in Iraq that I've been hungry for, some real honest talk from Mr. Petraeus. He'll tell you what's going right and what's going wrong. We've had, I think, good military leaders, but I think he's learned a lot, and I think he's clearly the best.

We needed to make a change with Secretary of Defense, and since then I've seen significant progress. It took Abraham Lincoln 9 generals before he got the generals that finally started to win some battles, Sherman and Grant.

We're starting to see a difference in Iraq because of this leadership. We're even starting to see Mr. Maliki show some guts by confronting his own political base, Shiias, in Basra.

They haven't been given the opportunity that we had of having 13 years before a true government was established under our Constitution. They've had five.

We have American time. We want them to act more quickly. But, at the same time, in terms of Middle East culture, they're moving a lot faster than some people give them credit.

Madam Speaker, I really appreciate your willingness to allow me this opportunity, and I want to just repeat that everyone in this chamber loves our troops. I'm addicted when I go back to Iraq, to meet with the men and women who serve, those who are content we're there, those who would go back and again and again, and some who wish they weren't there. But every one of our troops are real patriots. I can't tell you what an honor it is to interact with them. And with that, Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

OMISSION FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD OF FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2008, AT PAGE 1769

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REFERRED

A concurrent resolution of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. Con. Res. 71. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for the presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal to Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D., the Committee on House Administration.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HARE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. DUNCAN) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, April 8.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, April 2.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, April 8.

Mrs. BIGGERT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TANCREDO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WELLER of Illinois, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DUNCAN, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at their own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. GOODE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CLARKE, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, April 2, 2008, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5761. A letter from the Director, International Cooperation, Department of Defense, transmitting Pursuant to Section 27(f) of the Arms Export Control Act and Section 1(f) of Executive Order 11958, Transmittal No. 02-08, which informs of our intent to sign Project Arrangement Number Five concerning Apache Attack Helicopter Modernized Target Acquisition and Designation Sight and Pilot Night Vision Sensor Infrared Weather Performance Analysis, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5762. A letter from the Director, International Cooperation, Department of Defense, transmitting Pursuant to Section 27(f) of the Arms Export Control Act and Section 1(f) of Executive Order 11958, Transmittal No. 01-08, informing of an intent to sign the Project Agreement between the Department of Defense of the United States and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Singapore Concerning Development of Fuel Cell Power Systems, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5763. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the semiannual report detailing payments made to Cuba as a result of the provision of telecommunications services pursuant to Department of the Treasury specific licenses, as required by Section 1705(e)(6) of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6), as amended by Section 102(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, and pursuant to Executive Order 13313 of July 31, 2003, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 6032; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5764. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting notification that effective February 17, 2008, 25% Danger Pay Allowance for Chad has been established based on the unsettled security situation that could endanger lives of U.S. Government civilian employees, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 5928; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5765. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Copies of international agreements, other than treaties, entered into by the United States, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5766. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Copies of international agreements, other than treaties, entered into by the United States, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5767. A letter from the Acting Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, Transmittal No. 08-44 concerning the Department of the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to Iraq for defense articles and services; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5768. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting pursuant to Section 62(a) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), notification concerning the Department of the Army's proposed extension of a lease of defense articles to the Government of Denmark (Transmittal No. 09–07); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5769. A letter from the Under Secretary for Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's FY 2009 Cooperative Threat Reduction Annual Report, pursuant to Public Law 106-398, section 1308; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5770. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 3(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification regarding the proposed transfer of major defense equipment from the Government of Germany (Transmittal No. RSAT-02-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5771. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification regarding the proposed license for the manufacture of military equipment to the Government of the United Kingdom (Transmittal No. DDTC 015-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5772. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification regarding the proposed license for the manufacture of military equipment to the Government of the United Kingdom (Transmittal No. DDTC 022-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5773. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification regarding the proposed license for the manufacture of military equipment and the export of defense articles and services to the Government of Russia (Transmittal No. DDTC 040-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5774. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles to the Government of Georgia (Transmittal No. DDTC 033-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5775. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of a proposed agreement for the export of defense articles and services to the Republic of Korea (Transmittal No. DDTC 007-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5776. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of a proposed manufacturing license agreement for the export of defense articles and services to the Government of Turkey (Transmittal No. DDTC 026-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5777. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of a proposed agreement for the export of defense articles and services to the Government of Japan (Transmittal No. DDTC 006-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5778. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of an application for a license for the export of defense articles and services to the Governments of the United Kingdom and France (Transmittal No. DDTC 032-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5779. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of a proposed agreement for the export of defense articles and services to the Government of Russia (Transmittal No. DDTC 028-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5780. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of a proposed manufacturing license agreement for the export of defense articles and services to the Government of Canada (Transmittal No. DDTC 037-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5781. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of an application for a license for the export of defense articles and services to the Government of the United Kingdom (Transmittal No. DDTC 019-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5782. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of a proposed agreement for the export of defense articles and services to the Government of Mexico (Transmittal No. DDTC 008-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5783. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of a proposed agreement for the export of defense articles and services to the Government of Australia (Transmittal No. DDTC 115-07); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5784. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of a proposed agreement for the export of defense articles and services to the Government of Mexico (Transmittal No. DDTC 017-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5785. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles and services to the Governments of Russia and Kazakstan (Transmittal No. DDTC 029-08); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5786. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report pursuant to Section 3 of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, detailing an unauthorized retransfer of U.S.-granted defense articles; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5787. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment to the International Arms Traffic in Arms Regulations: North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) — received March 18, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5788. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State,

transmitting extension of the waiver of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act, Pub. L. 102-511, with respect to assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5789. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report providing information on steps taken by the U.S. Government to bring about an end to the Arab League boycott of Israel and to expand the process of normalization between Israel and the Arab League countries, as requested in Section 635 of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Pub. L. 110-161); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5790. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to Section 620C(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and in accordance with section 1(a)(6) of Executive Order 13313, a report prepared by the Department of State on the progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period December 1, 2007 through January 31, 2008; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5791. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a copy of Presidential Determination No. 2008-13, ''Waiver of Restrictions on Providing Funds to the Palestinian Authority,'' pursuant to Section 650(d) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2008, Pub. L. 110-161; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5792. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-323, ''Clean Cars Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5793. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-324, ''Accrued Sick and Safe Leave Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5794. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-325, ''College Savings Program Increased Tax Benefit Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5795. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-326, ''Omnibus Executive Service System, Police and Fire Systems, and Retirement Modifications for Chief of Police Cathy L. Lanier and Fire Chief Dennis L. Rubin Amendment Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5796. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-327, ''Producer Licensing Amendment Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5797. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-328, ''Special Election Amendment Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5798. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-329, ''Prohibition of Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity and Expression Amendment Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5799. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-330, ''Fire-Standard-Compliant Cigarettes Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5800. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-331, ''Fire Hydrant Inspection, Repair, and Maintenance Amendment Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5801. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-332, ''Department of Transportation Establishment Temporary Amendment Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5802. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-333, ''Extension of Time to Dispose of the Old Congress Heights School Temporary Amendment Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5803. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-334, ''Inclusionary Zoning Implementation Temporary Amendment Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5804. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-335, ''Conversion Fee Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5805. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-336, ''Supplemental Appropriations Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5806. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 17-337, ''Local Rent Supplemental Program Temporary Amendment Act of 2008,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. RAHALL: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2016. A bill to establish the National Landscape Conservation System, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 110–561). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. McGOVERN: Committee on rules. H. Res. 1065. A resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5501) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2009 through 2013 to provide assistance to foreign countries to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and for other purposes (Rept. 110–562). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. McCOTTER (for himself, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. WALSH of New York, Mr. WAMP, Mr. BURGESS, Ms. BERKLEY, and Mr. DeFAZIO):

H.R. 5668. A bill to prohibit Federal government officials and employees from attending the opening ceremonies of the 2008 Summer Olympic Games held in communist China based upon communist China brutalizing protesters in Tibet, supporting and enabling Sudan's genocidal regime, forcing a one child policy upon Chinese families, persecuting Chinese citizens for freely exercising religion, repressing free and independent labor unions, engaging in wanton environmental degradation, and systematically denying the Chinese people their basic freedoms; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. TOWNS (for himself and Mr. TERRY):

H.R. 5669. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the poison center national toll-free number, national media campaign, and grant program to provide assistance for poison prevention, sustain the funding of poison centers, and enhance the public health of people of the United States; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. FOSSELLA (for himself and Mr. PASCRELL):

H.R. 5670. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a Federal income tax credit for certain home purchases; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HERGER (for himself and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 5671. A bill to amend the laws establishing the Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, units of the National Forest System derived from the public domain, to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to retain and utilize special use permit fees collected by the Secretary in connection with the operation of marinas in the recreation area and the operation of the Multnomah Falls Lodge in the scenic area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 5672. A bill to establish the Commission on Women's Business Ownership; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, and Small Business, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. McCARTHY of California (for himself, Mr. EHLERS, and Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California):

H.R. 5673. A bill to amend the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act to direct the Secretary of Defense to collect absentee ballots of absent overseas uniformed services voters for elections for Federal office and deliver the ballots to State election officials prior to the time established for the closing of the polls on the date of the election, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. MEEK of Florida (for himself, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. ELLSWORTH):

H.R. 5674. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to require the Bureau of Prisons to provide secure storage areas in prison facilities for employees authorized to carry a firearm; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MEEK of Florida:

H.R. 5675. A bill to amend the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to revise the classification of certain cigars; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 5676. A bill to designate the historic Federal Building located at 100 North

Palafox Street in Pensacola, Florida, as the ''Winston E. Arnow Federal Building''; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. McCOTTER (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. SHULER, Mr. KNOLLENBERG, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Mr. BROWN of South Carolina):

H. Res. 1064. A resolution recognizing Gordon ''Gordie'' Howe on the occasion of his 80th birthday, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. EMANUEL:

H. Res. 1066. A resolution electing certain Members to a certain standing committee of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. COURTNEY (for himself, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. SHAYS, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. COHEN, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HARE, Mr. OLVER, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. SESTAK, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia):

H. Res. 1067. A resolution recognizing the 50th anniversary of the crossing of the North Pole by the USS Nautilus (SSN 571) and its significance in the history of both our Nation and the world; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania (for himself and Mr. EHLERS):

H. Res. 1068. A resolution permitting active duty members of the Armed Forces who are assigned to a Congressional liaison office of the Department of Defense at the House of Representatives to obtain membership in the exercise facility established for employees of the House of Representatives; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. CROWLEY (for himself, Mr. KIRK, and Mr. MAHONEY of Florida):

H. Res. 1069. A resolution condemning the use of television programming by Hamas to indoctrinate hatred, violence, and anti-Semitism toward Israel in young Palestinian children; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. PASCRELL (for himself, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. POMEROY, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Mr. ENGEL):

H. Res. 1070. A resolution expressing strong support for Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to be extended invitations for membership to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization at the April 2008 Bucharest Summit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 89: Mr. McCOTTER.
H.R. 241: Mr. GERLACH.
H.R. 281: Mr. KILDEE and Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 351: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 406: Mr. HODES and Mr. SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 471: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
H.R. 503: Mr. MEEKS of New York and Mr. MEEK of Florida.
H.R. 636: Mr. WESTMORELAND.
H.R. 741: Mr. BARROW.
H.R. 784: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 901: Mr. GONZALEZ, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 1032: Mr. KLEIN of Florida.
H.R. 1188: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 1264: Mr. MURTHA, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mr. BONNER, and Mr. GRAVES.
H.R. 1295: Mr. HERGER, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, and Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 1399: Mr. MITCHELL.
H.R. 1436: Mr. McCAUL of Texas.
H.R. 1464: Ms. SUTTON.
H.R. 1565: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.R. 1621: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 1646: Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 1667: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
H.R. 1687: Mrs. TAUSCHER.
H.R. 1742: Mr. McDERMOTT and Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 1921: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida and Mr. WYNN.
H.R. 1927: Mr. MICA and Mr. KLEIN of Florida.
H.R. 2014: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 2045: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
H.R. 2049: Mr. CROWLEY.
H.R. 2165: Mr. WHITFIELD of Kentucky and Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 2210: Mr. PASTOR.
H.R. 2329: Mr. LAMPSON and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 2417: Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.
H.R. 2470: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 2516: Ms. SUTTON.
H.R. 2550: Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 2634: Mr. HODES.
H.R. 2702: Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania and Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee.
H.R. 2762: Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 2784: Mr. SKELTON.
H.R. 2864: Mr. ANDREWS.
H.R. 2922: Mr. ALLEN and Mr. GERLACH.
H.R. 2965: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H.R. 3010: Mr. MARKEY.
H.R. 3089: Mr. McCAUL of Texas and Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 3098: Mr. LAHOOD and Mr. BLUNT.
H.R. 3132: Mr. PASTOR, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. GIFFORDS, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3191: Mr. BOSWELL and Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3229: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. SPACE, Mr. TANNER, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, and Mr. TAYLOR.
H.R. 3282: Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 3416: Mr. FARR.
H.R. 3434: Mr. BOREN.
H.R. 3439: Mr. PASTOR, Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, and Mr. ROTHMAN.
H.R. 3457: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3622: Mr. BOOZMAN.
H.R. 3652: Mr. ARCURI and Ms. BALDWIN.
H.R. 3658: Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 3700: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
H.R. 3769: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mrs. MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 3799: Mr. MORAN of Virginia and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 3822: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 3865: Mr. DELAHUNT and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 3876: Mr. ABERCROMBIE.
H.R. 3881: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 3934: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 3990: Mr. WEINER and Mr. SESTAK.
H.R. 4002: Mr. BOREN.
H.R. 4044: Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. COHEN, Mr. FILNER, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 4054: Mr. DOYLE, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. HARE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4102: Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 4130: Mr. GOODE.
H.R. 4202: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.
H.R. 4236: Mr. RAHALL and Mr. HALL of New York.
H.R. 4318: Mr. KIND.
H.R. 4544: Mr. McCAUL of Texas.
H.R. 4959: Ms. HARMAN, Mr. WU, and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 5028: Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, and Mr. LAMPSON.
H.R. 5032: Mr. HUNTER, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. McCAUL of Texas, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Ms. FALLIN, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. HAYES.
H.R. 5038: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.
H.R. 5057: Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 5060: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 5109: Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. BURGESS, and Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California.
H.R. 5134: Mr. MARSHALL and Mr. VISCLOSKY.
H.R. 5148: Mr. BOUCHER and Mr. DOOLITTLE.
H.R. 5173: Mr. ROSS and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 5178: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H.R. 5268: Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. ARCURI, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, and Mr. MARKEY.
H.R. 5315: Mr. HODES.
H.R. 5450: Mr. HILL, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. KUHL of New York, and Mr. McDERMOTT.
H.R. 5462: Mr. CULBERSON.
H.R. 5477: Mr. GALLEGLY and Ms. WOOLSEY.
H.R. 5481: Mr. WITTMAN of Virginia.
H.R. 5490: Mr. FLAKE.
H.R. 5493: Mr. EHLERS and Mrs. MYRICK.
H.R. 5506: Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 5541: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SHULER, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. CHANDLER, and Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 5561: Mr. KUHL of New York and Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.
H.R. 5566: Mr. GALLEGLY.
H.R. 5580: Ms. WATSON, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
H.R. 5585: Mrs. CAPPS.
H.R. 5587: Mr. BOYD of Florida.
H.R. 5602: Mr. HILL and Mr. BOSWELL.
H.R. 5609: Ms. SUTTON.
H.R. 5611: Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. KIND, and Mr. HOLDEN.
H.R. 5613: Mr. PALLONE, Mr. ALLEN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. ROSS, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. GORDON, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. HARE, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. GOODE, Mr. HOLT, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. FARR, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. REYES, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. INSLEE, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. WU, Mr. STARK, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. MARSHALL, Ms. SOLIS, Ms. CASTOR, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 5627: Mr. McCOTTER and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 5635: Mr. DAVIS of Alabama and Mr. MEEK of Florida.
H.J. Res. 9: Mr. COLE of Oklahoma.
H. Con. Res. 81: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.
H. Con. Res. 235: Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, and Mr. ENGEL.
H. Res. 102: Mr. SPACE.
H. Res. 146: Mr. WEXLER and Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.
H. Res. 163: Mr. CONYERS.
H. Res. 356: Mr. McNERNEY.
H. Res. 638: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H. Res. 896: Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland.
H. Res. 925: Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida.
H. Res. 988: Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. SHULER, Mr. DOYLE, and Mr. TANNER.

H. Res. 992: Mr. WYNN and Mr. CRAMER.

H. Res. 997: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. WALSH of New York.

H. Res. 1008: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.

H. Res. 1011: Mr. HUNTER, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. SIRES, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. WEXLER.

H. Res. 1026: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

H. Res. 1054: Ms. BERKLEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. SCHWARTZ, and Mrs. MALONEY of New York.

H. Res. 1056: Mr. CHANDLER.

H. Res. 1061: Ms. LEE, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, and Mr. WATT.

H. Res. 1062: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.