After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL M. HONDA,
Member of Congress.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

VISA LOTTERY PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, in the news since Christmas Day has been great concern about the security of our country related to individuals entering this country and attempting to perpetrate harm on our citizens. It harkens back to September 11, 2001, and all the measures that we have taken since then to try to make our Nation a safer place.

One of the areas where we could make it much safer and much fairer for all of our citizens and for those who seek to come to the United States would be to eliminate the visa lottery program. This is a program that awards legal permanent residence status, or ''green cards,'' to foreign nationals based on pure luck.

Literally, the State Department conducts a random lottery. Millions of people submit their names on very short forms, about a half-page long, and then they randomly select out of those millions of people 50,000 winners each year who get to enter the United States through the visa lottery program. They don't have to have any family ties to the United States. They don't have to have any job skills that are in need in the United States. They simply, through pure luck, get to enter this country.

Usually, immigrant visas are issued to foreign nationals that have existing connections with family members lawfully residing in the United States or with U.S. employers. However, under the visa lottery program, visas are awarded to immigrants at random without meeting such criteria.

A perfect example of the system gone awry is the case of Hesham Mohamed Ali Hedayet, the Egyptian national who killed two and wounded three during a shooting spree at Los Angeles International Airport in July 2002. He was allowed to apply for a legal permanent residence status in 1997 because of his wife's status as a visa lottery winner.

In fact, since this program was established in the early 1990s, nearly 1 million people have come into the United States regardless of the need for them to enter this country, regardless of the unemployment rate, which today stands above 10 percent. And with 15 million Americans looking for work, we give 50,000 visas to people to enter the country not based upon any family ties, not based upon any job skills, simply based upon pure luck.

The State Department's Inspector General testified before Congress recently that it continues to believe that the program ''contains significant risks to national security from hostile intelligence officers, criminals, and terrorists attempting to use the program for entry into the United States as permanent residents.'' With the tool of ''legal permanent resident'' status in hand, terrorists and spies would have free rein to travel and meet and plan terrorist activities within the borders of the United States.

Even if technical improvements were made to the visa lottery program, nothing would prevent terrorist organizations or foreign intelligence agencies from having members apply for the program who do not have criminal backgrounds, maybe have recently left one of the madrassas in the Middle East and have no record of having been affiliated with a terrorist organization, but that organization could assist them in submitting their names. And if they get a visa if their name is drawn, they don't just get a temporary visa like the 9/11 hijackers or the fellow who just attempted to blow up a Northwest airliner; rather, they get permanent residence status or a green card to live permanently in the United States.

Thirteen of the 14 countries over which the TSA is exercising greater scrutiny in the wake of the attempted Christmas Day bombing plot are eligible to participate in the visa lottery, including Yemen, which has become the focus of much activity on the part of terrorist organizations.

The visa lottery program is wrought with fraud. It is common for foreign nationals to apply for the lottery program multiple times using many different aliases. The State Department's Office of Inspector General declared in its September 2003 report that the visa lottery program is ''subject to widespread abuse'' and that ''identity fraud is endemic, and fraudulent documents are commonplace.''

A 2007 Government Accountability Office report found that the visa lottery program is vulnerable to fraudulent activity committed by and against applicants. The same 2007 report found that consular officers at six posts out of 11 reviewed reported that widespread use of fake documents, such as birth certificates, marriage certificates, and passports, presented challenges when verifying the identities of applicants and dependents.

The visa lottery program is unfair to immigrants who comply with United States immigration laws. Most family-sponsored immigrants currently face a wait of years to obtains visas, yet the lottery program pushes 50,000 random immigrants with no particular family ties, job skills, or education ahead of these family- and employer-sponsored immigrants each year with no wait.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation should be overturned. I have introduced legislation to do just that. This Congress should bring it up for a vote.

There is a bipartisan effort to eliminate the visa lottery program. Forty-five bipartisan Members of Congress have already cosponsored this legislation, and it has twice passed the House: once under a Democrat majority in the 110th Congress as an amendment to the FY 2008 State/Foreign Operations Appropriations bill on the House floor and once in the 109th Congress as an amendment to H.R. 4437.

Democrat leadership this Congress blocked the same amendment from coming to the floor for a vote during the consideration of the FY 2010 State/Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. The Democrat-controlled House has not held a single hearing on the dangers posed by the visa lottery program during the 110th or 111th Congresses.

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WE DON'T NEED MORE TROOPS IN AFGHANISTAN; WE NEED A NEW STRATEGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the year 2009 ended 12 days ago, and many were glad to see it go. It was a very difficult year for American families as they struggled with the recession. It was also a very difficult year for our brave troops in Afghanistan. The death toll was 317. That was twice as many as the previous year, and it made 2009 the deadliest year of the war. We'd all like to believe that this year will be safer for our troops in Afghanistan, but it doesn't look like it will be that way. Our military leaders have already predicted that President Obama's decision to send 30,000 more troops will lead to an increase in violence this spring and summer.

Sadly, America's military families who have already sacrificed so very much must brace themselves for more as the attacks on our troops continue. Violent extremism is thriving in Afghanistan because of the crippled economy, the broken infrastructure, the lack of education and other social services, the breakdown in law and order, and the belief that the central government isn't doing nearly enough to help their people.

Mr. Speaker, there is no military solution to these problems. That's why I'm opposed to sending more troops to Afghanistan. We don't need new troops. We need a new strategy. We must start using the tools of smart security to improve the lives of the Afghan people and give them hope for a better future. One of the keys to this new strategy must be a civilian surge, a surge of experts and aid workers who can help the

Afghan people to rebuild their communities and to rebuild their country. Everyone seems to agree that this is a good idea. The President said it's a good idea. Our diplomats and military leaders in Afghanistan have said it's a good idea. The people of our country certainly know that it's a good idea.

However, the last supplemental appropriations bill, which I voted against, lacked significant funding for the civilian surge, and President Obama only mentioned it once in his address on Afghanistan at West Point. The numbers on the ground tell the story, Mr. Speaker. When I questioned Ambassador Eikenberry last month at a Foreign Affairs Committee hearing, he indicated that there will be 1,000 civilians in Afghanistan by the end of this month, but we will have 100,000 troops there soon. That's a ratio of 100 to 1. So we aren't getting the civilian surge that we were promised. The current strategy, in fact, of relying on the military option ignores what will really work in Afghanistan: A real commitment to economic development, humanitarian aid, and social services, better law enforcement to disrupt terrorist networks, and better governance and systems of justice. The Afghan people desperately need a better future and a reason to reject violent extremism. They need hope for a positive future.

Mr. Speaker, winning in Afghanistan is about winning the hearts and minds of the Afghan people. Smart security is the way to do that.

RON BUTLER DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Ron Butler, the longtime coach and athletic director of Ranger College in Ranger, Texas. This past Saturday, the school honored him with Ron Butler Day to thank him for his years of service to their community. Ron worked at Ranger College from 1964, when he was hired, until his retirement in the year 2000. During his tenure at the college, he filled many roles. He was the head coach of both the men's and women's basketball teams, head coach of the softball team, assistant coach and head coach of the football team, and also the athletic director.

Throughout much of his tenure, he held many of these jobs at the same time. Most remarkable about Coach Butler's time at Ranger were the unqualified achievements the school had in athletics. In almost every sport, Coach Butler's teams found success and championships. For a college as small as Ranger, this is a big deal. It is not a stretch to say that Dr. Bill Campion, the president of Ranger College, was right when he said, ''I singlehandedly give credit for the reputation and success of Ranger College to Ron Butler.'' Excelling in athletics enabled the school to continue to grow and build its reputation as one of the finest junior colleges in Texas and the Nation.

Beyond the wins and the championships, Coach Butler has touched 25 years of students and families. His unwavering dedication and commitment can be seen rippling through the lives of everyone who has played under him or served alongside him. And after all this, Coach Butler still continues to serve his school today, as a member of the Board of Regents.

Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to share with this great body a small story of someone who gave so much to so many. Ranger College and all of its alumni owe a great debt of gratitude to this man, and it is my honor to thank Coach Butler publicly tonight.

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.)

REMEMBERING THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I was surprised to hear a few days ago Rudy Giuliani, the former mayor of New York, say that there were no terrorist attacks during the Bush administration on U.S. soil. He later corrected that remark to say that there were no terrorist attacks on U.S. soil while President Bush was leading the country—except for just 9/11, only the terrorist attack on 9/11. And I realized that I was witnessing the birth of a new form of political discourse from the right wing in this country: The exception. The exceptional exception, the exception that proves the rule or disproves the rule, as the case may be.

So I'm expecting that in the future, we'll hear from the right wing the claim that no cities drowned under the Bush administration—except for New Orleans. And that there were no wars that were started by mistake under the Bush administration—except for the war in Iraq. And that the Bush administration added nothing to the Federal debt—except for $4.5 trillion, which works out to $15,000 for every man, woman, and child in this country. And that they respected all of our constitutional rights as Americans—except when they didn't. I think that we'll hear the Republicans claim that the Bush administration managed the economy quite well—except when they brought it to the brink of national bankruptcy.

In fact, they'll claim that the Bush-Cheney administration was a complete success—except for the fact that it was an abject failure. In fact, what we learned in watching them for 8 years is that the reason why the Republicans hate government so much is because they're so bad at it. There are those people among us who lived through that terrible time and will look back on it, and they'll say that they'll vote for anybody on the ballot, absolutely anybody on the ballot with one exception, except if that person happens to be Republican.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE CLIMBING DEBT BURDEN

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. You know, Mr. Speaker, I get a big kick out of my colleagues from the other side of the aisle who continue to beat on the Bush administration. I mean, we're not in the Bush administration. We are in the Obama administration. And the Obama administration this year has outlined a $3.55 trillion budget. They always seem to come down when they talk about President Bush and his administration, some of the shortcomings—and there has never been an administration that didn't have some shortcomings—but they don't talk much about what's happened since they took power.

When the Democrats took over Congress less than 3 years ago, the national debt was under $9 trillion. It went from $9 trillion to $10 trillion to $11 trillion to over $12 trillion. That's just in the last 3 years. They're spending money like it's going out of style. They have increased the national debt limit five times in just the last 3 years, and the increase of $3.4 trillion is 38 percent-plus over what the national debt was when they took control of this Chamber and the other Chamber. It really bothers me when they talk about all this in retrospect and they don't pay any attention to what's going on now and what should be going on in the future.

They're talking about a national health care plan now that is going to cost, I believe, $3 trillion over the next decade, and they're behind closed doors, trying to ram that thing through without really having even a conference committee. They're doing it with just the leaders, and they're doing it in a smoke-filled room with—well, maybe they don't smoke. But they are doing it in a closed room where nobody can see—not even C–SPAN, even though they promised that they would.

Now let's just look at what's happened since they took power with the