

have supported them through the good years and bad ones. They were a source of joy, hope, and inspiration. We admire the Pats for their achievements and look forward to win number three.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the New England Patriots on their thrilling victory in Super Bowl XXXVIII. In a season of tremendous adversity marked by difficult early-season losses and numerous injuries, this team displayed the values of hardwork and determination that so epitomize the region from which they hail. After beginning their season with a heart-breaking defeat at the hands of the intra-division rival Buffalo Bills, the Patriots went on to win all but one of their next fifteen games, including a franchise-record twelve-game winning streak. Ignoring the seemingly relentless skeptics, the Patriots defeated a hard-nosed Tennessee Titan team and halted the high-octane Indianapolis Colts to gain a spot on the world's biggest stage in Super Bowl XXXVIII.

One again relying on the leadership of quarterback Tom Brady and the steady foot of kicker Adam Vinatieri for last-second heroics, the Patriots defeated a stubborn Carolina Panther team to earn their second Super Bowl victory in the past three years. Abiding by the values of teamwork and perseverance instilled by head coach Bill Belichick, the New England Patriots are an example to all Americans of what it means to be a true champion. In addition, I would particularly like to congratulate Mike Cloud, a resident of Rhode Island, on being part of a team that makes all of New England proud.

I hope our colleagues will join me in congratulating the Super Bowl champion New England Patriots.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Tuesday, February 3, 2004, the resolution is considered read for amendment and previous question is ordered.

The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### OVERTIME REGULATIONS AND VETERANS

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as one of the chairmen of the two labor committees here in the House and as a veteran, I am here to denounce an effort by Big Labor to scare our Nation's veterans and service men and women into thinking the Department of Labor is out to take away their overtime. The Department of Labor is working on revisions to the regulations governing overtime pay. These regulations would provide 1.3 million more Americans with overtime and help millions of hard-working people in this country.

Let me be absolutely clear, the Department of Labor's proposed overtime

regulations do not apply to the military, and nothing in existing law or the proposed regulations suggest that being a veteran would have any effect on overtime pay. It is a sad day indeed when the men and women of our forces are exploited for political gain. Opponents of these regulations ought to be ashamed.

SECRETARY OF LABOR,  
Washington, January 27, 2004.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I write to provide you with the facts to correct the record following last week's Senate floor debate on the Consolidated Appropriations Act with regard to the Department of Labor's proposed revision of the Fair Labor Standards Act's overtime exemption regulations. I also would like to thank you for your support and leadership on this important issue.

The recent allegations that military personnel and veterans will lose overtime pay, because of proposed clarifications of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) "white-collar" exemption regulations, are incorrect and harmful to the morale of veterans and of American servicemen and women. I want to assure you that military personnel and veterans are not affected by these proposed rules by virtue of their military duties or training.

First, the Part 541 "white collar exemptions" do not apply to the military. They cover only the civilian workforce.

Second, nothing in the current or proposed regulation makes any mention of veteran status. Despite claims that military training would make veterans ineligible for overtime pay, members of Congress should be clear that the Department of Labor's proposed rules will not strip any veteran of overtime eligibility.

This has been one of many criticisms intended to confuse and frighten workers about our proposal to revise the badly outdated regulations under the FLSA "white collar" exemption regulations. It is disheartening that the debate over modernizing these regulations to meet the needs of the 21st Century workforce has largely ignored the broad consensus that this rule needs substantial revision to strengthen overtime protections.

The growing ambiguities caused by time and workplace advancements have made both employers' compliance with this rule and employees' understanding of their rights increasingly difficult. More and more, employees must resort to class action lawsuits to recover their overtime pay. These workers must wait several years to have their cases adjudicated in order to get the overtime they have already earned. In fact, litigation over these rules drains nearly \$2 billion a year from the economy, costing jobs and better pay.

I hope that this latest concern will be put to rest immediately. Once again, I assure you that military duties and training or veteran status have no bearing on overtime eligibility. We hope that future debate on this important provision is more constructive. If we can provide further assistance in setting the record straight, we would be pleased to do so. The Office of Management and Budget has advised that there is no objection from the standpoint of the Administration's program to the presentation of this report.

Sincerely,

ELAINE L. CHAO.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RENZI). Under the Speaker's announced

policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

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

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.)

#### ASSOCIATION HEALTH PLANS

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

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to come to the House tonight and talk about the Republican agenda for taking care of the uninsured. The uninsured remain a major problem in this country, and I think we have a unique opportunity in front of us this year for actually reducing significantly the number of uninsured in this country.

The President actually gave mention of this in his State of the Union address here a little over a week ago. There are three Republican bills out there right now that would significantly impact downward the number of uninsured of this country.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues recall we passed in this House as part of the Medicare bill the bill that would allow expansion of health savings accounts. This is an issue that is near and dear to my heart because I had an Archer MSA for a number of years back when I was in my private medical practice, and I know the power of these accounts in being able to allow an individual to build wealth and build wealth that is dedicated to their health care needs.

This is the single best way to enhance the consumer aspect of health care in this country, which I believe is an aspect that is absolutely critical.

With a health savings account, an individual can choose their own doctor. There is nothing more fundamental in this country in the private practice of medicine than being able to choose your own physician. One can consult with your physician about services that one needs. One is not consulting with an HMO board somewhere. You are actually making these decisions yourself with your physician in the treatment room. There is no question that health savings accounts allow the